

# Ochlockonee River Water Trail

## Fact Sheet



### What is a Water Trail?

- Water equivalent of a hiking trail.
- Blueways, canoe trails, and paddle trails are all water trails.
- It has access points along the river, like trailheads, for putting boats on the water or taking them off.
- Usually for non-motorized boats like canoes and kayaks.
- Water trails can be various lengths and are used by paddlers, anglers, hikers and picnickers of all ages and abilities.

### Tourism and Economic Growth

- The outdoor recreation industry provides \$6.1 million American jobs, enthusiast spend \$646 billion each year, \$39.9 billion produced in federal tax revenue, and \$39.7 billion produced in state/local tax revenue.
- In Georgia, approximately 1 million paddlers participate in the sport.
- More than \$23 billion dollars is spent in the state on outdoor recreation.
- Communities throughout Georgia are realizing the economic benefits of highlighting their waterways.
- In 2002, the estimated impact of visitors to the Chattooga River was \$2.6 million, with 60 jobs being supported by river recreation.

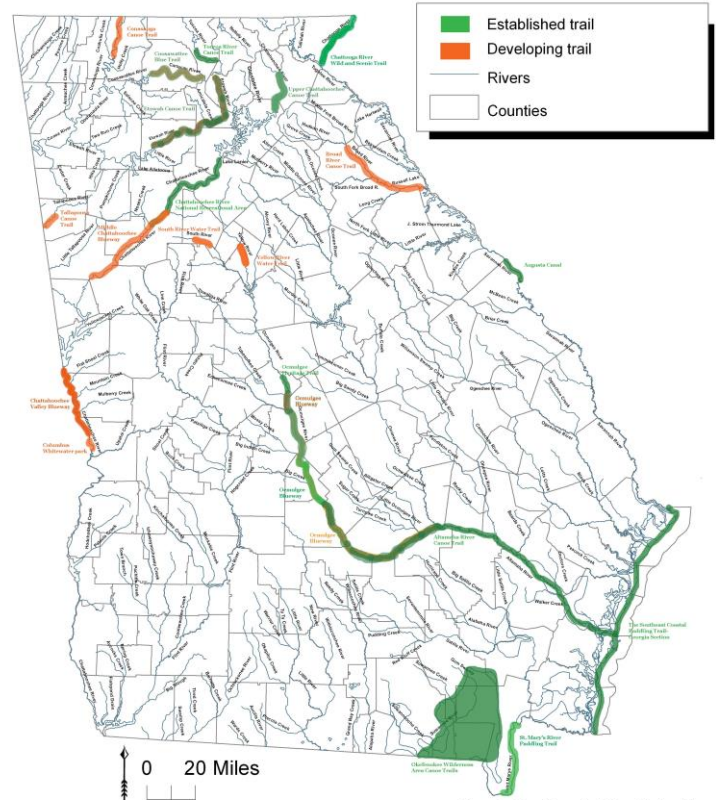
### Recreation

- Paddling is an easy outdoor activity for many types of people.
- The recent America's Great Outdoors Initiative in 2010 found that Americans want access to their rivers, lakes and streams.
- Communities benefit from increased recreation and tourism in their town.

### Conservation

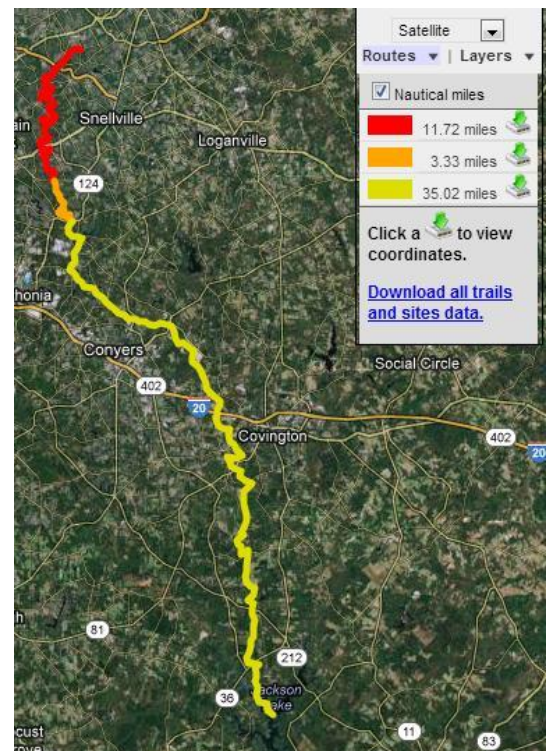
- Paddlers see the conditions of the river and become advocates for clean water.
- The river teaches paddlers about wildlife habitat.
- Protections that can help keep the river clean can include improved zoning and buffer requirements, improved storm water practices, prevention of new water quality threats, and enforcement of water quality laws.

### Georgia Water Trails



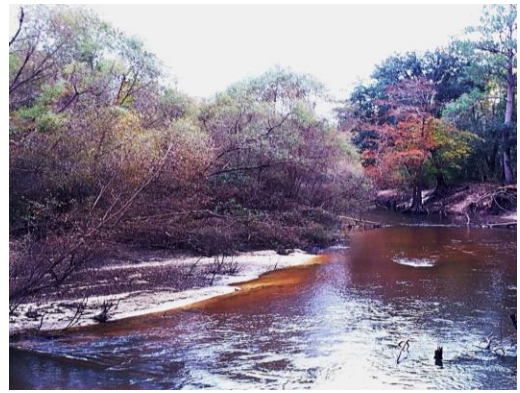
Created by Georgia River Network  
September, 2011

### Ochlockonee River Water Trail



## Ochlockonee River Water Trail

- Newly formed Citizen based action group organized to protect the river corridor, and promote and maintain a water trail.
- Winds 56 miles through the southwest Georgia counties of Colquitt, Thomas and Grady before crossing into Florida and emptying into the Gulf of Mexico, runs through a bottomland forest amongst cypress, black gum, oak and willow. The winding course of the river contains sandbars, beaches and abundant wildlife.
- Phase 1 development includes identification and mapping of access points to the river. Partnership, development and expansion with State, Local, and Federal agencies, river networks, and conservation groups.



### Examples in Georgia

- The 138-mile long Altamaha Canoe Trail provides paddlers access and campsites along the Altamaha River ([www.altamahariver.org](http://www.altamahariver.org)).
- The SE Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail ([www.secoastpaddlingtrail.com](http://www.secoastpaddlingtrail.com)) includes the entire Georgia coast and north to the Chesapeake Bay and south to the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail.
- The Flint Riverkeeper, [www.flintriverkeeper.org](http://www.flintriverkeeper.org), includes the entire corridor from the Atlanta Airport to Lake Seminole and the Florida line.
- The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area in Atlanta. ([www.nps.gov/chat](http://www.nps.gov/chat))
- The Ocmulgee River Water Trail from Macon to the Altamaha River.
- The Okefenokee Canoe Trail in the Okefenokee Swamp.

### Take Home Points:

- Water trails have many benefits for relatively little investment.
- Water trails can help diversify local economies.
- Many Georgia communities already take advantage of the benefits of water trails.

### Resources:

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