

Georgia State Parks Nuisance Alligator Document

Introduction:

Many wild animals make their home within the boundaries of our state parks and historic sites. Some of these animals, including the American Alligator, can be both a nuisance and a hazard to site visitors and associates. The American Alligator is found in wetlands throughout the coastal plain of the Southeastern United States. Within this range, alligators can be found in almost any body of fresh water, but population densities are greatest where an abundant food supply exists. Alligators are carnivorous and will prey on whatever food source is readily available. This can include foods deposited into park waters by guests who think it is acceptable and enjoyable to feed the alligators, not realizing that this practice can ultimately lead to the demise of the animal.

Understanding that wildlife cannot be exclusively predicted, nor managed, responsible stewardship involves managing certain activities (such as feeding alligators) with the intent and desire to reduce the development of harmful behaviors, such as becoming a nuisance or threat to humans. A nuisance alligator may: become habituated to people; inhabit recreational waters intended primarily for swimming; display aggressive behavior toward humans or domestic animals; show symptoms of some debilitating illness or injury, etc.

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this document is to protect humans and protect alligator populations while the two share the same water resources.

The primary objective here is to promote positive behavioral responses in both humans and alligators, while the primary means will be via a holistic nuisance animal management approach described below.

Information, Education, and Signage:

All site associates, regardless of their title, can play an important role in educating visitors regarding alligator populations in site waters. Though the key location for this information dispersal may be at site offices and visitor centers, other locations and venues should exist for visitor education. The following is a list of examples of when and how this information could be disseminated.

1. Handouts available to guests advising them of the presence of alligators, procedures for handling pets, food, and garbage, and any other site-specific restrictions.

2. Posters and/or special notices (see examples: appendix 1) displayed on site bulletin boards.
3. Signage (see examples: appendix 2,3,4) installed at appropriate areas such as campgrounds, cottages, swimming areas/ beaches, docks, etc.
4. Public interpretive programs focusing on alligators and how to safely and responsibly coexist with them.
5. Approved social media may be utilized when additional general public notification needs to be made.

Site Maintenance, Sanitation, and Garbage Disposal

Consistent site maintenance can help reduce creating a “negative reward” atmosphere within the site. By not providing rewards, efforts are more likely to succeed in fostering a healthy relationship between visitors and these reptiles.

1. Managers should develop and implement a maintenance plan to consistently remove human food/garbage from high-usage water areas, such as swimming beaches, fishing areas, docks, etc. This plan should adjust for periods of anticipated high visitation.
2. Maintenance staff should strive to keep vegetation that functions as an attractant to alligators out of designated swimming areas.

Enforcement Procedures

1. Observed guest activities that promote nuisance or negative alligator behavior should be reported by staff or volunteers to park management. Managers should provide direction as to whether staff should approach the offending party.
2. When appropriate, on-site LE or LED personnel should be contacted for further handling of the incident. The issuance of written warnings/citations and/or ejections of the visitor(s) should be considered.
3. When alligators are reported or observed as being visibly active in visitor areas, increased patrols are justified to monitor the activity.

Removal Process

Despite best prevention efforts, an alligator exhibiting nuisance behavior may need to be removed on occasion.

1. Park Managers, or their designees, should contact their Region Manager and Resource Management Unit (RMU) to discuss. Considerations should be made at the time whether the beach or other impacted areas will be temporarily closed. It may be

necessary to contact the public information/marketing office so notifications can be made that the area will be closed.

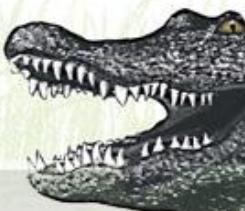
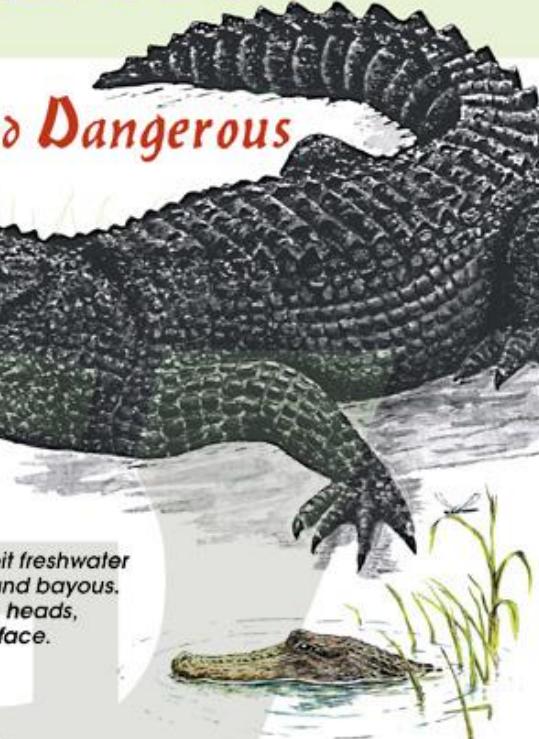
2. The site manager or designee will reach out to their respective Game Management office to request removal by a licensed trapper. Once approved and after a tag has been issued to the licensed trapper, site staff will then work with the trapper to expedite the removal process, striving to minimally impact visitor services when possible.
3. Once the animal has been removed and/or a consensus has been reached, the closed area will be re-opened as soon as possible

Administration/Reporting

Reports of alligators displaying nuisance behaviors are important and warrant attention. Any significant behavior or incidents between alligators and either site visitors or staff associates should be documented, filed, and reported to the park's region office and RMU as soon as possible. Documentation should also include actions taken, alligator removal, etc.

Alligators!

Beware: Wild and Dangerous



Alligators have been around since the age of the dinosaurs. Found only in the southeastern United States, American alligators inhabit freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, marshes, swamps, and bayous. Oftentimes you may only see their eyes, heads, or snouts protruding from the water's surface.

Newly hatched baby gators are about 9-10 inches long. They grow about 1 foot per year until they are about 7-8 feet long, then continue to grow slowly up to 12 feet or more. The largest gator ever recorded measured over 19 feet.

Alligators feed mainly on fish, turtles, snakes, birds, and small mammals. Nests are built from mounds of decaying vegetation up to 3 feet high and several feet across. In the center of the nest, females lay 30-50 hard-shelled, 2-3 inch long eggs, which hatch in about 65 days. If the eggs and young do not fall prey to raccoons, skunks, and other predators, young alligators will stay together in a group or "pod" for the first year or more.

Adult gators have virtually no predators, except man. As our population continues to increase and more of our remaining natural areas are developed, our challenge is to remember that we share this land with wildlife. Alligators are a natural part of Louisiana's native habitat. By observing them from a respectful distance, man and alligator can continue to peacefully coexist.

Be Careful!

- Do not feed or entice alligators.
- Do not allow pets to swim in or drink from waters possibly inhabited by alligators.
- Do not approach nest mounds from late June to mid September, when a guarding female may be nearby.

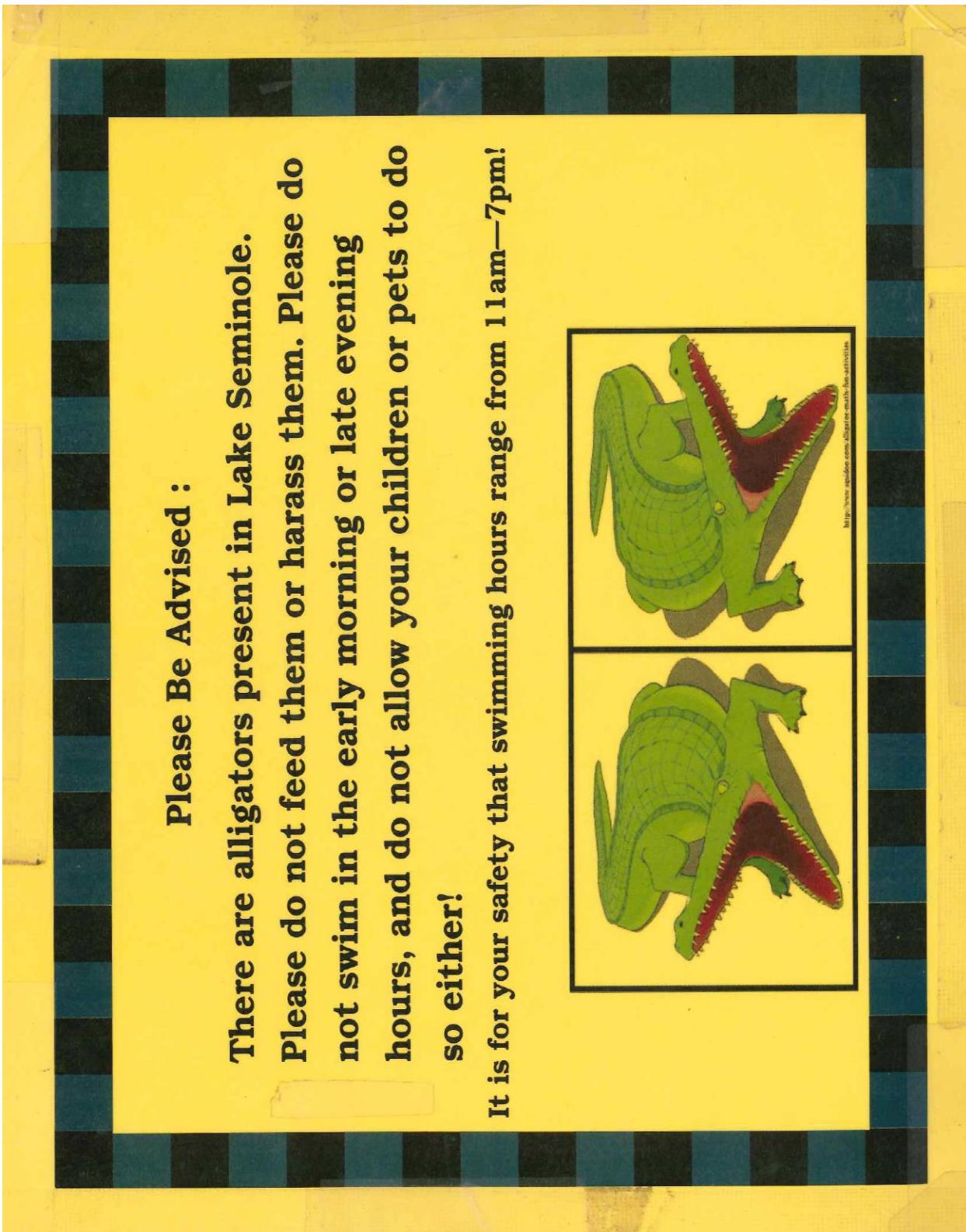
Appendix 2: Approved alligator signage

Source: Voss Signs 1-800-473 0698



Appendix 3: Swimming Beach Signage Example

Source: Seminole State Park



GCI - Manufacturing
2984 Clifton Springs Road

Decatur, GA 30034
United States of America
Phone: 404-244-5137
Fax: 404-244-2952

Quote Number
156022-0

QUOTATION CONFIRMATION

Date
3/19/18

Page
1

Customer: 120503

DNR LITTLE OCMULGEE LODGE
PARK
80 LIVE OAK TRAIL

HELENA, GA 31037
United States of America

Ship To: LITTLE OCMULGEE STATE PARK
ATTN: SIM DAVIDSON
80 LIVE OAK TRAIL

HELENA, GA 31037
United States of America

Entered..: 3/19/18 **Bid/Promo....:** SIM DAVIDSON
Expiration: 5/18/18 **Entered by.:** Elizabeth Soto

| Item | Description | Quantity | UOM | Disc % | Unit Price | Extend. Price |
|---------------|---|----------|-----|--------|------------|---------------|
| | Customer Service: Email: CustomerService@gci-ga.com 404-244-5112 Accounts Receivable: Email: GCIReceivables@gci-ga.com Phone: 404-244-5137 Thank you for your business!!! | | | | | |
| 28A83030WEGDS | SIM DAVIDSON 229 868-3108 30X30 MBNB .080 ALUM 1.875 RAD DBL SIDED - NO HOLES SIDE 1 - BLACK TEXT & BORDER W/VARIOUS COLOR BACKGROUND SIDE 2 - BROWN SHEETING ONLY | 1.00 | EA | | 43.7600 | 43.76 |
| 28A81218WEGDS | 12X18 .080 ALUM MBNB 1.5 RAD DBL SIDED - NO HOLES SIDE 1 - BLACK TEXT & BORDER W/VARIOUS COLOR BACKGROUND SIDE 2 - BROWN SHEETING ONLY | 1.00 | EA | | 10.8100 | 10.81 |
| 28A107WEGDS | 10X7 MBNB .080 ALUM W/.75 RAD DBL SIDED - NO HOLES SIDE 1 - BLACK TEXT & BORDER W/VARIOUS COLOR BACKGROUND | 1.00 | EA | | 8.9900 | 8.99 |

Continued . . .

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HELENA,GA 31037
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Ship To: LITTLE OCMULGEE STATE PARK
ATTN: SIM DAVIDSON
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Expiration: 5/18/18 **Entered by.:** Elizabeth Soto

| Item | Description | Quantity | UOM | Disc % | Unit Price | Extend. Price |
|--|-------------|----------|-----|--------|-----------------|---------------|
| SIDE 2 - BROWN SHEETING ONLY | | | | | | |
| **SEE ATTACHED DRAWINGS FOR SET UP AND TEXT** | | | | | | |
| FREIGHT SI01 | FREIGHT | 1.00 | EA | | 9.9500 | 9.95 |
| | | | | | Material total: | 73.51 |
| | | | | | Total Quote: | 73.51 |



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1ea

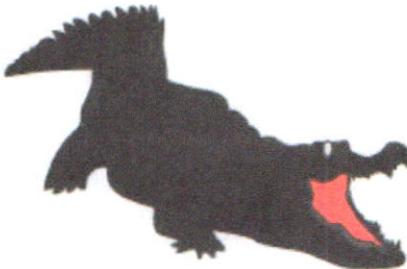
Alligator Country

"ABOUT ALLIGATORS"

- You are within the range of the American Alligator.
- They feed mainly on fish, snakes, turtles, birds and other small animals.
- Alligators are most active in the early morning and late evening.
- These reptiles associate food with people if they are fed with human food or garbage.
- Fed Alligators can become aggressive and have to be removed or killed for public safety.



Be Aware



(Look for these signs throughout the park)

"WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Swim only in designated areas.
- Keep all pets away from the water.
- Do not feed alligators, and do not dispose of food in or around bodies of water.
- If an alligator displays aggressive behavior, move to safety and alert park staff or call 911 for emergencies.

A FED GATOR IS A DEAD GATOR!

For your protection, wildlife laws will be enforced.

"TEMPLATE MUST BE SIGNED, DATED AND RETURNED BEFORE WORK CAN BE COMPLETED." X: _____

DATE: ___/___/___

Customer: DNR WILDLIFE

Comments:

Font Detail: Font #1:

Size: 0 in. / Font #2:

Size: 0 in. / Font #3:

Size: 0 in.

Color:

(C=0, M=100, Y=100, K=0) Red

Black 2

Sign Dimension: 30in x 30in

Metal Rad.: 1.875

Decal Dimension:

Material:

Designed Date: 3/15/2018 / 11:08:02 AM

Printed on Roland:

Designed By: Art #3 Jordan Crear

Smith Sign Shop
Highway 301 North
Glennville, GA 30427

File Name: Various Alligator Country Signs (2).fs



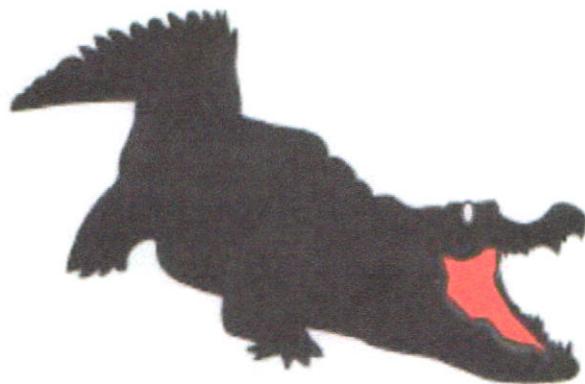
12 in

18 in

I sea

Alligator Country

Be Aware



- Alligators are present in this area.
- Feeding is strictly prohibited.
- Respect Alligators. Do not approach.
- For your protection, wildlife laws will be enforced.
- Contact park staff with questions or to report incidents

"TEMPLATE MUST BE SIGNED, DATED AND RETURNED BEFORE WORK CAN BE COMPLETED." X:

DATE: ___/___/___

Customer: DNR WILDLIFE

Comments:

Font Detail: Font #1:

Size: 0 in. / Font #2:

Size: 0 in. / Font #3:

Size: 0 in.

Color:

Red

Black 2

Sign Dimension: 12in x 18in

Metal Rad.: 1.50

Decal Dimension:

Material:

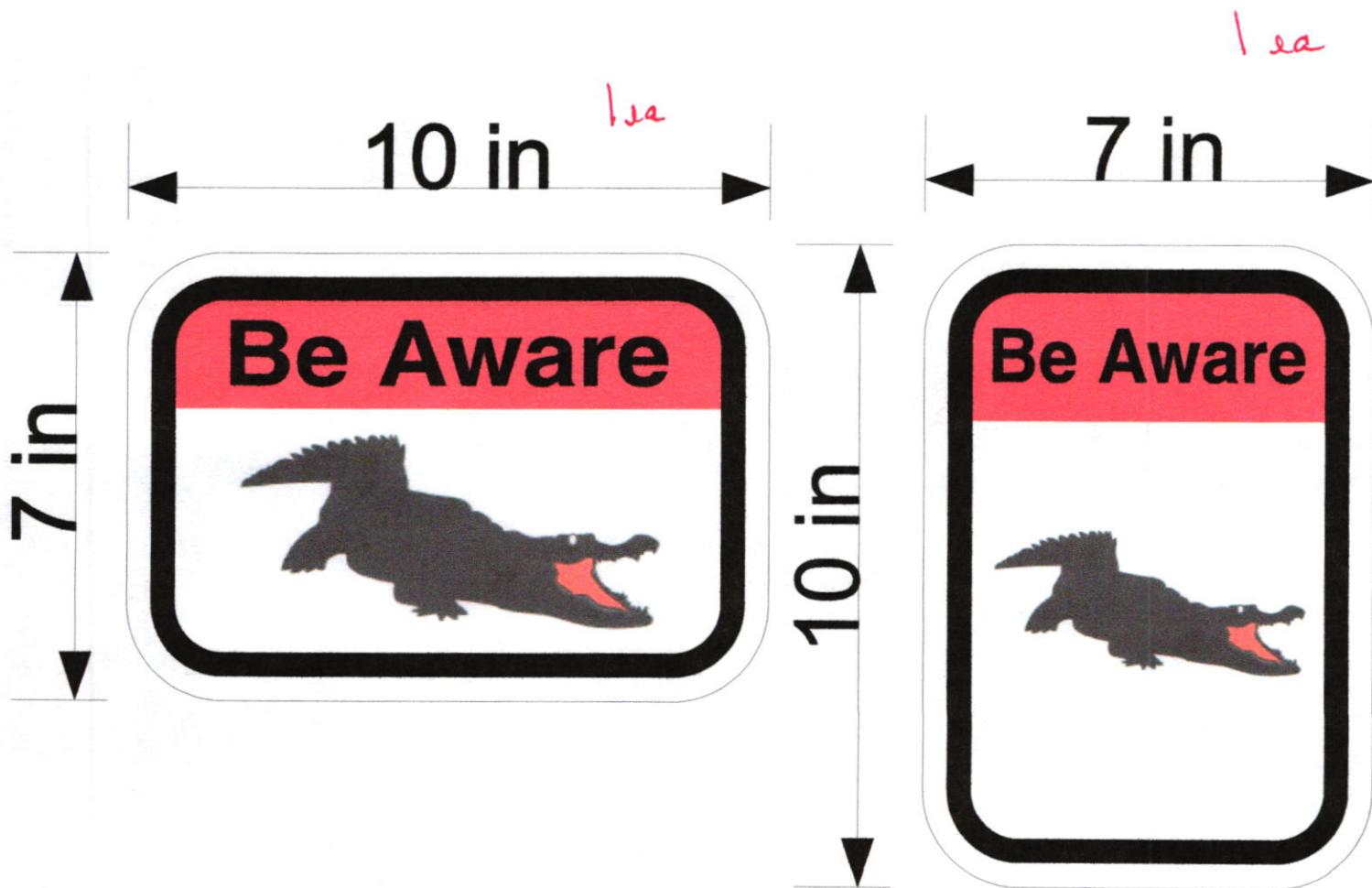
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Printed on Roland:

File Name: Various Alligator Country Signs (2).fs

Designed By: Art #3 Jordan Crear

Smith Sign Shop
Highway 301 North
Glenville, GA 30427



"TEMPLATE MUST BE SIGNED, DATED AND RETURNED BEFORE WORK CAN BE COMPLETED." X: _____ DATE: ___/___/___

Customer: DNR WILDLIFE

Comments:

Font Detail: Font #1:

Size: 0 in. / Font #2:

Size: 0 in. / Font #3:

Size: 0 in.

Color:

Red

Black 2

Sign Dimension: VARIOUS

Metal Rad.: 1.50

Decal Dimension:

Material:

Designed Date: 3/15/2018 / 11:04:30 AM

Printed on Roland:

File Name: Various Alligator Country Signs (2).fs

Designed By: Art #3 Jordan Crear

Smith Sign Shop
Highway 301 North
Glennville, GA 30427