

# Alabama State Lands Bartram Canoe Trail



## The MOBILE-TENSAW DELTA IS OUR NATION'S SECOND LARGEST RIVER DELTA.

It encompasses a vast wetland characterized by estuarine marsh, cypress-tupelo swamp and bottomland hardwood ecosystems.

The Delta has over 50 rare and endangered plant and animal species known to inhabit its wetlands and waterways. The region encompasses 250,000 acres, of which 100,000 are publicly owned and managed. In January 2003 Alabama State Lands implemented the Bartram Canoe Trail system which provides opportunities for recreational boaters, specifically canoeists and kayakers, to enjoy the rivers, streams, lakes, sloughs and bayous of the Delta. Currently the State Lands Division maintains six day-use trails and six overnight trails. There are two land-based campsites and four floating platform campsites available for the overnight routes. The land based camping areas are open to anyone on a first-come first-served basis. The floating platform campsites are limited to groups no larger than eight and are available by reservation only. Reservations are limited to canoeists and kayakers. Motorized vessels are prohibited. For more information about reservations or fees, go to [www.bartramcanoetrail.com](http://www.bartramcanoetrail.com).



### TrailKey

- Complete Trail
- System Waterways
- Riverside Campsite
- Floating Camping Platform
- Put-in/Take-out
- Waterways
- County Road
- State Highway
- Secondary Road
- Town or City
- Hiking Trail

### PUT-IN/TAKE-OUT GPS COORDINATES

Boatyard Landing	N31°10.608 W087°50.441
French's Lake	N31°08.141 W087°50.711
Holley Creek	N31°10.944 W087°51.250
Hubbard Landing	N31°03.822 W087°52.217
Rice Creek	N31°00.947 W087°52.816
Upper Bryant Landing	N31°02.662 W087°52.581

CAMPING SITES & PLATFORMS GPS COORDINATES	
Canal Island Platform	N31°05.390 W087°53.474
Dead Lake Platform	N31°02.634 W087°54.930
Jug Lake Platform	N31°00.714 W087°54.488
Spoonbill Sandbar Campsite	N31°10.078 W087°53.609
Two Rivers Point Campsite	N31°01.181 W087°56.757

Visit [www.bartramcanoetrail.com](http://www.bartramcanoetrail.com) for more detailed information and additional GPS coordinates for each trail.



The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division and its affiliates assume no responsibility for inaccuracies in road alignments, configuration of intersections and other related information depicted on maps. This map is designed to aid in planning and not for navigation of the Bartram Canoe Trail.

## Trail Descriptions

- 1 Globe Creek Trail**  
Starting in the upper reaches of the Mobile-Tensaw Forever Wild Property, this trail begins in a small waterway that meanders through mature bottomland hardwood forests. This trail offers numerous opportunities to view the diverse wildlife and plants of this unique ecological region.
- 2 Red Hills/Proctor Creek Trail**  
Crossing the open water of Tensaw Lake to these small feeder creeks offers an opportunity to explore the remote backwaters. Many limbs and sunken trees prohibit access to most motorboats, providing the perfect opportunity for the smaller canoes and kayaks to enjoy the solitude.
- 3 Douglas Lake Trail**  
Traveling down Tensaw Lake and into Douglas Lake, this trail is characterized by its lake-like setting. This flat water paddle into Douglas Lake provides an opportunity to witness the large cypress trees reminiscent of the old Mobile-Tensaw Delta.
- 4 Richardson Island Trail**  
Departing from Rice Creek landing, this simple trail follows Rice Creek, Briar Lake and Tensaw Lake around Richardson Island. Paddle this simple route and its several back sloughs that offer opportunities for fishing, bird-watching or just quiet solitude.
- 5 Fisher Island Trail**  
After crossing Briar Lake and the Tensaw River, the trail follows Bayou Jessamine into what is locally known as Jug Lake. Paddling up this bayou allows for a unique experience of observing the wildlife and plants of an interior delta island.
- 6 Indian Mound Island Trail**  
After crossing Briar Lake and Tensaw River, the trail follows the entire length of Bayou Jessamine into Bottle Creek. A short paddle downstream, a pull-out on the west bank sandbar and brief 10 minute hike allows one to gaze into the past at a collection of large mounds constructed by Indians of the Mississippian Era.
- 7 Two Rivers Point**  
Departing from Rice Creek Landing, the trail runs the east side of Richardson Island and follows the entire length of the picturesque Bayou Tallapoosa into the Tensaw River. After an overnight stay at the land-based Two Rivers Point Campsite, the trail returns to Rice Creek Landing via Bayou Jessamine. The opportunity to visit Bottle Creek Indian Mounds should not be missed along the return leg of this journey.
- 8 Spoonbill Sandbar**  
Launching from French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk, this overnight trip provides an interesting chance to witness the vast bottomland hardwood forest of the upper Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The land-based Spoonbill Sandbar Campsite on the Alabama River allows for an overnight experience in the style of William Bartram himself.
- 9 Spoonbill Sandbar/Two Rivers Point**  
This route is a combination of overnights routes #1 and #2, resulting in a three-day two-night experience. Launching is either at French's Lake, Holley Creek or Boatyard Landings.
- 10 Jug Lake**  
Departing from Rice Creek Landing, this overnight trail follows Rice Creek, Briar Lake and Tensaw River around Richardson Island, with a stopover at the Jug Lake Camping Platform. This trail offers a mixture of more secluded smaller water and open bigger water.
- 11 Canal Island**  
Starting in the upper reaches of the Mobile-Tensaw Forever Wild Property, this trail begins in a small waterway that meanders through mature bottomland hardwood forests. After spending the night on the Canal Island Camping Platform you can enjoy Tensaw Lake and its backwater sloughs.
- 12 Dead Lake Island**  
Traveling down Tensaw Lake this trail provides the opportunity to explore the backwater sloughs and tributaries of Tensaw Lake. This camping platform area has two platforms and can accommodate a larger group.
- 13 Canal/Dead Lake Island**  
This two-night, three day-trail consists of a mixture of the small water of Globe Creek and Bayou Tallapoosa as well as the more open water of Stiggins Lake and the Tensaw River.

For detailed maps and information for each individual trail see reverse.

### Floating Camping Platforms - Rules for Use

The floating camping platforms are limited to canoe and kayaking groups of eight or less. In the Dead Lake Island slough there are two separate platforms to accommodate larger groups. Below are Rules for Use specific to the Floating Camping Platforms.

1. When camping on the floating platforms group size is limited to eight.
2. Pets are not allowed on floating camping platforms.
3. Open fires are not allowed on floating platforms.
4. Camp stoves are required for cooking on floating platforms.
5. Each party is required to have a compass, map, flashlight, and portable toilet with disposable bags.
6. The floating platforms can be reserved for only one night. A group can reserve the platforms at different locations when taking multiple night trips. A platform reservation is from 12 noon to 12 noon.
7. Feeding or harassing wildlife is prohibited. Do not discard garbage or food scraps on or near the floating platform.
8. The floating platforms will be inspected after each use. Damage to platforms will be assessed and be the responsibility of the user.
9. Visitors may be held financially responsible for unnecessary rescues.

### Trip Planning

Taking time to plan your trip can significantly enhance your experience. Be aware of the Rules for Use and take pride in what this region has to offer. Leave no trace of your presence so the experiences for those who follow are as pleasant as yours. Review the information provided for the trail you plan on using; obtain water level information to optimize your enjoyment and safety. While most trips are without mishap, be aware and prepared for potential hazards. For information about local outfitters, motels and restaurants contact the area Chambers of Commerce: [www.northbaldwinchamber.com](http://www.northbaldwinchamber.com), [www.cbchamber.org](http://www.cbchamber.org) and [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com)

### Significant Factors Relating to the Delta Water Levels

Public use of all water routes within the Delta is greatly influenced by water levels of the area's rivers. Trail routes within the northern portion of the Delta are especially influenced by water levels on the Alabama River. The first upstream impoundment on the Alabama River from the Delta is Claiborne Reservoir. Operation of Claiborne Dam by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the single most influential factor affecting the water levels on the upper Delta. Review the information provided with the respective trail descriptions for optimal water levels. This information is helpful in trip planning and trail selection. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 and work through the Menu options to select Claiborne Dam tailwater, or check the Army Corps of Engineers' website at: <http://lwater.usace.army.mil>. Additional information can also be found at <http://lwater.usgs.gov>.

### Leave no trace

Show respect by minimizing your presence and impact in all ways. Take pride in the ability to pass through the area without leaving any sign of your presence. Never discard garbage or food scraps in the swamp, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem. Such items pollute the environment and attract unwanted animals. Avoid disturbing wildlife (and other visitors) by keeping quiet and not approaching them too closely. Avoid disturbing plants and other natural features by leaving them in place and building fires only at designated sites. Deposit all human waste in a toilet. Campers on overnight canoe trips are required to use portable toilets between facilities. For information about how to enjoy the outdoors while "leaving no trace" visit: [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org).





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Not For Resale

## 7 Two Rivers Point (2 Days/1 Night)

**Distance:** 14.1 miles  
**Start:** Rice Creek Landing  
**End:** Rice Creek Landing  
**Campsites:** Two Rivers Point  
**Type of trail:** old river channel, creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. Levels from 15-18 are the absolute best for the Globe and Bear Creek systems. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

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The Overnight Route # 1 begins at Rice Creek Landing, located on the Forever Wild Land Trust's Delta Tract, 2.9 miles north of the Highway 225/59 split in Stockton, AL, on Baldwin County Rd. 21. The map shows the trail proceeding out of Rice Creek, up Briar Lake and Tensaw Lake to Bayou Tallapoosa, through Bayou Tallapoosa to Tensaw River, down the Tensaw River to Two Rivers Point land based campsite. On day two the trail proceeds down the Tensaw River to Bottle Creek, down Bottle Creek to Bayou Jessamine, and then through this bayou to Tensaw River and back to Rice Creek Landing.

## 8 Spoonbill Sandbar (2 Days/1 Night)

**Distance:** 16 miles  
**Start:** French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk  
**End:** Hubbard Landing  
**Campsites:** Spoonbill Sandbar  
**Type of trail:** creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. Levels from 15 to 18 are the absolute best for the Globe and Bear Creek systems. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

Overnight Route # 2 begins at the French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk and ends at Hubbard Landing with a stop at Spoonbill Sandbar land based campsite. French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk is located on the Forever Wild Land Trust's Clearwater Tract. To locate French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk, traveling north of Stockton, AL, on Highway 225/59, follow signs to the Upper Delta Wildlife Management Area and then follow signs to French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk. The map shows French's Lake is a small slough-like area on Major's Creek, prior to the creek splitting into several channels. The multiple channels can be confusing, so it is important for users to closely follow the marked route. Once the paddler reaches the old Alabama River channel, the route continues downstream (paddler's left) to the Spoonbill Sandbar campsite. After spending the night, the trail proceeds down the Alabama River to Little Bear Creek, Bear Creek, Stiggins Lake and the Tensaw River, and then into the upper portion of Tensaw Lake before reaching the end at Hubbard Landing.

## 9 Spoonbill Sandbar/Two Rivers Point (3 Days/2 Nights)

**Distance:** 30 miles  
**Start:** French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk  
**End:** Rice Creek Landing  
**Campsites:** Spoonbill Sandbar, Two Rivers Point  
**Type of trail:** river, creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** old river channel, bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** Good  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. Levels from 15 to 18 are the absolute best for the Globe and Bear Creek systems. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

Overnight Route # 3 is a combination of routes #1 and #2, which begins at French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk, French's Lake or Boatyard Landings. Both of the latter locations are privately owned, but allow for public use in the form of fee-associated boat launching and overnight vehicle parking. The map shows the trail begins in Major's Creek working its way to the old Alabama River channel. Day one ends at the Spoonbill Sandbar campsite. Day two proceeds down the Alabama River to Little Bear Creek, Bear Creek, Stiggins Lake and the Tensaw River. Day two ends at the Two Rivers Point campsite. On day three the paddlers proceed down the Tensaw River and then into Bottle Creek, connecting to Bayou Jessamine, and then out to Rice Creek Landing after crossing the Tensaw River and Briar Lake.

## 10 Jug Lake (2 Days/1 Night)

**Distance:** 13 +/- miles  
**Start:** Rice Creek Landing  
**End:** Rice Creek Landing  
**Campsites:** Jug Lake  
**Type of trail:** river, creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** old river channel, bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** Good  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

The map shows the Jug Lake trail paddling thru Rice Creek and up Briar Lake down Tensaw Lake on the east side of Larry Island. The trail proceeds to the west side of Larry Island into Tensaw Lake/Tensaw River, and down into Bayou Jessamine ending at the platform campsite located in Jug Lake. Day two returns to the Tensaw River via Bayou Jessamine and back up Briar Lake to Rice Creek.

## 11 Canal Island (2 Days/1 Night)

**Distance:** 11 +/- miles  
**Start:** French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk  
**End:** Hubbard Landing  
**Campsites:** Canal Island Floating Platform  
**Type of trail:** creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. Levels from 15 to 18 are the absolute best for the Globe and Bear Creek systems. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

The Canal Island overnight trail begins at the French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk, located on the Forever Wild Land Trust's Clearwater Tract. Get to French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk, by traveling north of Stockton, AL, on Highway 225/59, follow signs to the Upper Delta Wildlife Management Area and then follow signs to French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk. The map shows French's Lake is a small slough-like area on Major's Creek, prior to the creek splitting into several channels. The multiple channels can be confusing, so it is important for users to closely follow the marked route. The first day begins with a paddle down Globe Creek, which follows a generally southerly direction into Big Beaver Creek, then in a generally westerly direction upstream in Big Beaver Creek and ending at the floating campsite in the east side of Canal Island. Day two ends at Hubbard Landing after paddling back down Big Beaver Creek and into Tensaw Lake.

## 12 Dead Lake (2 Days/1 Night)

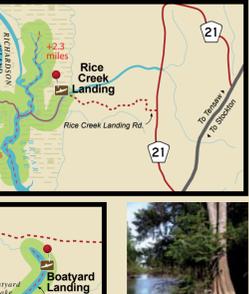
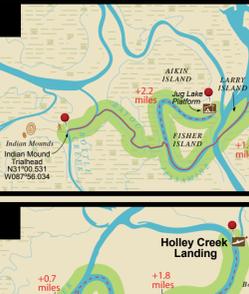
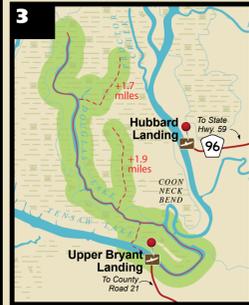
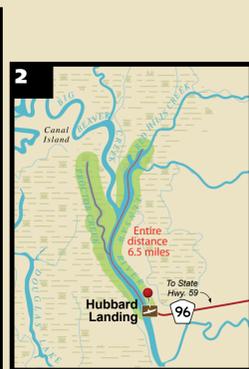
**Distance:** 7 +/- miles  
**Start:** Upper Bryant Landing (private; public use fee associated)  
**End:** Upper Bryant Landing (private; public use fee associated)  
**Campsites:** Dead Lake Island  
**Type of trail:** lake and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 6 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

The Dead Lake Island campsite has two floating platforms to accommodate larger groups. If your group is larger than eight, the reservation of both platform campsites is required. The map shows the Dead Lake Island trail leaving Upper Bryant Landing paddling west on Tensaw Lake. Day one ends at the floating platform located in the slough west of Dead Lake Island. The return route is the same. The paddlers have the option of exploring the side creeks and sloughs as well as Tallapoosa Bayou.

## 13 Canal Island/Dead Lake (3 Days/2 Nights)

**Distance:** 11 +/- miles  
**Start:** French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk  
**End:** Upper Bryant Landing (private; public use fee associated)  
**Campsites:** Spoonbill Sandbar, Two Rivers Point  
**Type of trail:** river, creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** old river channel, bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** good  
**Recommended water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 10 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. Levels from 15 to 18 are the absolute best for the Globe and Bear Creek systems. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601 or visit <http://al.water.usgs.gov> or <http://water.sam.usace.army.mil/>

This multiple night trail would require the reservation of Canal Island and Dead Lake Island floating platform campsites. The map shows this route leaving French's Lake Coastal Access Kiosk. The trail begins in Major's Creek, working its way down Globe Creek, upstream into Big Beaver Creek and Little Lake. Day one ends on the floating campsite located on the east side of Canal Island. On day two the paddlers explore Stiggins Lake, the Tensaw River and Bayou Tallapoosa. Day two ends on the floating campsite in the slough located on the west side of Dead Lake Island. On day three the paddlers travel up Tensaw Lake to Upper Bryant Landing.



## 5 Fisher Island Trail (Day Use)

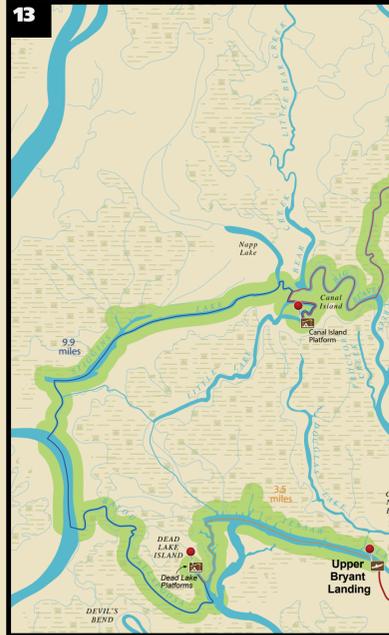
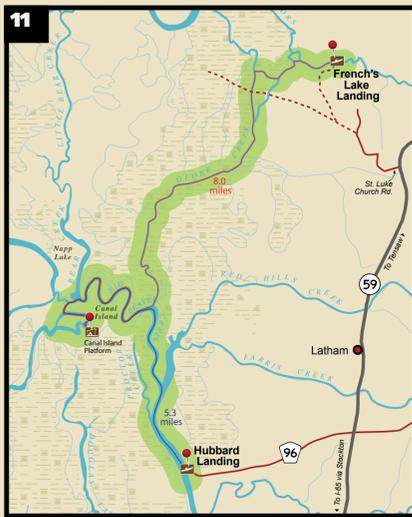
**Distance:** 8.9 miles (additional miles possible via adjacent sloughs and creeks)  
**Start:** Rice Creek Landing  
**End:** Rice Creek Landing  
**Type of trail:** creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Optimal water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 6 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601

The Fisher Island day trail begins at Rice Creek Landing, located on the Forever Wild Land Trust's Delta Tract, 2.9 miles north of the Highway 225/59 split in Stockton, AL, on Baldwin County Rd. 21. The map shows the trail proceeding out of Rice Creek, around the south end of Richardson Island and past Larry Island, across Tensaw River and into Bayou Jessamine. The trail then splits from Bayou Jessamine, proceeding north into a body of water known locally as "Jug Lake," which bends around Fisher Island. The return leg follows the same route. Paddlers have several options for selecting the length and duration of this day-trip, especially when incorporating side trips.

## 6 Indian Mound Trail (Day Use)

**Distance:** 9.1 miles (additional miles possible via adjacent sloughs and creeks)  
**Start:** Rice Creek Landing  
**End:** Rice Creek Landing  
**Type of trail:** creek, lake, and slough  
**Habitats:** bottomland hardwood swamp, flowing creeks, side channel sloughs and backwaters  
**Reliability:** excellent  
**Optimal water levels:** Claiborne Dam river stages ranging from 6 to 19 feet on tailrace readings provide optimum water levels for this route. River stages above these values should be considered hazardous. For water level information at Claiborne Dam, call 1-888-771-4601

The Indian Mound day trail begins at Rice Creek Landing, located on the Forever Wild Land Trust's Delta Tract, 2.9 miles north of the Highway 225/59 split in Stockton, AL, on Baldwin County Rd. 21. The map shows the trail proceeding out of Rice Creek, around the south end of Richardson Island across Tensaw River, through Bayou Jessamine and into Bottle Creek to a sandbar landing where a foot trail leads to the Indian Mounds. The return leg follows the same route. Paddlers have several options for selecting the length and duration of this day-trip, especially when incorporating side trips.



### TrailKey

	Complete Trail System Waterways		Day 1 Main Trail
	Riverside Campsite		Day 1 Optional Route
	Floating Camping Platform		Day 2 Main Trail
	Put-in/Take-out		Day 2 Optional Route
			Day 3 Main Trail
			Day 3 Optional Route
			Hiking Trail

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### Navigation

The Mobile-Tensaw Delta is a vast system with many creeks, rivers, sloughs and backwater features that can be difficult to follow on a map. We encourage the user to be observant for trail markers and utilize this brochure as well as maps from the Bartram Canoe Trail website ([www.bartramcanoeatrail.com](http://www.bartramcanoeatrail.com)) to aid in trail navigation. Additionally, the user should be prepared when paddling some of the smaller creeks and rivers to encounter fallen trees blocking the trail and requiring some portages.

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