



**For Immediate Release**

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**Waterkeepers Alabama Installs New Fish Consumption Advisory Signs Statewide**

Alabama - Today is [Rivers of Alabama Day](#), and [Waterkeepers Alabama](#) is excited to announce they have completed a project to mount more than 45 new, more accessible fish consumption advisory signs at [Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#) (ADCNR) managed boat ramps on impacted waterways across Alabama. These signs are intended to alert anglers heading out to fish about nearby fish consumption advisories issued by Alabama's state agencies. Each sign features a convenient hotline that anglers can call toll free to hear a recording of the over 200 fish consumption advisories for the whole state.

[Black Warrior Riverkeeper](#) has mounted four signs at ADCNR boat ramps in the Black Warrior River watershed. Three of the boat landings are on Smith Lake, at Lion's Park (Lick Creek), Smith Lake Park (Ryan Creek) and Smith Lake Dam (Sipsey Fork). The fourth sign Black Warrior Riverkeeper mounted is on Lake Tuscaloosa at the Binion Creek boat ramp. All advisories in the Black Warrior River basin are for fish contaminated with mercury from burning coal at power plants.

"Fishing is a great American tradition, especially in Alabama," said Charles Scribner, executive director of Black Warrior Riverkeeper and past president of Waterkeepers Alabama. "We want anyone to enjoy fishing while being able to make informed decisions about fish consumption."

The Alabama Department of Public Health updates and re-releases the fish consumption advisories each year. Waterkeepers Alabama is working to get this information into the hands of anglers that need it the most – those fishing for dinner. Fish consumption advisories are recommendations from the state to limit or avoid eating fish at certain locations due to testing results revealing health-hazardous contamination in fish tissues. These advisories are aimed to prevent long-term illnesses that can result from eating contaminated fish, such as reproductive dysfunction, cancers, and issues with child development. Waterkeepers Alabama hopes to reach a wide audience of anglers by utilizing the many popular public-access boat ramps that the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources manage.

Besides calling the hotline hosted by [Coosa Riverkeeper](#) that is featured on the signs, there are currently no other ways to access the advisories without a smart device or a steady internet

connection. As much as 1 in 4 Alabamians do not have internet access, according to the American Consumer Survey, so these signs provide anglers with a route to access this vital public health information offline. Anyone can call from anywhere at any time to hear fish consumption advisories in Alabama by dialing (844) 219-7475!

“Folks eating fish in Alabama deserve easy access to such important public health information such as the fish consumption advisories. By working with Outdoor Alabama and our partners across the state, we are now able to provide a bit easier access through the hotline.” said Victoria Miller, Fish Guide Coordinator with Coosa Riverkeeper and project organizer. “However, more can be done to protect Alabama’s anglers by the state agencies regulating the advisories, like expanding testing efforts to include more water bodies and contaminants, and promoting the advisories more through their websites, social media, guidebooks, and other forms of official communication about the outdoors.”

Waterkeepers Alabama collaborated on this project with Outdoor Alabama, or the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, for permission to post at their public boat ramps and other partner groups to mount the signs, such as the Alabama Rivers Alliance, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Cahaba Riverkeeper, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Choctawhatchee Riverkeeper, Coosa Riverkeeper, and Mobile Baykeeper. Each sign is sponsored, mounted, & maintained by the organization’s logo found on the bottom left corner.

Waterkeepers Alabama is a regional entity of the Waterkeepers Alliance launched in 2018 to further connect and support Waterkeeper organizations on waterways that flow through and across Alabama. Those interested in finding out more about fish consumption advisories should visit [WaterkeepersAlabama.org/Fish](https://WaterkeepersAlabama.org/Fish) to see a map with the advisories for Alabama.

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Black Warrior Riverkeeper’s mission is to protect and restore the Black Warrior River and its tributaries. The citizen-based nonprofit organization promotes clean water for improved public health, recreation, and wildlife habitat throughout the Black Warrior River watershed. Learn more at [BlackWarriorRiver.org](https://BlackWarriorRiver.org).

Caption: New fish consumption advisory sign for public boat ramps in the Black Warrior River

