



# CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's Swim Guide helps keep you safe on the water this summer**

As temperatures rise, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK) is publishing weekly Swim Guide water quality reports throughout the summer to help communities have fun and stay safe on the water.

CRK monitors water quality at more than 300 stream, river, and lake sites all year on a weekly basis through the [Neighborhood Water Watch](#) program. The water quality data are available to the public on the [Neighborhood Water Watch database](#).

This year, CRK is excited to provide [Swim Guide](#), a series of maps with red or green lights to help communities decide if recreation is safe at popular swimming spots. Each Thursday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, CRK will collect and analyze water samples for *E. coli* bacteria. On Fridays, CRK will publish a series of maps with water quality conditions on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and the [Swim Guide](#) website (a Swim Drink Fish initiative).

"We often get asked, 'Is it safe to swim here?'" says Jess Sterling, CRK Technical Programs Director. "There are a lot of misconceptions about water quality in the Chattahoochee River, so the goal of Swim Guide is to publish a resource about water quality conditions so the community can have fun on the river and be as safe as possible."

The maps will include swimming spots throughout Lake Lanier, Metro Atlanta (Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area), West Point Lake, and Columbus. On each map, green checkmarks will indicate a low risk of *E. coli* contamination (less than 235 MPN/100mL) and red Xs will indicate a high risk of *E. coli* contamination (greater than 235 MPN/100 mL). Risk levels are based on [EPA Beach Action Value](#) information.

It is important to note that samples are only collected once a week and water quality conditions can change quickly. If it has rained in the last 48 hours, if the river is high and muddy, or if the lake has a [bright green color](#), CRK recommends using caution when coming into contact with the water.

More information about *E. coli* monitoring can be found on CRK's website [here](#).

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**Media contact:**

Rosemary Pitrone, CRK Communications Manager

[rpitrone@chattahoochee.org](mailto:rpitrone@chattahoochee.org)

- For inquiries about Lake Lanier, contact Becca Risser at [brisser@chattahoochee.org](mailto:brisser@chattahoochee.org)
- For inquiries about Metro Atlanta (Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area), contact Jess Sterling at [jsterling@chattahoochee.org](mailto:jsterling@chattahoochee.org)
- For inquiries about West Point Lake and Columbus, contact Ashley Desensi at [adesensi@chattahoochee.org](mailto:adesensi@chattahoochee.org)

**About Chattahoochee Riverkeeper:**

Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's mission is to educate, advocate, and secure the protection and stewardship of the Chattahoochee River, including its lakes, tributaries, and watershed, in order to restore and conserve their ecological health for the people and wildlife that depend on the river system and in recognition of the important ecosystem functions provided throughout the region and planet. For more information, visit [www.chattahoochee.org](http://www.chattahoochee.org).