



Education

Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Water Trail
Credit: Brian Peterson, Star Tribune

Best Management Practice Goal: The water trail users are provided with opportunities to learn about the value of water resources, cultural heritage and boating skills and outdoor ethics.

Key Questions

Education Topics

- Are there education programs about a wide variety of topics, including science, natural history, the environment, safety, history and culture, best practices, and boating skills?

In-Person Education

- Are classes, workshops, or educational seminars provided?
- Is there interpretive programming?
- Are there guided tours or trips?
- Are there programs, tours, or events aimed specifically at new paddlers?
- Have members presented at conferences or group meetings?
- Is there a volunteer program for paddlers to get involved?
- Are there any museums or visitors centers highlighting the water trail?
- Have any festivals or events been held?
- Have there been any design competitions to engage the public?
- Is there safety training available (swiftwater rescue, boater safety, proper PFD use)?
- Does signage (interpretive, safety, directional, etc.) provide training information?

Youth programs

- Are youth programs being provided for varying age groups?
- Do youth programs provide education on a variety of topics?
- Is there a direct formal or informal relationship with a school?
- Do youth programs provide hiring or training opportunities?

Media

- Have any educational films been created about the water trail?
- Have any webinars or presentations been given?
- Are there educational brochures on aspects of the water trail?
- Does the water trail website contain educational information?
- Have there been any radio segments or podcasts about the water trail?
- Do signs or kiosks contain educational information?



Chattahoochee National Water Trail
Credit: NPS/Alanna Smith

Examples

Events and Festivals

- The Bronx River Festival is a community festival celebrating the river and introducing people to canoeing and bicycling.
- Hudson River Days is the annual celebration of the Hudson River estuary and its watershed.
- The South Dakota Kayak Challenge is a 72-mile kayak race on the wildest stretch of the Missouri River between Yankton and Sioux City.
- The Kawnivore 100 Race is a hundred-mile ultramarathon canoe race through the heart of the Kansas Flint Hills.
- The Floatzilla Paddlesports Celebration on the Rock River Water Trail is a large community paddling event. 959 paddlers attended in 2014.

Programs

- The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area hosts events throughout the summer.
- The Rock River Coalition and Environmental Law Institute present monthly webinars.

Youth Programs

- Rocking the Boat empowers young people challenged by severe economic, educational, and social conditions.. Students work together to build wooden boats, learn to row and sail, and restore local urban waterways.
- Kids 4 The Kaw: The Kansas River Water Trail has a program for kids including a lesson plan for teachers.
- River Science Curriculum: A science curriculum based on the Kansas River and developed by the Friends of the Kaw.
- RiverKids Program: The Alabama Scenic River Trail has developed a statewide school to teach any child in the state of Alabama to safely paddle a kayak at no cost to participating families.

Museums and Visitors Centers

- Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge's Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center contains interactive exhibits, a film, wildlife viewing, and a bookstore. 1
- The Port Huron Museum on the Island Loop water trail has exhibits and programs and three satellite facilities.