

Steve Marshall  
Alabama Attorney General



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### First North Alabama Projects Funded by Tyson Settlement Announced

(CULLMAN) – Recreational boaters, paddlers and fishermen will have better access to the Mulberry and Sipsey Forks of the Black Warrior River, thanks to three enhancement projects in Walker and Cullman counties announced Saturday.

State and local leaders visited sites Saturday – in Colony and Garden City in Cullman County and the Forks in the River site near the Walker County town of Sipsey – and offered details unique to all three projects.

The three projects are funded from the settlement with Tyson Farms as part of a state lawsuit against the company in the wake of an illegal wastewater discharge at the company’s facility in Hanceville in 2019. The spill killed an estimated 175,000 fish and damaged the river’s ecosystem.

“These community enhancement projects are the result of the dedicated teamwork of legal staff from the Attorney General’s Consumer Interest Division, and our partners at the Alabama Department of Conservation and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management,” said Attorney General Steve Marshall. “As I said we when announced this settlement last August, this is another example of a Consumer Protection case done well – the money is going exactly where it ought to go – not to the state coffers or outside counsel, but to the impacted areas. It is all the more rewarding to finally see these recreational access projects come to life to benefit the impacted communities.”

Here’s a brief look at what’s planned at all three sites:

- **Forks in the River, near Sipsey:** Expand parking area and construct a dock, pavilion, and restroom facility.
- **Town of Colony access:** Construct a gravel road and parking area, which will give local residents direct access to the river for the first time.
- **Garden City Park:** Riverfront clean-up with new kayak launch area, add restroom facility and create hiking trail.

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In wake of the 2019 spill, Marshall sued the company on behalf of the State of Alabama for violating the Alabama Water Pollution Control Act and the Environmental Management Act.

As part of the settlement of the lawsuit, the Attorney General created a Restitution Fund Oversight Committee to oversee the projects that are designed to enhance the State's natural resources, increase recreational opportunities, and benefit the environment and public health in the impacted areas. Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Deputy Commissioner Ed Poolos served as chairman of this committee, which selected the projects announced Saturday.

"I would like to express my deep appreciation to every member of this committee. They have all worked diligently as a team, to get us to this point. I'm very pleased that we can now announce these three initial sets of projects, with you having our assurance that many more will follow over the coming months," Poolos said. "We believe these projects will provide tremendous and long-lasting benefits for Alabama's citizens impacted by the wastewater spill."

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