







Wekiva River/Rock Springs Run Paddling Trail Guide



The Waterway

Beginning just north of Kelly Park in Apopka, crystal-clear Rock Springs Run winds its way swiftly downstream about 8 miles to join the spring run flowing out of Wekiwa Springs State Park, thus creating the Wekiva River. The Wekiva River (note spelling difference for the state park and river) continues north approximately 15 miles to the St. Johns River. A mixture of swift and placid water offers a frequent change of pace. Traveling through sand pine scrub, pine flatwoods, hammocks and swamps, paddlers can see a variety of wildlife, including river otters and sometimes black bears. Numerous islands, tributaries and lagoons provide opportunities for side trips and camping.

The Paddling Experience

This 27-mile paddling trail is generally suitable for beginners. Primitive camping by permit is available at limited sites along the trail, making a pleasant overnight adventure (see map). Rock Springs originates at Kelly County Park upstream from the Kings Landing put-in and is popular with tubers and swimmers. This park does not allow canoe or kayak launching but does have camping available. The paddling trail put-in is just downstream at King's Landing, a private outfitter with a fee to launch and limited parking. The Rock Springs Run to Wekiva Island and side trip to Wekiva Springs is the most popular part of this designated trail. Use can be heavy on holidays and weekends. The portion downstream of Wekiva Island may have small fishing boats present but it is a remote, beautiful area with abundant wildlife. The last mile-and-a-half from the confluence of the St. John's River to the High Banks Landing can have heavy motorboat traffic with high wakes possible. There are four state park primitive campsites available on the river (shown on map). Call the park at 407-553-4383 for reservations. A camping fee is required.

Big Buck – Mile 4.5 (N28.7430 W81.4744) Indian Mound – Mile 5 (N28.7404 W81.4668) Otter Camp – Mile 5.3 (N28.7382 W81.4643) Buffalo Trace – Mile 10.3 (N28.7403 W81.4223)

Access Points

#1, Start of the Trail, Kings Landing,

Kings Landing charges a fee to launch and provides canoe/kayak rentals. From Orlando: travel north on I-4 to SR 436 to the town of Apopka. In Apopka, turn north (right) on CR 435 / Park Avenue. Follow this for six miles to a T-intersection at Kelly Park Road. Turn east (right) and then north (left) on Baptist Camp Road. Go past Kelly Park to the King's Landing put-in on the right side of the road where it dead-ends.

#2, Mile 7.5, Wekiwa Springs State Park, (0.7 miles up spring run)

From I-4 take SR 434 West (exit 94) to Wekiva Springs Road. Turn right and proceed about 4 miles to the park entrance



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#3, Mile 8, Wekiwa Island

From I-4, take SR 434 West (exit 94) to Wekiva Springs Road. Turn right and proceed about 3.3 miles to Miami Springs Drive. Turn right and go 0.2 miles. Turn right at the end of the road into Wekiva Island.

#4, Mile 17.5, Wilson's Landing County Park

From I-4 head west on SR 46 (exit 101C) 4.5 miles. Make a left on Osprey Hammock Trail and stay to the right to immediately merge onto Malekean Trail. The park will be 300 yards on the left side, with boat drop-off past the main parking area indicated by signs.

#5, Mile 19.0, Katie's Landing, Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park

For thousands of years, Native Americans valued the abundance of wildlife in the <u>Lower Wekiva River</u> <u>Preserve State Park</u> area. The system of blackwater streams and wetlands provides habitat for black bears, river otters, alligators, wood storks, and sandhill cranes. Visitors can stroll along the Sand Hill Nature Trail for a self-guided tour of the native Florida plants and wildlife found at the park. *From Interstate 4 exit on CR 46 and travel west about 5 miles. Look for Wekiva Park Drive on the right and drive one mile to park on left.*

#6, Mile 27, end of the trail, High Banks Landing, (St Johns River)

From US 17/92 in the town of DeBary, turn west on High Banks Road and follow about 3 miles to the landing on the St. Johns River.

Outfitters and Shuttle Service

Adventures in Florida 407-924-3375

Kings Landing 407-886-0859

Wekiva Falls RV Park 352-268-9121

Wekiva Island, Inc. 407-862-1500

Wekiwa Springs State Park Nature Adventures 407-884-4311

Wekiva Outfitters 407-902-4324

Base Camp

Located at the headwaters of the Wekiva River, the beautiful vistas within Wekiwa Springs State Park offer a glimpse of what Central Florida looked like when Timucuan Indians fished and hunted these lands. Just one hour from most Central Florida attractions, Wekiwa Springs offers visitors the opportunity to relax in a natural setting, enjoy a picnic, or take a swim in the cool spring. This is a very popular park, particularly on summer weekends. To ensure entrance, we recommend arriving early; otherwise, the parking area will be full and you may not be able to enter. Thirteen miles of trails provide opportunities for hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding. Paddlers can paddle along the Wekiva River and Rock Springs Run. Canoe and kayak rentals are available from the park's concessionaire. Options for camping include a full facility campground and primitive camping areas.