GeV, USA, praised by the US Nature Conservancy as a national treasure of biological diversity. Ichauway, located in Baker County and containing what may be the largest remaining unbroken tract of Longleaf Pine (Pinus australis) upland forest and undisturbed wiregrass understorey in the United States, will be preserved intact and dedicated to research and education in the ecological and conservation sciences.

Ichauway contains a number of exceptional natural communities and populations of at least thirty rare and endangered species. It includes 14 miles (22.4 km) of the Ichauway–Nochaway Creek, a blackwater stream, and 12 miles (c. 19 km) of the Flint River, a brownwater stream originating in the Georgia Piedmont region. Assembled in the late 1920s, Ichauway was the private shooting reserve of the late Robert W. Woodruff, longtime Chairman of the Coca-Cola Company and a noted philanthropist and outdoorsman.

The centre, to be known as the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center, is being established as a self-guiding, independent research and educational institution. In addition to conducting basic and applied ecological research and monitoring relevant to the understanding of natural and managed ecosystems, the centre will attempt to establish and maintain long-term, experimental, and reference, studies of ecosystems; serve as a regional benchmark in the growing global network of monitoring stations for environmental quality; bridge basic research with applications and make this knowledge available to appropriate audiences; promote multidisciplinary research and exchange of knowledge; promote cooperative research and training activities with other institutions, agencies, and individuals; instruct students, agency personnel, conservation professionals, landowners, and decision-makers, in the understanding and management of natural and managed ecosystems; promote a broad awareness of the importance of ecological relations to human welfare; and develop a greater public concern for the conservation of biological resources and environmental quality.

Dr Gene E. Likens, Director of the Institute of Ecosystem Studies of The New York Botanical Garden, is chairing the Scientific Advisory Committee that will advise the Foundation on the new research centre. Also serving on the Committee are Dr Arthur W. Cooper (Head of the Department of Forestry at North Carolina State University), Dr Jerry F. Franklin (of the College of Forest Resources at the University of Washington), Dr Eugene P. Odum (Director Emeritus of the Institute of Ecology of the University of Georgia), and Dr Walter Rosene (a wildlife biologist from Gadsden, Alabama) who is considered to be the world’s foremost living authority on the Bobwhite Quail (Colinus virginianus). The Foundation recently launched its search for a scientific director of the new research centre.

Core funding for establishment and operation of the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center will come from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, Inc., one of the US South’s major independent private foundations. The Foundation makes grants primarily in the areas of health care, education, the arts, child care, and youth services.