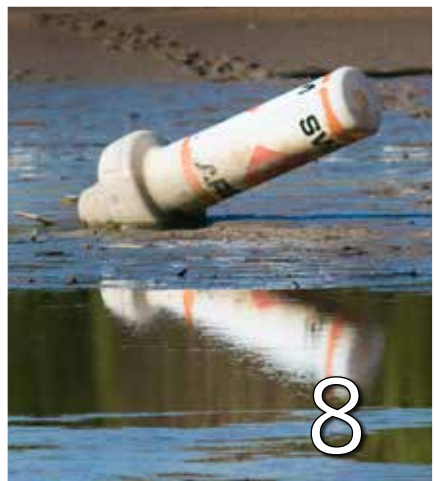


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ON THE COVER: The approach of spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's go fishing!'

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ANNUAL RENEW OUR RIVERS LAKE CLEANUP HAS SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC IMPACT

Written by Adrinece Beard
File Photos

Alabama Power Company has announced that 15 million pounds of waste have been removed from adopted waterways – including Logan Martin Lake and the Coosa River – since the start of the Renew Our Rivers (ROR) program.

ROR began in 2000 as the result of a one-time river cleanup event in Gadsden organized by now-retired Gene Phifer and other Alabama Power employees who took the initiative to clean litter along the Coosa River.

Today, the environmental stewardship program is nationally recognized as one of the largest river cleanups including river systems across Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Mississippi. Thousands of volunteers participate each year.

In 2017 alone, more than 4,700 volunteers removed roughly 295,000 pounds of trash and debris from Alabama waterways. This year, the program is set to host 30 cleanups, including the 18th annual Logan Martin Lake cleanup March 17-24.

Both Alabama Power Company and the Logan Martin Lake Protection Association (LMLPA) will work collectively to provide volunteers with cleanup supplies and other essentials between 8 a.m. and noon on March 17 or 24 at one of the collection sites listed at www.lmlpa.org.

"It's a fun time to get the family out," said Mike Clelland, an environmental specialist with Alabama Power. "Everybody who participates gets a free t-shirt and free

2018 LOGAN MARTIN LAKE CLEAN-UP DETAILS

When: March 17-24

Organized by: The Logan Martin Lake Protection Association and Alabama Power Company

How to get involved: Go to a collection site between 8 a.m.-noon on Saturday, March 17, or Saturday, March 24. Sign up, and get bags, your t-shirt and gloves. Pick up trash on your own shoreline or any lake area of your choice. Return full Renew Our Rivers bags to the collection sites, where they should be placed in the marked dumpsters. No lake trash is allowed in city or county receptacles. Volunteers can also sign up online by visiting www.lmlpa.org.

Collection sites and coordinators:

- Lakeside Landing – David and Kaye Carboni (205-901-2234), Linda Ruethemann (205-902-1196), Dieter Ruethemann (205-531-8154)
- Clear Creek Marina – Sam Marston (205-914-8895), Jacqueline and Dennis Searcy (205-541-2442)
- Poor House Branch Marina – Robert Taylor (205-910-2234)
- Riverside Marina – Mike Boyd (205-541-1572), Cliff Early (205-706-5141)
- Woods Surfside Marina – Mark or Zack (205-525-5533), Dawn and Jeff Lovell (205-515-9850)
- Pell City Civic Center – Wayne Wilcox (205-515-9850), Ashley Thomas (205-338-1913)
- Caribe Club and Marina – Larry Davis (205-441-4172), Johnny Capps (205-531-5480), Tonja Ramey (205-763-4007)

Pontoon boats wanted: If you have a pontoon boat that can be used for trash pickup, call Mike Riley at 205-531-2372 or email mike.riley@lmlpa.org.

Post clean-up picnic: It begins at noon March 24 at Lakeside Park. Free food and live entertainment will be available for clean-up volunteers. Admission is your 2018 Renew Our Rivers t-shirt.



lunch."

The free lunch is provided at the picnic at noon on March 24, at Lakeside Park in Pell City to celebrate the conclusion of the cleanup efforts.

What's most important is the environmental impact volunteers have on maintaining the lake and protecting the wildlife, according to the ROR chairman for Logan Martin.

Mike Riley said leaving unsightly trash in the lake can have an adverse effect on the birds, ducks and fish. Plastics, for example, are long-lasting and durable or non-biodegradable, despite their ability to disintegrate from long periods of sun exposure. Unfortunately, they can also be hazardous to wildlife, which is sometimes known to die from plastic ingestion.

Riley said the amount of trash removed from Logan Martin Lake depends

Hundreds of volunteers turn out every year to help keep Logan Martin Lake clean during the Renew Our Rivers initiative.

on how many volunteers participate, the weather and how observant everyone is about keeping trash out of the lake.

"Any trash you see on the road will end up at the lake," he said.

For this reason, volunteers are also encouraged to adopt-a-road or clean up behind litterbugs.

Last year, the Logan Martin cleanup had 832 volunteers, compared to only 100 in 2001. The LMLPA also documented that 6.25 tons of trash were collected from the lake in 2017, a 13 percent increase from 2015.

As of now, Riley is expecting 928 volunteers to be present at Logan Martin Lake next month. However, more volunteers are welcome to participate by signing up online at www.lmlpa.org or calling Riley at 205-531-2372.

