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Black Warrior Riverkeeper Wins River Hero Award at Alabama Watershed Leadership Conference

Montgomery - Nelson Brooke, the staff Riverkeeper at Black Warrior Riverkeeper, received the 2010 River Hero Award at the Alabama Rivers Alliance's Watershed Leadership Conference.

As staff Riverkeeper for Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Brooke patrols and photographs the Black Warrior River and its tributaries, looks for pollution problems, responds to citizen complaints, researches and analyzes polluters' permits, collect pollution samples for laboratory analysis when necessary, educates the public about the beauty of the river and threats to it, advocates compliance with environmental laws, and is a spokesman for the Black Warrior River watershed.

A Birmingham native, Brooke attended The Altamont School in Birmingham and graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with an anthropology degree. Brooke is an Eagle Scout and outdoor enthusiast who has enjoyed fishing and hunting along the banks of the Black Warrior River since he was seven years old. Brooke has been Black Warrior Riverkeeper's staff Riverkeeper since January of 2004. He also served as Executive Director from August 2007 through December 2009, when Charles Scribner became Executive Director, enabling Brooke to focus more on Riverkeeper patrol and advocacy.

The Alabama Rivers Alliance annually hosts the Watershed Leadership Conference, a premier educational and networking event for Alabamians interested in clean water. The conference moves to different regions of the state each year, and since 2010 is an election year, the 2010 Watershed Leadership Conference is in the state's capitol of Montgomery from February 27-March 2, 2010.

The Watershed Leadership Conference is for anyone seeking to learn about clean water, environmental science, legislative policy, and leadership. Each year the conference brings over 100 individual attendees from a variety of backgrounds and over 25 various grassroots and conservation organizations together to share, network, and learn. At the Conference, participants receive professional development training from experts as well as their own peers on the newest ideas and innovations in their fields.

Formed in 1997, the Alabama Rivers Alliance (www.alabamarivers.org) is Alabama's statewide nonprofit river-protection organization. Their mission is to protect Alabama's rivers through water quality and quantity policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, and the providing of information to citizens in order to achieve clean and healthy watershed ecosystems, healthy people, strong economies, and a functioning democratic system of government in Alabama.

As citizen-based environmental advocacy organizations, Black Warrior Riverkeeper and the Alabama Rivers Alliance frequently collaborate on initiatives affecting water quality in the Black Warrior River watershed or the entire state.

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Black Warrior Riverkeeper (www.blackwarriorriver.org) is a citizen-based nonprofit environmental advocacy organization whose mission is to protect and restore the Black Warrior River and its tributaries. A proud member of Waterkeeper Alliance, Black Warrior Riverkeeper was the Alabama Environmental Council's 2007 Conservation Organization of the Year and the American Canoe Association's 2008 Green Paddle Award winner. For more information, contact Charles Scribner, Executive Director: (205) 458-0095, cscribner@blackwarriorriver.org or Nelson Brooke, Riverkeeper: (205) 458-0095, nbrooke@blackwarriorriver.org.