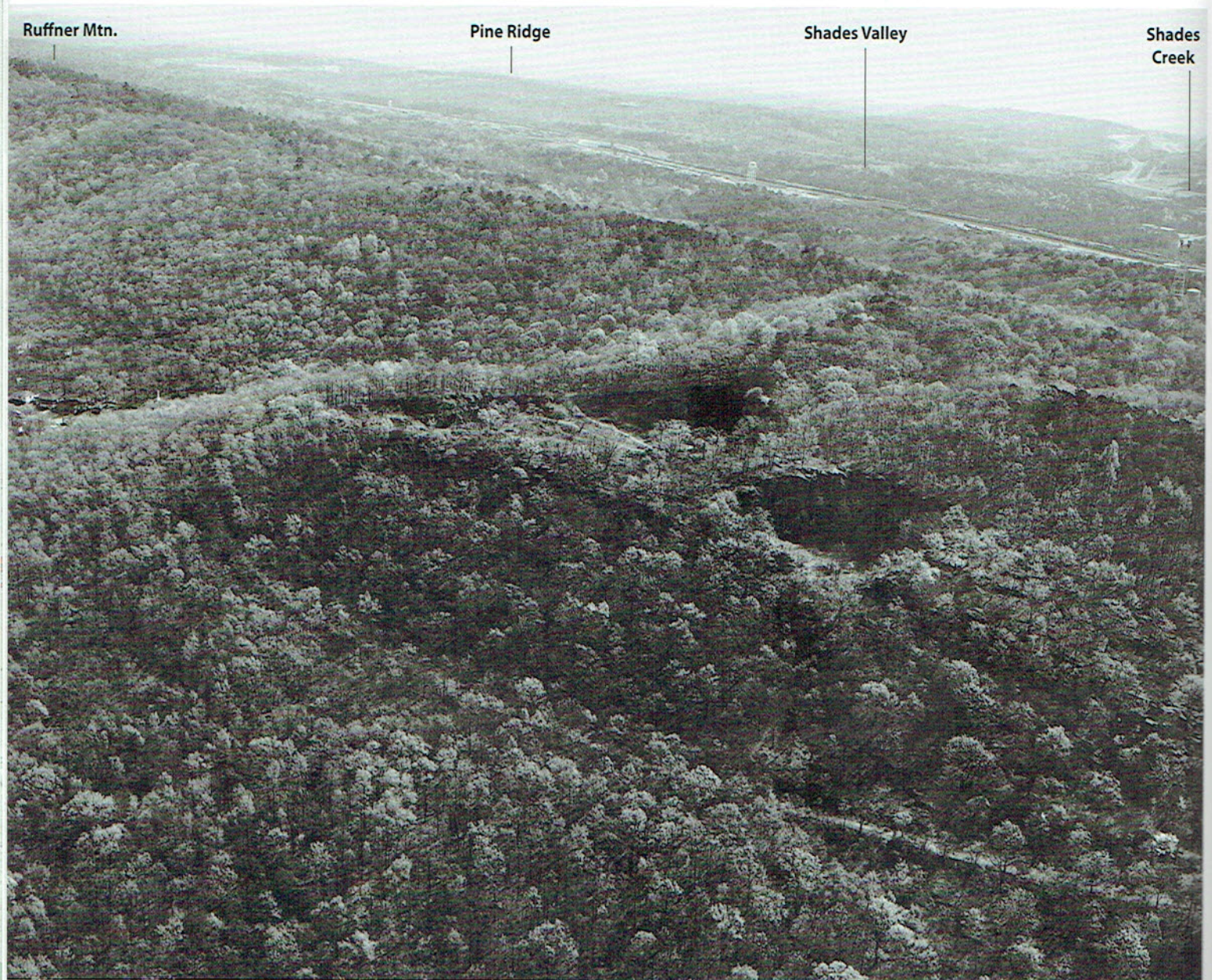


## Evolving Uses of Mineral Land: Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve

The Sloss company continued to work its Ruffner mines until 1953. Today's Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve acquired its first mineral lands in 1977 when citizens banded together, as the Ruffner Mountain Nature Coalition, to stop the building of apartments on the mountain. The urban preserve includes 1,040 acres of distinctive ridge and valley land, 14 miles of trails winding through the reforested mining ruins, distinctive overlooks to the City of Birmingham 400 feet below, and facilities for educational programs. The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a program of the US National Park Service, documented the historic ore mines in 1993, producing photographs and drawings that show how the ores were worked.

### Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve

1214 81st Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35206  
[ruffnermountain.org](http://ruffnermountain.org)



Sloss-Sheffield Steel and Iron Co.'s abandoned limestone quarries and railroad right of way, now Ruffner Mountain Nature Preserve. View looking southeast to Norfolk Southern's Norris Yard at Irondale. JET LOWE, HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD, 1993. HAER AL-27-5.

Last timbered in the 1950s, Ruffner's protected forest supports maturing stands of oak, hickory, and pine and abundant wildlife. The Ruffner lands now include these abandoned limestone quarries in which fossil remains of ancient sea life are well exposed.