



ELMORE COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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World's longest annual paddle race returns to Wetumpka, Alabama

Elmore County - Around twenty of the fiercest paddlers in the world will converge on Alabama this month for a state-wide race that tests the will of even the most extreme athletes.

Racers face whitewater, battle tidewater currents, and hike around a dozen dams in this 650-mile, adventure-style paddle race called the Great Alabama 650. The race kicks off in Northeast Alabama on September 18th, and spectators can cheer for racers on riverbanks in Gadsden, Pell City, Wetumpka, Montgomery, Selma, Fairhope, and more.

The racecourse is the core section of the Alabama Scenic River Trail, a 6,000-plus mile mapped river trail system. This 650-mile segment of the river trail extends from the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in Northeast Alabama through alligator country to the Gulf of Mexico.

Racers will have up to 10 days to finish the race and vie for a first-place win in one of three divisions— male solo, female solo, and two-person team. Participants will be allowed to use kayaks, canoes, or stand-up paddleboards interchangeably throughout the event.

Competitors are expected to arrive in Wetumpka on Monday September 20th and Tuesday September 21st. The public is welcome to join the Elmore County Economic Development Authority, Wetumpka High School, Wetumpka Area Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Wetumpka, Elmore County EMA, and City of Wetumpka in welcoming the paddlers to checkpoint one (mile 232) at Coosa River Adventures.

Spectators can follow the event virtually at AL650.com where race organizers will post a live map reporting up-to-the-minute updates on each boats' whereabouts. The map will be augmented with Facebook and Instagram posts from the field by following official race accounts or by using the hashtag #AL650.

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For more information contact ECEDA (334) 524-0817 -- cary.cox@elmoreda.com