

Reynolds Bend

Length: 16 Miles (US 411 to Ga. Loop 1/Grizzard Park)

Class: I

Time: 7-10 hours

Minimum Level: River can be run year round. Releases from the Allatoona Dam can cause water levels to fluctuate dramatically. Paddlers should use caution when paddling this section during hydro-power releases which cause rapid rises in water levels. Release schedules are issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers every day at midnight and can be retrieved by calling 706-334-7213

River Gauge: The nearest river gauge is located at the US 411 launch site.

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ga/nwis/uv?site_no=02395000

Launch Site: Currently, the best launch site is an undeveloped slope on the southeast corner of the US 411 Bridge. Vehicles with high clearance can access a road that leads to the top of this slope beneath the bridge. A new developed launch is planned for the southwest corner of the US 411 Bridge. It should be completed in 2012.

Directions: The launch site can be accessed from US 411 between Rome and Cartersville. Eastbound travelers from Rome should cross the river and turn right into the gravel road that parallels the highway. Westbound travelers from Cartersville must cross the river and complete a U-turn at Macedonia Road, cross back over the river eastbound and turn right.

Take Out Site: Dixon Landing is a paved Department of Natural Resources boat ramp with large parking area located at the end of George Griffin Jr. Drive in the Rome-Floyd YMCA Sports Complex along Ga. Loop 1 on the outskirts of Rome.

Directions: From the US 411 launch site, go west on US 411 8.7 miles to Ga. Loop 1. Turn right on Ga. Loop 1 and proceed 1.9 miles to Turner Chapel Road. Turn right and then immediately right into the YMCA Sports Complex. Follow George Griffin Jr. Drive until it dead ends at Dixon Landing.

Description: From caves to springs to cliffs and shoals, this 16-mile section is varied, beautiful and remote. Though some residential development encroaches, this remains the longest bridge-less section of the river. The paddle path crosses twelve distinct Native American fish weirs and over the largest shoal on the river below Allatoona Dam.

Outfitters:

Euharlee Creek Outfitters in Euharlee and the Coosa River Basin Initiative in Rome are the nearest canoe/kayak outfitters.

Points of Interest:

Mile 142.3—(34°13'17.93"N 84°58'51.86"W)--Fish Weir & Two Run Creek—Just upstream of the mouth of Two Run Creek is an excellent, intact fish dam, and along the creek adjacent to the river is the site of a sizable Cherokee Indian village that is shown on maps dating from as early as 1755. Many burials and artifacts have been discovered in the area. Upstream on Two Run Creek, Bartow County operates a wastewater treatment facility that discharges treated sewage to the creek.

Mile 143.6—(34°14'1.12"N 84°59'21.69"W)—Woolley's Bridge—All that remains of this pre-Civil War covered bridge are the rock piers. Union troops camped on the Andrew F. Woolley plantation here in May 1864—a key location because the bridge crossed the river where the Rome to Kingston Railroad paralleled it. Before the Union invasion, Woolley had employed the bridge to carry and sell lumber to the Confederate saltpeter operation at Ravenel Cave on the opposite side of the river (see below). Later in the war the bridge was burned and never rebuilt. Notice that you will see no mortar in these piers, yet they remain even after more than 150 years.

Mile 144.1—(34°13'44.94"N 84°59'31.57"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 144.6—(34°13'15.22"N 84°59'39.24"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 145.6—(34°12'39.13"N 85° 0'11.75"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 146.3—(34°12'56.78"N 85° 0'34.72"W)—Spring & Ravenel Cave—On river left on a high bank overlooking the shoals here is Ravenel Cave. This ancient cave was likely used as shelter by Native Americans, but it was most notably employed as a "saltpeter mine" during the Civil War. The Confederate Nitre Bureau mined caves throughout this area to extract nitrates to be used in the production of gunpowder. Proximity to water—an essential ingredient in the extraction process—is the likely reason this cave was mined. Soil was removed from the cave floor and through an arduous process that involved soaking the soil in water, adding wood ash and boiling off the water, potassium nitrate was created. The miners were known as "peter monkeys" and worked for low wages in the

dark, damp caves. The workers at the Ravenel Cave were Confederate draftees who earned 60 cents per day. The Ravenel Cave was mined during 1861 and 62, but the nearby, and larger, Kingston Saltpeter Cave produced Confederate gunpowder until Sherman's invading troops destroyed the operation. According to a 1970 survey, the cave extends 203 feet into the bluff overlooking the river. The cave is located on private property. Directly opposite the cave, on river right, is a clear, cold spring run that is worth sticking your feet in.

Mile 148.3—(34°14'27.39"N 85° 1'1.27"W)—Rome to Kingston Railroad—Paralleling the river on the north bank from Kingston to Rome is the now abandoned Rome to Kingston Railroad. The line was originally chartered in 1839 as the Memphis Branch Railroad and Steamboat Co. of Georgia with a grand plan to connect Rome to Memphis, Tennessee (an idea for which local leaders still advocate—but as an interstate highway). It is considered the first rail line to attempt to connect steamboat traffic (on the Coosa at Rome) with the railroad. After the line was captured by Union troops, in July 1864 it helped avert a Union military disaster during the Allatoona Pass Battle as the line was used to send additional soldiers from Rome into the battle. The railroad also played a part in the famous Great Locomotive Chase during the Civil War. The Rome mail train picked up the Confederate's chase of the stolen "General" locomotive at Kingston. The railroad made its last run in October 1943. Trestles of the old railroad still remain over some Etowah tributaries including this one at Tom's Run Creek as well as near the mouth of Dykes Creek.

Mile 149.2—(34°14'39.46"N 85° 1'44.71"W)—Young's Mill Creek/Ft. Means—Near the mouth of Youngs Mill Creek in the spring of 1838, the U.S. Military constructed Fort Means where nearby Cherokee Indians were gathered before their removal to the west. The fort served as the collection point for 467 Cherokee prisoners, one of whom was shot and killed for trying to escape. Capt. John Means commanded 68 men from here. The accounts of the Cherokee Removal in the area are different, depending upon who is telling the story. One account from the conquerors, goes like so: "After all the warning and with the soldiers in their midst, the inevitable day appointed found the Indians at work in their houses and in their fields. It is remembered as well as if it had been seen yesterday, that two or three dropped their hoes and ran as fast as they could when they saw the soldiers coming into the field. After that they made no effort to get out of the way. The men handled them gently, but picked them up in the road, in the field, anywhere they found them, part of a family at a time, and carried them to the post."

The account from a Cherokee named Oo-loo-cha, the widow of Sweet Water went like so: "The soldiers came and took us from our home. They first surrounded our house and they took the mare while we were at work in the fields and they drove us out of doors and did not permit us to take anything with us, not even a second change of clothes. Only the clothes we had on. And they shut the doors after they turned us out. They would not permit any of us to enter the house to get any clothing, but drove us off to a fort that was built at New Echota (on the Oostanaula River near Calhoun). They kept us in the fort about three days and then marched us to Ross's Landing (Chattanooga). And still on foot, even our little children. They kept us for about three days at Ross's Landing and sent us off on a boat to this country."

Mile 149.2—(34°14'39.46"N 85° 1'44.71"W)—Fish Weir—This weir is located just downstream from the mouth of Young's Mill Creek

Mile 149.6—(34°14'27.80"N 85° 1'56.64"W)—Atlanta Steeplechase—On river left here is the site of the Atlanta Steeplechase at Kingston Downs. An annual rite of Spring since 1966, the Steeplechase has been held at Kingston Downs since 1993. The horse race and high-style party attracts some 25,000 people each year to this little bend of the Etowah and is considered Georgia largest single horse racing event. Proceeds from the event benefit various charities each year.

Mile 149.9—(34°14'5.74"N 85° 2'3.97"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 150.2—(34°13'58.12"N 85° 2'14.79"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 150.9—(34°13'53.71"N 85° 3'0.42"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 152.1—(34°13'27.78"N 85° 3'58.55"W)—Reynold's Bend Rock Island—This rock island marks the beginning of a picturesque two-mile loop in the river known as Reynolds Bend. The island is a great place to soak in the sun and go for a swim. Further downriver, you'll be greeted by high rock bluffs on the south side of the river. The Bend is rich in history. Today, the property is still farmed as it has been for centuries. Had you been here in 1835, the residents included Cherokee Indians that went by Anglo names like Pumpkinpile, Chicken Cook, Gone to Mill, Buffalo Fish and Eagle on the Roost. After Pumpkinpile and his kind were forcibly removed from their homes, the Reynolds moved in, settling the "island" formed by the bend in 1847.

Mile 152.8—(34°12'55.24"N 85° 4'1.42"W)—Spring—Along the base of the cliffs here, a cold clear spring issues forth from a cleft in the rock. During the summer it serves a cold water refuge for striped bass.

Mile 155.5—(34°14'13.48"N 85° 4'59.96"W)—Dykes Creek & Fish Weirs—Visible near the mouth of Dykes Creek are the remains of a trestle of the Kingston to Rome railroad. The half-mile below Dykes Creek includes several indistinct Native American Fish Weirs

Mile 156.8—(34°13'47.01"N 85° 6'20.97"W)—Fish Weir—this is perhaps the most symmetrical fish weir along the length of the river, forming an almost perfect V.

Mile 157.5—(34°13'52.13"N 85° 6'52.80"W)—Fish Weir

Mile 157.6—(34°13'56.22"N 85° 6'58.43"W)—Grizzard Park & Dixon Landing—Named for long-time Rome Assistant City Manager, Jim Dixon, this boat launch was completed in 2007. Dixon was instrumental in establishing this launch. At the time of its completion there was only one other boat launch between Allatoona Dam and Rome.