

S27 Suwannee River Day Paddles

Upper Suwannee River

Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park to Spirit Of The Suwannee Music Park Paddle Information Sheet

Description: The Suwannee is approximately 246 miles long and arises from the Okefenokee Swamp. Depending on water levels, this section usually has plenty of sandy riverbank areas and point bars for taking a break. There is an emergency takeout at Blue Spring Paddle Launch, near the halfway point.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 20.2 Miles/5.5 Hours

Launch Site: Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park

Takeout Site: Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park

Special Considerations: For reservations at State Park, call Reserve America. The river is not considered safe for paddling when the water level at White Springs Gauge exceeds 63'. During planning, and before departure, check with local outfitters for safe water levels for passage, and shuttling services, if needed. Shuttling required.

Outfitters: Suwannee Canoe Outpost—Live Oak, FL 386-364-4991

American Canoe Adventures— White Springs, FL 386-397-1309

Madison Outpost Adventures— Lee, FL 850-673-9069

Skill Level Definitions

Beginner: New to paddling and may need tips and or instructions about paddling strokes, safety procedures, and entering/exiting kayaks. Comfortable on short trips of 1 to 3 miles on protected waters, when wind does not exceed 5 mph.

Novice: Paddlers acquainted with basic paddle strokes and can manage kayak handling independently in winds not exceeding 10 mph on protected waters. Comfortable on trips up to 6 miles.

Intermediate: Paddlers with experience in basic strokes and some experience on different venues, including some open water. Comfortable on trip distances of 6 to 10 miles, winds not exceeding 15 mph.

Advanced: Seasoned paddlers who possess skills and experience to paddle all venues and conditions. Experienced in self-rescues. Should be comfortable paddling more than 10 miles in a day.

NOTE: Great care has been taken to ensure this guides accuracy, but weather, tides, and water conditions can change rapidly and create hazardous conditions. These maps are for visual reference only, please consult NOAA Charts for navigation. Paddlers should have all proper safety equipment and check conditions before departure. All paddlers should always wear PFDs while on the water, and leave a float plan. There are inherent dangers in any paddle sport. There are special hazards along the Florida coast due to shifting tides, changing wind and weather, shallow waters, and treacherous bottoms with soft mud, rocks, and oyster bars. It is up to each paddler to be aware of these dangers, to accept and be prepared for the risks involved, and to be certain they have the skills to safely paddle in these conditions.