

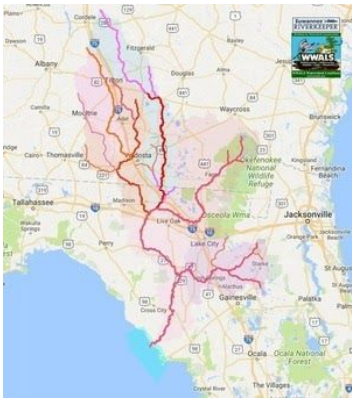
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Race or paddle, fun for the whole family: the Eighth Annual BIG Little River Paddle Race

Adel, Georgia, February 18, 2020 — You could win in any of a dozen categories. But you are not required to race: it’s a nice spring paddle anyway! On Saturday, April 25, 2020, in Reed Bingham State Park, between Adel and Moultrie, Georgia, it’s the eighth annual BIG Little River Paddle Race. There will be lunch, a kayak raffle, and a silent auction afterwards. You can just paddle along this scenic stretch of tea-colored river on the Withlacoochee and Little River Water Trail among cypress, turtles, birds, and yes, alligators. (Don’t pet them and they won’t bother you.) This three-mile race also has fierce competitors, with last year’s winner finishing in barely more than half an hour.



BLRPR mastermind Bret Wagenhorst, an eye doctor in Tifton, GA, and a charter board member of WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS), said, “You can win in any of a dozen categories: one- or two-person canoe or kayak, male or female or mixed, as well as oldest, youngest, and from farthest away.”



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 WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity est. June 2012.

Mission: WWALS advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.



Photo: Bret Wagenhorst, of 2019 First female tandem kayak: [Megan Robinson & Lily Robinson](#), of Tifton, GA.

Dianne Walters, president of Friends of Reed Bingham State Park (FORB), said, “This is a great community event, with volunteers from all around helping paddlers from everywhere.”

Wagenhorst added, “Last year, the first woman across the finish in a solo kayak was Nikki York, of Adel, GA. And for the first time, a canoe finished first to win the \$100 cash prize. It was a

two-person canoe of gentlemen from Gray, GA: Wayne Hale and Terry Donahue.”



Photo: Bret Wagenhorst, of the 2019 race start.

Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman said, “Terry Donahue was also the Oldest winner, and Youngest was JRee Bush, at the minimum park age of 12. This year we hope to have even more paddlers than last year, when we had 55 paddlers (57% female) in 46 canoes and kayaks, from Georgia, Florida, and Mexico.”

Nobody beat the previous year’s winning time, so this year if somebody does, they will get an additional \$200 prize. Winners in other categories each get a BLRPR hat, which you can’t get any other way than winning, volunteering, or being on the WWALS board.



Photo: John S. Quarterman of WWALS Board and volunteers with BLRPR hats

Registration is on-line at wwals.net (\$20 until April 1; \$30 thereafter), or at the site, 8 AM to 9 AM, Saturday, April 25, 2020, at Red Roberts Landing, on Rountree Bridge Road, off of I-75 Exit 41 (Sparks). You can rent boats at Reed Bingham State Park (reservations must be arranged in advance), and there is a park entrance fee of \$5.00.

The mass start will be at 9:30 AM. It can take two hours for everybody to paddle down to Reed Bingham State Park Boat Ramp (West), after which we will have lunch at about noon, with silent auction, followed by the awards. There is a cash prize and a trophy for First Place, and hats for all the other winners. Plus you can get stickers, buttons, and pictures taken by Gretchen Quarterman on many of our rivers and lakes and swamps in the 10,000 square mile Suwannee River Basin.



Photo: John S. Quarterman, of awards last year

BLRPR is a fundraiser for the nonprofits WWALS and FORB.

Friends of Reed Bingham State Park (FORB) is the official nonprofit support organization for Reed Bingham State Park, a park known for its innovative programs and as a leader in resource management, particularly with rare and endangered plants and animals such as gopher tortoises, bald eagles, indigo snakes, and other native species. We are a chapter of Friends of Georgia State Parks. Join us as we work to provide a wonderful place for individuals and families to enjoy the natural beauty of South Georgia.

WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS) advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities. Founded in June 2012, WWALS has board members from multiple counties in south

Georgia and north Florida, and members from all over the Suwannee River Basin and from farther away. Since December 2016, John S. Quarterman is the Suwannee Riverkeeper®, which is a staff position and a project of WWALS as the member of Waterkeeper® Alliance for the Suwannee River Basin.

For more WWALS outings and events as they are posted, see the [WWALS calendar](#) or the [WWALS outings and events](#) web page. WWALS members also get an upcoming list in the Tannin Times newsletter.

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