

Apalachicola River Blueway

(This document contains maps and data book)

“The Apalachicola River is one of the most beautiful streams of North America, formed at the northern border of Florida by the junction of the Chattahoutchie and the Flint River; it crosses, making quite numerous turns, a region of great fertility, and empties near the town of Apalachicola.” The Comte de Castelnau, 1837

This early description of the 105-mile Apalachicola River still holds true today. From its formation at the Jim Woodruff Dam near the Georgia border, the river is undammed and largely wild, flowing past large tracts of public and protected lands. High bluffs, abundant wildlife, and rare animals and plants make this river among the most unique in Florida, and at the right water conditions, large sandbars make for ideal primitive campsites. The following data should provide information about the basic access points and other amenities found along the river that can contribute to a successful paddling trip.

Please note that the river can have the fastest current in the state, so it is not recommended for beginners. Mile markers along the shores, decreasing from 106 at the dam to 0 in Apalachicola, provide helpful navigational guides. Barge traffic and dredging are largely a thing of the past, but buoys, training dikes and large sand mounds are still visible. Numerous side streams, many of which are listed here, are worthy of exploration. Devon Creek, for example, (off Owl Creek) is a scenic watery tunnel beneath a thick canopy of cypress or tupelo gum trees.

One recommended side trip is to explore the Chipola River Dead Lakes area. This is a wide swampy area of both dead and living cypress trees originally formed by a naturally occurring levee that backed up the Chipola River. The area has stunning primeval beauty. From the Apalachicola River, it can be reached by taking the Chipola River cutoff just after Gaskin Park in Wewahitchka. After three miles, take a right onto the main channel of the Chipola River. A compass and/or GPS is recommended if venturing away from the main channel. GPS coordinates are provided in the data book if paddlers wish to stay at the Dead Lakes Sportsman’s Lodge (along the Chipola Cutoff just before the Chipola River on the right) or at the Dead Lakes Park Campground (along a side channel west of the main Dead Lakes area). The campground is about 6 miles from Gaskin Park.

While most of the ramps, campsites and points of interest in the data book can be easily spotted along the main Apalachicola River channel, GPS is recommended for finding the entrance to Owl Creek (mile 22) if you want to paddle the 1.5 miles to the Hickory Landing Campground.

There are two creek entrances just before Owl Creek—Kennedy and Brushy Creeks—that can cause confusion.

Most sandbars are accessible for camping/rest stops and are within the public domain, although access to land beyond the ordinary high water mark might not be allowed. Please respect private property rights and regulations pertaining to lands managed by Torreya State Park and the Nature Conservancy where water access is not allowed.

Water Levels: During low to moderate water levels, sandbars for rest stops and primitive campsites are numerous until Sand Mountain (mile 36), whereupon they are less prevalent as the ever-widening river flows past a more swampy floodplain. Most sandbars are under water during high water conditions. The USGS river gauge at Chattahoochee should be below 44 feet for best paddling and camping conditions: http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?site_no=02358000; the USGS gauge near Sumatra should be below 5.5 feet for best paddling and camping conditions: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv?02359170>.

For more information about the river and paddling, we recommend the following websites:

Apalachicola Riverkeeper: <http://apalachicolariverkeeper.org/>. Note: The Riverkeeper is the managing entity for the Apalachicola Blueway and coordinator of the annual [Apalachicola RiverTrek](#) each October.

Apalachicola River Blueway: <http://apalachicolablueway.com/>

Northwest Florida Water Management District: <http://www.nfwwater.com/water-resources/swim/apalachicola/>

Apalachicola Paddling Trails System in lower Apalachicola Basin:
<http://myfwc.com/viewing/recreation/wmas/lead/apalachicola-river/things-to-do/paddling/>

Recommended gear and safety equipment:
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/paddling/Segments/Equip_list.htm

Trip tips and safety information:
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/paddling/Segments/Tips_Safety.htm

Wildlife viewing tips:
<http://myfwc.com/viewing/how/>

Apalachicola River Paddling Data Book

If paddling downstream, the east side of the river would be on your left and the west side on your right.

PC = Primitive campsite

POI = Point of Interest/landmark

C = Campground

LA = Laundromat

W = Water

L = Lodging

I = Internet computer

PO = Post Office

R = Restaurant

S = Shower

G = medium/lg supermarkets

B = Bathroom

PI = Put-In

g = convenience/camp stores

<i>River Mile #</i>	<i>Type of amenity</i>	<i>GPS # (decimal-degrees)</i>	<i>Directions</i>
106	POI—Jim Woodruff Dam	N30.7088 W84.8639	Approach dam with caution
105	PI, B, W, C—Clyde Hopkins Park; R and g on Highway 90 .3 miles from landing; nearest motel 1 mile east on Hwy 90; PO .6 miles east.	N30.7007 W84.8575	In Chattahoochee, turn south off Highway 90 onto River Landing Road just east of the Apalachicola River Bridge. The road will wind down to the landing after a short distance.
105	C, L, R, B, W, g—future site of Chattahoochee Landings	N30.6913 W84.8614	East side of river; look for dock and sign.
103	POI, PI—Abandoned Jackson County Port	N30.6749 W84.8773	West side of river; marked by large wood loading dock and pilings. Ramp on side channel before port.
103	POI—Scholz Power Plant	N30.6687 W84.8863	West side of river; smokestacks, plant, intake canal and outflow visible
100	POI—I-10 Bridge	N30.6336 W84.9043	
100	PI—Aspalaga Ramp	N30.6248 W84.9030	East side of river
98	POI, PC (small site)—Aspalaga blue	N30.6141	West side of river; can hike to spring

	springs run	W84.9247	where a large alligator lives
96	PC—high sandbar	N30.5925 W84.9462	east side of river
95	POI—Gregory House/Torrey State Park	N30.5786 W84.9494	East side of river; historic house and narrow clearing in front of house visible
94	PI, PC—Ocheese Landing	N30.5820 W84.9651	West side of river
90.5	POI—Sweetwater Creek	N30.5253 W84.9883	East side of river; good flow
89	PI, PC—Redd's Landing	N30.5197 W84.9942	West side of river along canal. Great river view!
88	PI, PC—Harry Donar Landing	N30.5152 W84.9914	East side of river
84	PC—Alum Bluff low sandbar	N30.4713 W84.9878	West side of river—may not be visible at high water; Alum Bluff across river—no legal access
80	PI, B, W—Bristol Landing; L, R, PO about .6 miles from access road to Hwy 20; G another .6 east on Hwy 20.	N30.4403 W84.9865	East side of river
79	POI—Hwy 20 Bridge	N30.4371 W85.0010	
78	POI—Sutton Lake and Bayou	N30.4323 W85.0218	West side of river
77	PI—Neal Landing	N30.4235 W85.0324	West side of river
77	PC—long high sandbar	N30.4125 W85.0286	East side of river. Another sandbar .5 on west side and at mile 74 on east side.
71	POI—Old River	N30.3785 W85.0333	West side of river
63	PI, B, W, PC—Estifinulga County Park	N30.3083	East side of river, camping allowed; large sandbar across river is also a good

		W85.0400	primitive campsite. If this one is under water, a higher site is a quarter mile downstream on east side.
58	POI—Mary Slough/Lake Iamonia	N30.2729 W85.0631	West side of river; potential side trip
55	PC—high sandbar	N30.2481 W85.0796	east side of river
47	PC—high sandbar	N30.1780 W85.1361	east side of river
45	PI—Iola Landing	N30.1629 W85.1412	West side of river a short ways up slough
43	POI—Florida River	N30.1434 W85.1310	East side of river
42	PI, B, W—Gaskin Park, Wewahitchka	N30.1318 W85.1423	West side or river
41	POI—Chipola Cutoff	N30.1289 W85.1466	West side of river. It is a total of almost 6 miles to Dead Lakes Campground.
41A	L—Dead Lakes Sportsman's Lodge	N30.1270 W85.1744	3 miles up Chipola Cutoff on right bank just before Chipola River (850-639-5051)
41B	POI—side channel entrance to Dead Lakes Park Campground	N30.1418 W85.1768	Left side of main channel; large cypress marked with ribbons and reflectors
41C	C, W, B, PI—Dead Lakes Park Campground	N30.1360 W85.1993	Keep right in side channel but avoid first slough on right; about 1.5 miles to campground ramp. Secure kayaks and walk to campground. First-come, first serve for camping, although capacity has never been a problem.
39	PC—high sandbar	N30.1141 W85.1431	East side of river; another sandbar about .5 miles on west.
36	POI—Sand Mountain	N30.0926 W85.1531	West side of river; largest of the spoil disposal sites from dredging

35	POI—River Styx	N30.0871 W85.1364	East side of river
29	POI—Battle Bend	N30.0176 W85.1003	East side of river
26	POI—Chipola River	N30.0125 W85.0885	West side of river
26	POI—Kennedy Creek	N30.0045 W85.0623	East side of river
24	POI—Brushy Creek	N29.9902 W85.0405	East side of river
22	POI—Owl Creek	N29.9719 W85.0246	East side of river; leads 1.5 miles to Hickory Landing Campground. Scenic creek worth exploring along with Devon Creek (N29.9799 W85.0186), which branches off to the south.
22A	C, PI, W, B—Hickory Landing Campground	N29.9884 W85.0141	1.5 miles up Owl Creek on right
19	POI, B—Ft. Gadsden Historic Site	N29.9383 W85.0122	East side of river; site of 1816 battle between United States and free blacks, runaway slaves and Seminole Indians.
15	POI, PI, PC—Bloody Bluff Landing	N29.8733 W85.0109	East side of river; site of another 1816 battle between American soldiers and blacks and Indians.
14	PC—high sandbar	N29.8634 W85.0149	West side of river
13	POI—Humphreys Slough	N29.8536 W85.0209	East side of river; part of Apalachicola Paddling Trails System (FWC)
12	POI—Brothers River	N29.8453 W85.0330	West side of river
10	POI—St. Marks River	N29.8243 W85.0204	East side of river; empties into East Bay

6	POI—Jackson River	N29.7790 W85.0505	West side of river; leads to Lake Wimico
4	PI—Box-R Wildlife Management Area	N29.7684 W85.0433	West side of river; limited hours
4	POI—Acorn lake Creek	N29.7660 W85.0291	East side of river; part of Apalachicola Paddling Trails System (FWC)
0	PI—Apalachicola Battery Park; R, L, G nearby in downtown.	N29.7235 W84.9819	Hug western shore; just past Hwy 98 Bridge, turn right into canal to landing

Emergency Contacts for Apalachicola River region

Police/Medical emergencies: 911

Medical 24 Hour Emergency Services:

County	Hospital	Phone & Address
Calhoun	Calhoun Liberty Hospital	20370 North East Burns Avenue Blountstown, FL 32424
Franklin	Weems Memorial Hospital	135 Avenue G Apalachicola, FL 32320 850-653-8853
Jackson	Jackson Hospital	4250 Hospital Dr Marianna, FL, 32446 850-526-2200
Gadsden	Capital Regional Medical Ctr	23186 Blue Star Hwy, Quincy, FL 32351 850-875-6000
Gulf	Sacred Heart Hospital	3801 E Hwy 98 Port St Joe, 32456 850-229-5600

Law Enforcement:

Franklin County Sheriff: 850-670-8500

Gulf County Sheriff: 850-227-1115

Calhoun County Sheriff: 850-674-5049

Liberty County Sheriff: 850-643-2235

Gadsden County Sheriff: 850-627-9233

Jackson County Sheriff: 850-482-9624

Report wildlife violations: Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission Hotline: 1-888-404-3922 or dial #FWC or *FWC on cell phone