

Minimum Flows for Florida Paddling Trails



Have you ever driven to a river and found it too low to paddle? This chart can help you determine ahead of time if a designated paddling trail has sufficient water levels for paddling without frequently scraping the bottom or portaging over snags. Using this chart and the availability of river gages that can be accessed online via satellite, a paddler, outfitter or trip leader can better plan an outing before embarking. Bear in mind that gages can only determine water levels and discharge rate, and not the conditions of rivers in regards to snags. In such cases, or where gages are not present, it is best to contact a nearby outfitter or paddling club.

Outfitters, public land managers and knowledgeable paddlers are an integral part of this ongoing data collection process. Feedback and input is welcome.

Please contact [Doug Alderson](#) with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails. This chart should be used in conjunction with the Office of Greenways and Trails website page for [Florida's Designated Paddling Trails](#).

The chart is only designed to be relevant to the river sections that are part of a designated paddling trail, and measurements are for gage height and not discharge rate.

Note: It is generally unsafe to paddle a river during flood stage.

Websites for online gages referenced:

[United States Geological Survey \(USGS\) by river basin](#)

[USGS gages by county](#)

[Northwest Florida Water Management District \(NFWMD\)](#)

[Suwannee River Water Management District \(SRWMD\)](#)

Tide Charts

On this website, you can check tides for [112 sites along the Gulf of Mexico](#)

On this link, you can check tides for [102 sites along Florida](#)

This site covers [172 sites along the Keys](#)

N/A = no information available at this time or not applicable

Minimum Flows Chart

Paddling Trail	Section most affected by low water	Gage used	Min. level for good paddling
Perdido	Contact Adventures Unlimited, Perdido: 850-968-5529	USGS 02376500 Barrineau Park	Best between 2-6 feet; avoid flood stage around 13 feet
Coldwater Creek	Contact Adventures Unlimited: 850-623-6197	USGS 02370500 Milton	N/A

Sweetwater/Juniper Creek	Above Red Rock Bridge. Contact Adventures Unlimited: 850-968-5529 or Bob's Canoe Rentals: 850-623-5457.	No online gage	N/A
Blackwater River	Consistently navigable. Contact Action on Blackwater: 850-537-2997	USGS 02370000 Baker	N/A
Yellow River	Above Milligan (Hwy 90)	USGS 02368000 Milligan	1-2 feet or above
Shoal River	Usually navigable below Hwy 90	USGS 02369000 Mossy Head	N/A
Choctawhatchee River Blueway	Exposed sandbars may not be available during high water levels	USGS 02365200 Pittman	Best levels for paddling and sandbar camping is below 10 feet
Holmes Creek	Springfed. All of designated trail navigable.	USGS 02366000 Vernon	N/A
Econfina Creek	Between Scott's Bridge and Walsingham Park. Call Econfina Creek	NFWFMD 544 Scott's Bridge	Best between 2 and 4 feet. <u>Note: gage is not online.</u>

	Canoe Livery, 850-722-9032.		
Chipola River	Designated trail usually navigable. Contact Bear Paw Canoe Rentals, 850-482-4948	USGS 02358789 Marianna	Above 12 feet not recommended for beginners.
Upper Chipola River	Snags are prevalent during low water	No gage	
Merritt's Mill Pond	Always navigable		N/A
Apalachicola River Blueway	Most sandbars for camping are under water during high water	USGS 02358000 Chattahoochee	Below 44 feet for good sandbars; river not recommended during flood stage
Apalachicola River Paddling Trail System		N/A	Tidally influenced
Ochlockonee River North	All. Upper river is prone to snags.	USGS 02329000 Havana	Above 12.5 feet
Ochlockonee River South	Above Whitehead Landing	USGS 02330000 Bloxham	Above
Sopchoppy River	Oak Park Cemetery Bridge to Mt. Beeser Church Bridge	USGS 02327100 Oak Park	Above 8.5 feet

Apalachee Bay Paddling Trail System (Chaires Creek...)	Smaller tidal creeks are not passable at low tide	N/A	Tidally influenced
Wakulla River	Spring-fed river, always navigable		N/A
Lake Jackson	Every few years, sinkhole can dry up lake	No gage	N/A
Wacissa River	Slave Canal. Best on a high tide.	USGS 02326550 Nutall Rise	7.5 feet median (tidally influenced)
Aucilla River	All, especially shoals and above Hwy 27	USGS 02326500 Lamont	48-50 feet
Econfina River	Above park boat ramp	USGS 02326000 Near Perry	Above 7.5 feet
Withlacoochee River North	Above Blue Springs State Park	SRWMD Pinetta	Above 54 feet
Suwannee River North	Above Suwannee Springs. Big Shoals may require portaging below 55 feet For upper river around Fargo, GA, SRWMD Fargo gage should read above 93.5 feet	USGS 02315500 White Springs	Above 52 feet

Suwannee River South	consistently navigable below Suwannee Springs, although some shoals can be present	SRWMD Suwannee Springs	Above 35 feet
Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail	Tidally influenced. Log onto FWC website for more information.		N/A
Steinhatchee River	Upper river and falls can be impassable in low water conditions	USGS 02324000 Cross City	11-15 feet
Santa Fe	Above Hwy. 27 Bridge is often low. 1-2 low spots below 27 if 441 gage is below 31.5. Contact Santa Fe Canoe Outpost: 386-454-2050	SRWMD U.S. 441 Bridge	Above 32 feet
Ichetucknee River	Spring-fed; water levels always suitable		N/A
Potano Paddling Trail	Lake levels are usually sufficient; creek to CR 234 can be impassable in low water	No gage	N/A
St. Mary's	Low water can reveal numerous snags in upper river near Macclenny. Contact St.	USGS 02231000 Macclenny	Above 2 feet

	Mary's River Fish Camp: 866-845-4443		
Pellicer	Always navigable. Contact Faver-Dykes State Park: 904-794-0997	USGS 02247222 Espanola	N/A
Bulow Creek	Always navigable Contact Bulow Creek State Park: 386-676-4050	No gage	N/A
Tomoka	Always navigable. Contact Tomoka State Park: 386-676-4050	USGS 02247510 Holly Hill	N/A
Spruce Creek	Contact Cracker Creek Outfitters 386-304-0778	USGS 02248000 Samsula	Most of river is tidally influenced
Putnam County Blueways	Water levels are generally suitable		N/A
Withlacoochee River South	Lacoochee to Silver Lake. Contact Nobleton Outpost: 352-796-7176 (open Fri-Mon).	USGS 02312558 Nobleton	Above 38 feet for upper section
Wekiva River/Rock Springs Run	Springfed. Wekiva is usually navigable but Rock Springs Run can be low at times. Call King's	USGS 02235000 Near Sanford	N/A

	Landing outfitters: 407-886-0859.		
Econlockhatchee	Contact Florida Outback Adventures: 407-302-5550 or Hidden River Park: 407-568-5346.	USGS 02233484 Oviedo	Can be snags in upper river if below 11 feet
Pithlachascotee	River usually navigable below Grey Preserve	USGS 02310300 Near New Port Richey	N/A
Hillsborough	Above Sargeant Park can become shallow Contact Canoe Escape: 813-986-2067	USGS 02303330 Near Thonotosassa	N/A
Alafia	River is generally navigable	USGS 02301500 Lithia	N/A
Little Manatee	Call Canoe Outpost: 813-634-2228 or Little Manatee Kayaking, LLC 813-777-0021	USGS 02300500 Wimauma	Above 2 feet
Paddle Manatee	Most of the 75-mile trail network is tidally influenced.		N/A

Upper Manatee	Contact Ray's Canoe Hideaway: (888) 572-2663		N/A
Charlotte County Blueways	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced
Peace	Above Zolfo Springs Call Canoe Outpost: 800-268-0083 Below Zolfo, may have to zig-zag to find deep enough water during low rainfall periods.	USGS 02294898 Ft. Meade	Above 72 feet
Buster Island	Trail can be impassable in low water. Inquire with Lake Kissimmee State park: 863-696-1112.	No gage	N/A
Loxahatchee	Above Trapper Nelson's historic site. Call Canoe Outfitters: 561-746-7053 (open Th-Mon).	No gage	Often low in spring. Must pull over small wooden dams.
Jupiter Waterway Trail	Eastern half of trails are tidally influenced.	No gage	N/A
Whiskey Creek	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced
Estero Bay and River	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced
Calusa Blueway	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced

Hickey Creek	Always navigable		N/A
Blackwater River/Royal Palm Hammock	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced
FL Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail	Tidally influenced		Tidally influenced

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