

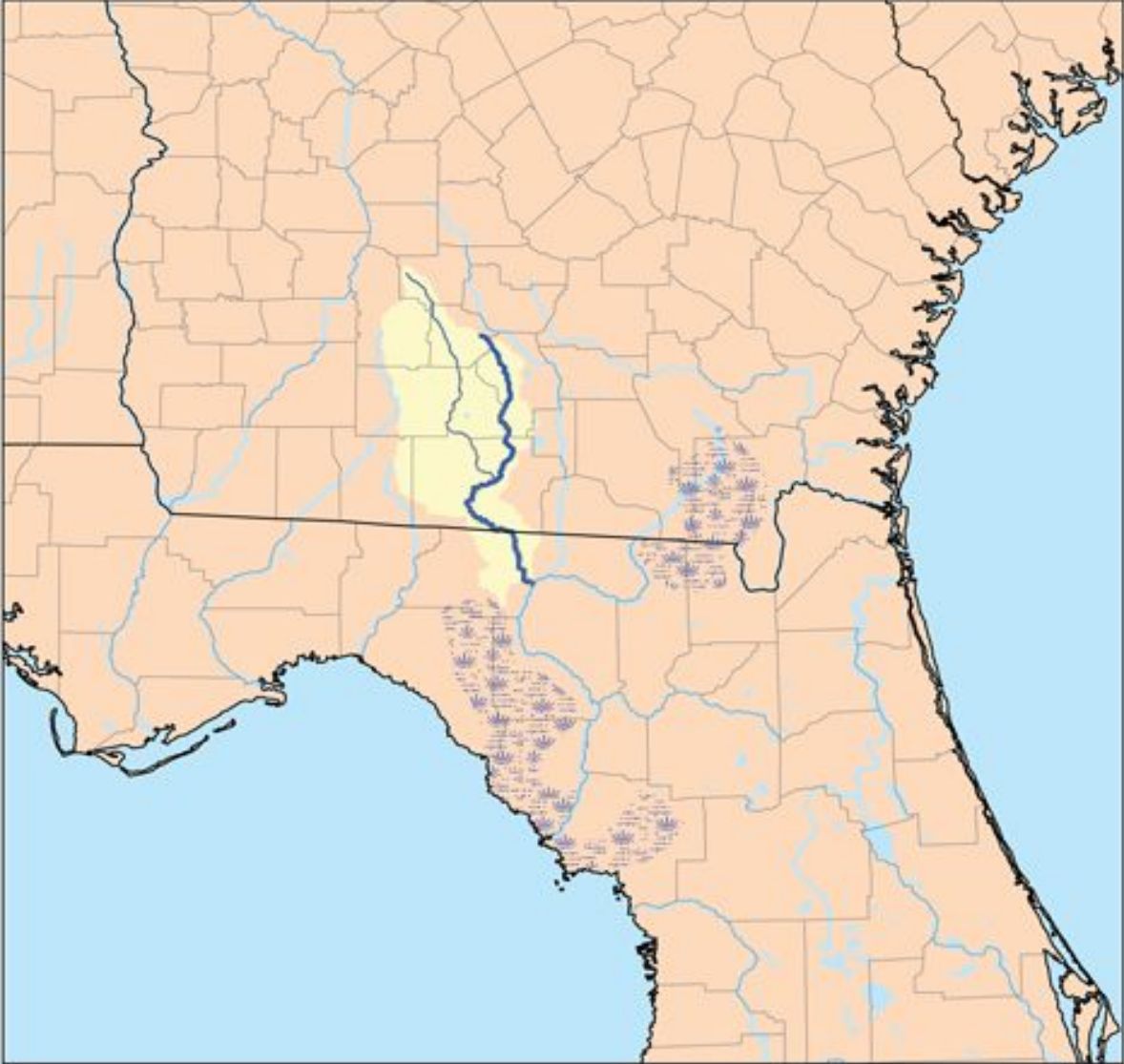
Paddles through Time

Historical and Archaeological Sites of the Withlacoochee River of South Georgia and North Florida

“How do raindrops know they are a river”?

T. S. Eliot









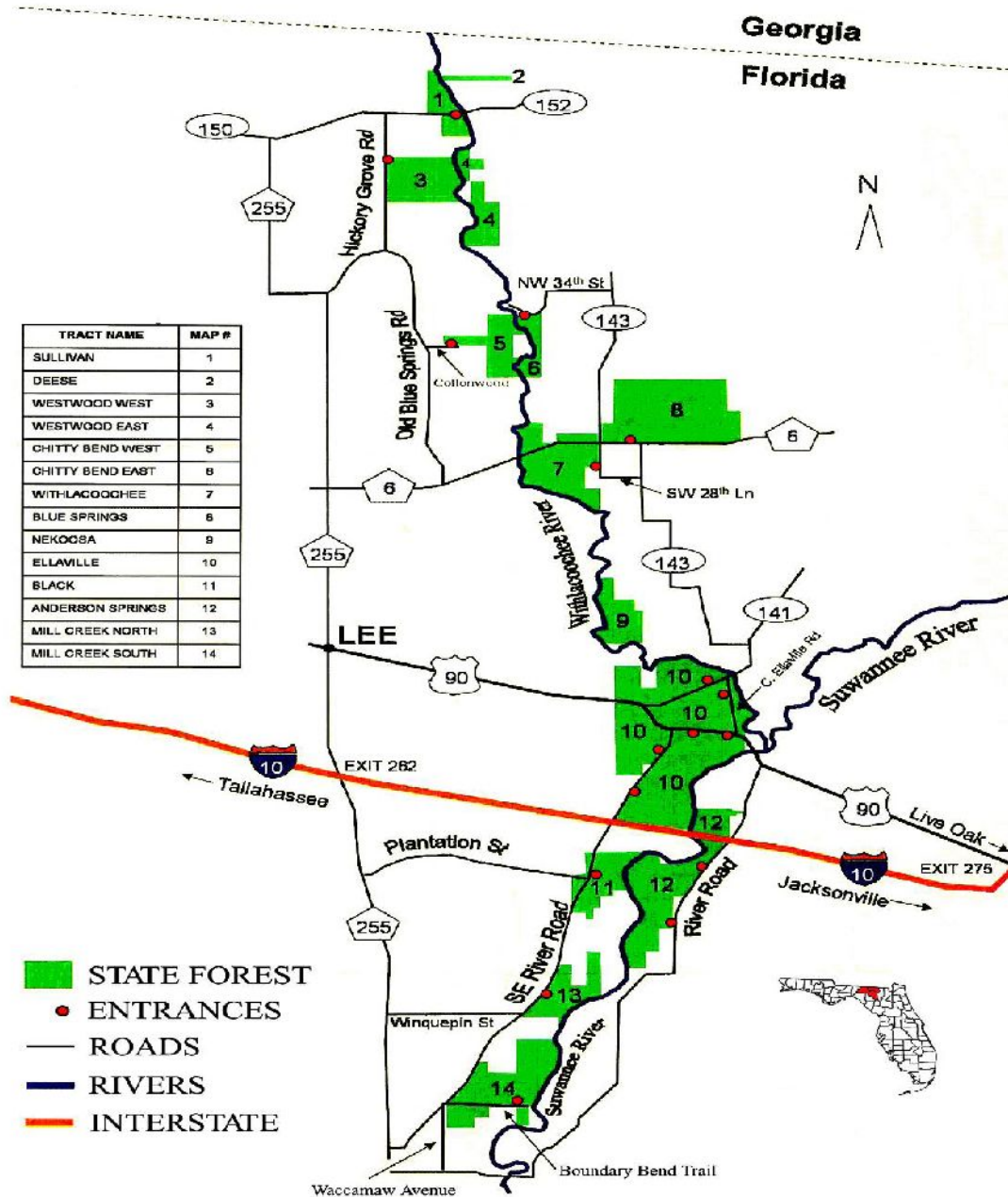
Withlacoochee Watershed



Georgia
Florida

TRACT NAME	MAP #
SULLIVAN	1
DEESE	2
WESTWOOD WEST	3
WESTWOOD EAST	4
CHITTY BEND WEST	5
CHITTY BEND EAST	6
WITHLACOGGHEE	7
BLUE SPRINGS	8
NEKOCSA	9
ELLAVILLE	10
BLACK	11
ANDERSON SPRINGS	12
MILL CREEK NORTH	13
MILL CREEK SOUTH	14

- STATE FOREST
- ENTRANCES
- ROADS
- RIVERS
- INTERSTATE



Paleo-Indian Era: 12,000 – 14,000 years ago

- Climate was much cooler and dryer than now – **the river may not have existed as a permanent feature**
- Lived in small mobile groups – followed the game
- Hunted various animals, including the mega-fauna, with spears tipped with flint/chert points
- May have collected plant food as deciduous forest replaced Ice Age coniferous forest
- Occupied small temporary camps in response to seasonal availability of food
- Made their distinctive tools in workshops located near outcrops of chert – **numerous quarry sites on the Withlacoochee**
- **Present day springs may have been watering holes at that time**





Archaic Period: 8000 to 2000 years ago

- Less arid conditions – climate approaches present-day
- Established camps around water sources
- Larger populations; occupy sites for longer periods
- The “container revolution” – they could fashion vessels out of fired clay
- Mastered the ability to weave fine cloth, and make baskets
- **By middle to late Archaic, the river probably had a consistent flow**
- **Weirs – fish traps – established on the river – one below Madison Blue Springs**
- **Numerous archaic sites on the Withlacoochee in Florida**





The Woodland Period: (In Southeast @ 1000 B.C.- A.D. 1000)

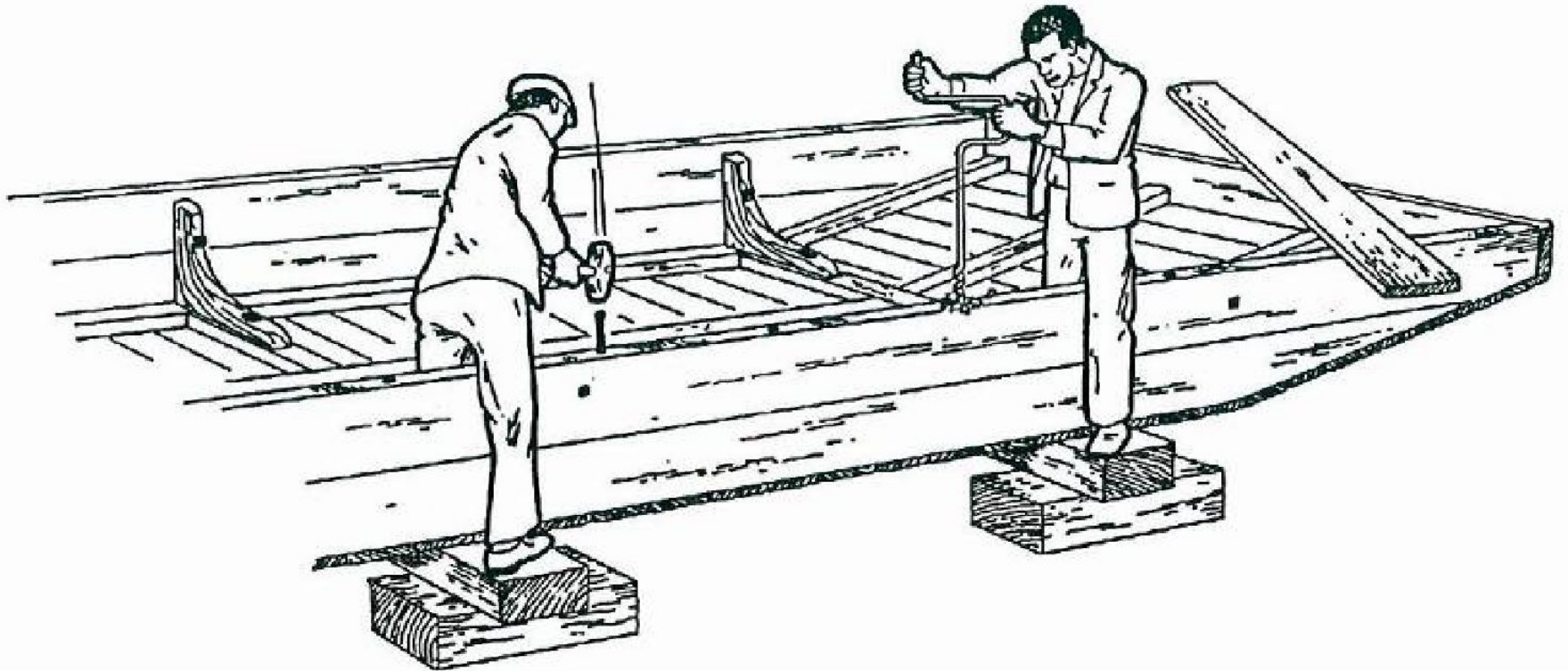
- Emergence of a distinct pottery-making tradition with definite vessel forms and decoration
- Distinct regional cultures – Deptford, Santa Rosa/Swift Creek, Weeden Island
- Archaic-style spears and atlatls until the Late Woodland period (circa A.D. 800) when these were replaced by bow and arrow technology
- Increasing social stratification – political elites
- Middle Woodland sites with burial mound graves of elite individuals buried with exotic mortuary gifts
- Extensive trade networks covering most of the eastern United States
- **Mounds on the Withlacoochee – especially in Hamilton Co.** – most have been plowed down – Source: old photographs, oral histories, one Florida Master Site File entry, one intriguing newspaper article



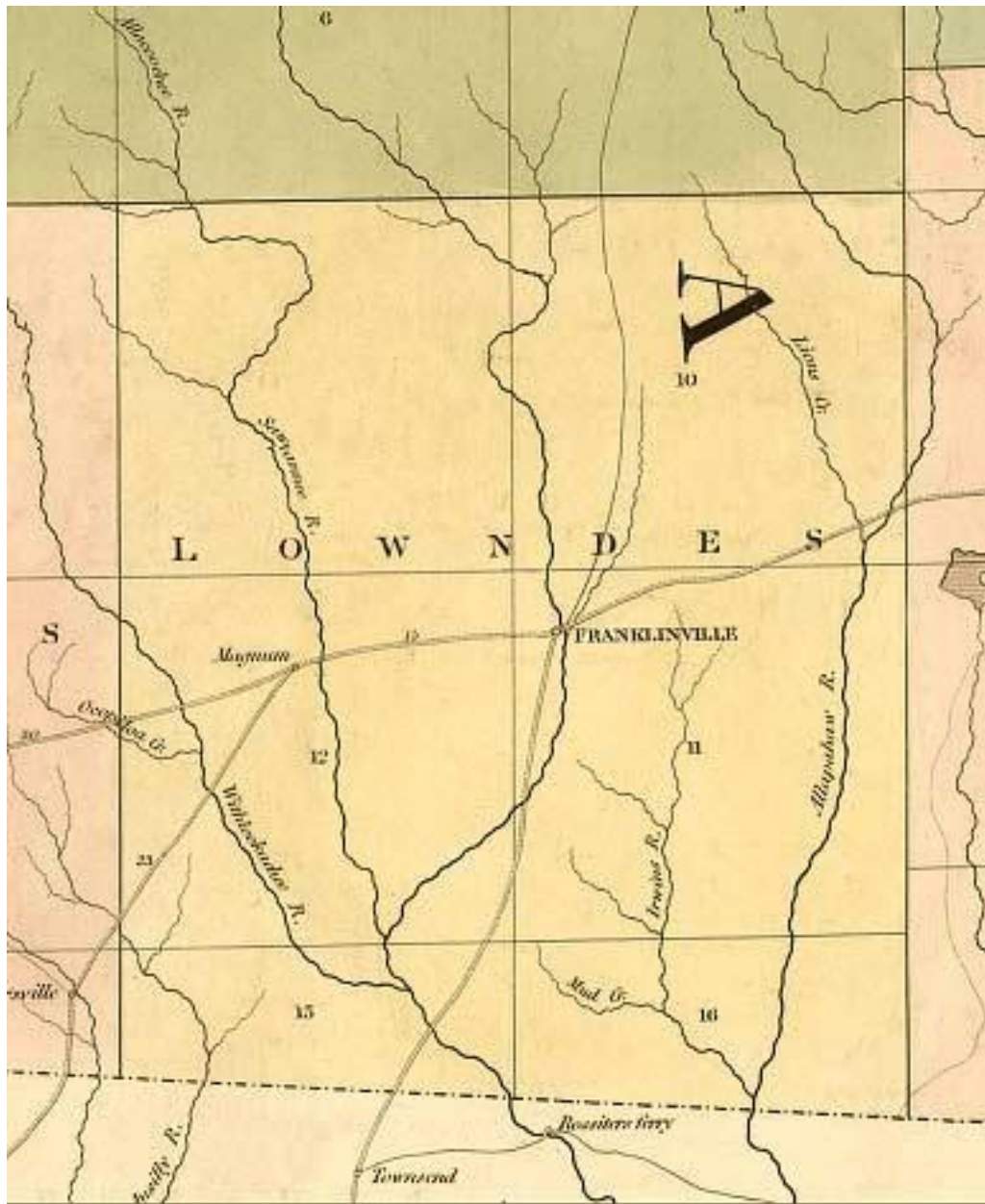
Later peoples and how the river was used -

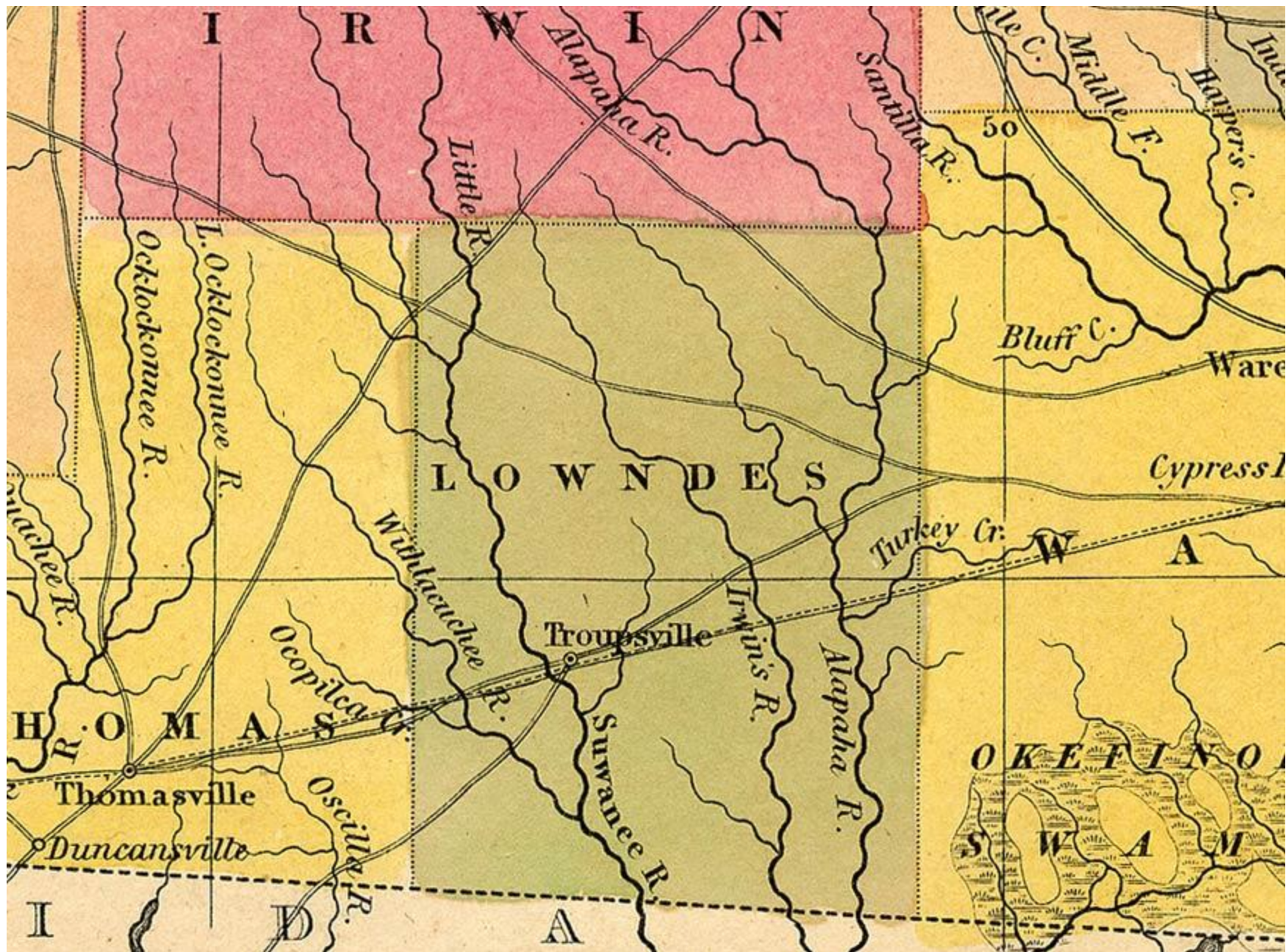
Mission period – Timucuan missions near the river or within the watershed

- **Santa Cruz de Cachipile**, a Spanish Franciscan mission situated near twin sinkhole lakes. The mission existed from 1625 to 1657.
- Mission **San Francisco de Chuaquin** existed from 1625 to 1657, and like other missions upriver, fell victim to the resettlements following the Timucuan Revolt. Located near the confluence of the Withlacoochee and Suwannee.



Thwartship planking of 8HA410, the Little Jack Shipwreck





1834 Hamilton Co.

From hand-colored map of Florida



Hamilton Co. 1856

From the annual report of the Surveyor General

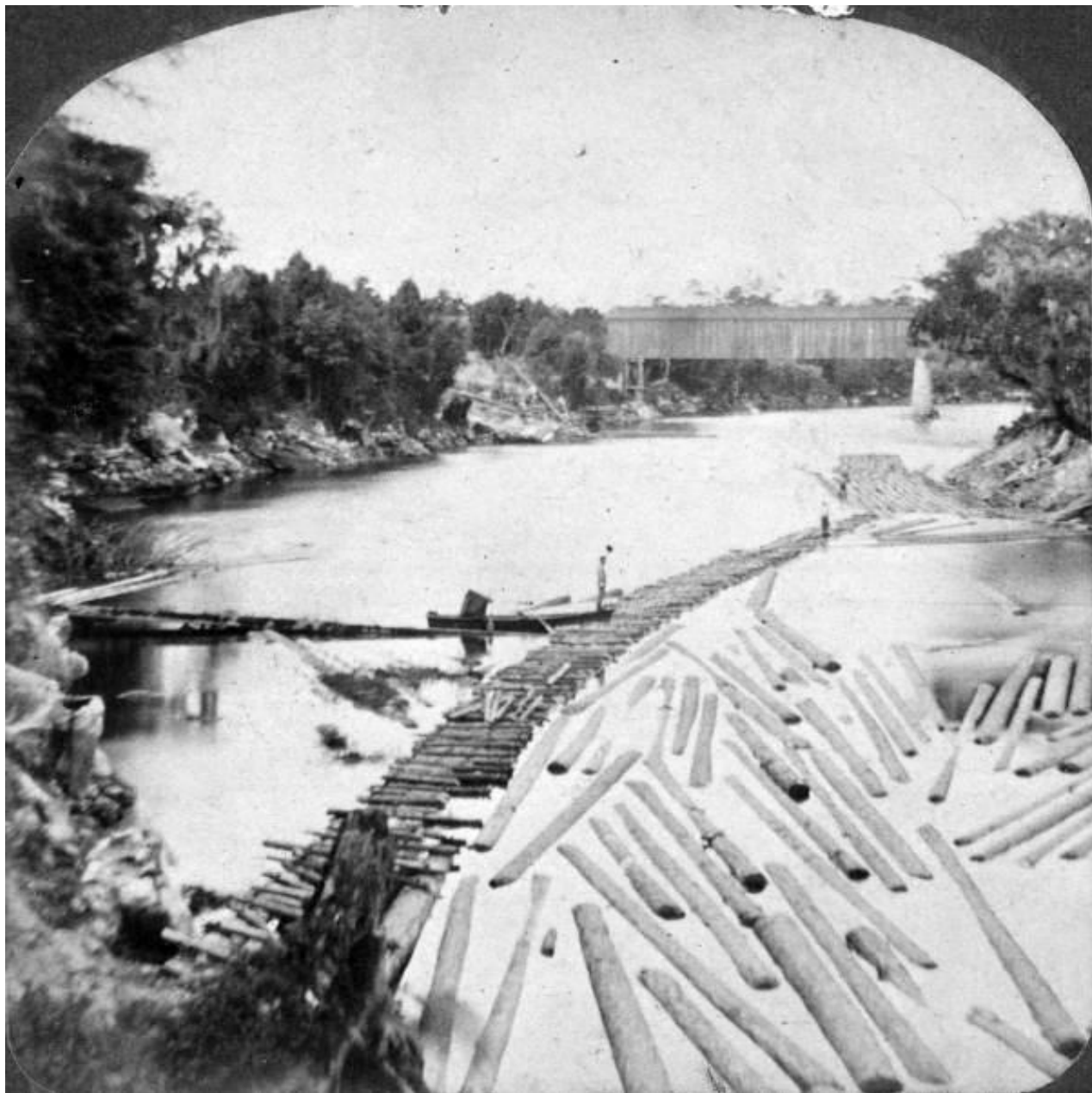


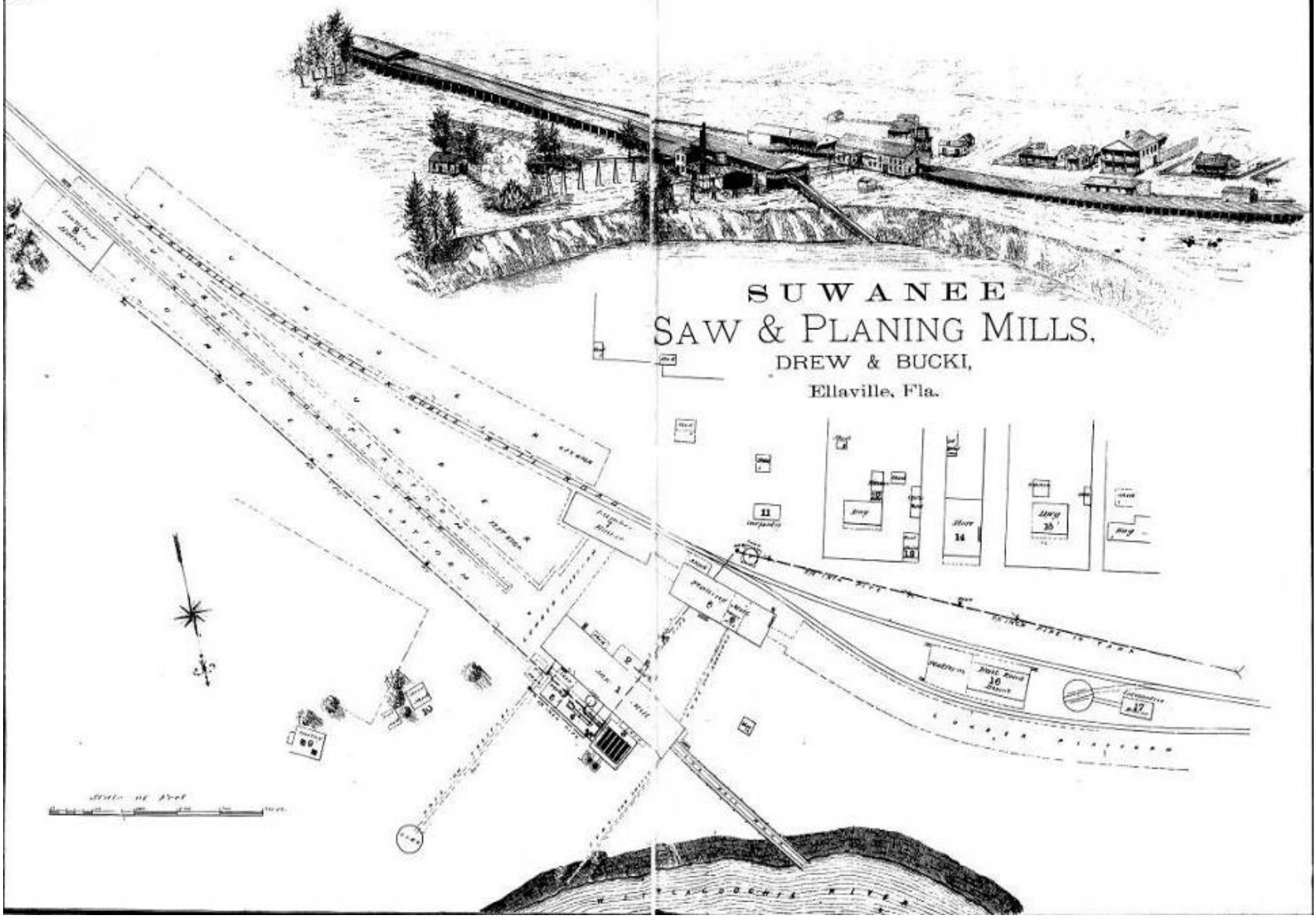


Ghost Towns -

- **Franklinville** – Original county seat – on river at site of a good spring and bridge crossing.
- **Troupville** - In Lowndes County, at the junction of the Withlacoochee River and the Little River. Troupville replaced the short-lived *Lowndesville*. When the railroad came, Troupville residents picked up their houses and moved to the railroad, founding Valdosta.
- **Olympia** – Railroad and sawmill town built on the river along the Georgia & Florida RR (*G&F* – *Nickname* - Ole God Forsaken). On Georgia side of river. Trestle remains on the river.
- **Bellville** - A community by the name of Benton was originally established here in the early 1840's, but the name was changed to Bellville in 1847 to honor James S. Bell, an early settler. Bellville is always prominently displayed on early maps, although one map labels it Rossetters. Rossetters Ferry Landing still visible.
- **Forrest or Echo** – Opposite Madison Blue Springs. A boom town that grew up around the turpentine industry and existed from late 19th century to early 20th. Appears on old maps and in oral history.
- **Ellaville** – At confluence of the Withlacoochee and Suwannee. Largest sawmill in Florida at the time. Home of Gov. George F. Drew.











For Mrs. Pearl E. Noeple,
from
Mr. + Mrs. Wm. M. Corbes,
Sidney, Mont.









Some Current Threats to the River

- Agricultural run-off – mainly fertilizers, herbicides (prometon) and pesticides; high mercury levels
- Over-pumping the aquifer – historic springs have disappeared
- Introduced exotic plants (Ex. Water Hyacinth in 2007)
- Point sources – municipal sewage effluent
- Artifact hunters - looters

Archaeological Opportunities on the Withlacoochee

- 1. Numerous Paleo and Archaic Sites – abundant spring sites - first and second magnitude - frequent quarry sites and lithic scatter, deep “lakes” may have preserved evidence of early humans, flora and fauna – not just “stones and bones”**
- 2. Fish Weirs and the possibility of documenting earlier harvesting cycles**
- 3. One (and possibly other) Spanish mission sites – could illuminate life in the “fringe” missions away from the Camino Real**
- 4. Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century sites – all relatively unstudied**
- 5. Naval Stores and Timber Industries – numerous sites**
- 6. Drew/Bucki Mill Site – several puzzling features**

“ Madison County remains almost terra incognita.....” Jerald Milanich, 1994

Just remember -

“There is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.”

The Wind in the Willows - Kenneth Grahame



About WWALS

WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS) is an [IRS 501\(c\)\(3\)](#) educational nonprofit corporation registered in Georgia and Florida.

WWALS Vision: A healthy watershed with clean, swimmable, fishable, drinkable water.

WWALS Mission: WWALS [advocates](#) for [conservation](#) and [stewardship](#) of the surface waters and groundwater of the Suwannee River Basin and Estuary, in south Georgia and north Florida, among them the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds, through [education](#), [awareness](#), [environmental monitoring](#), and citizen [activities](#).

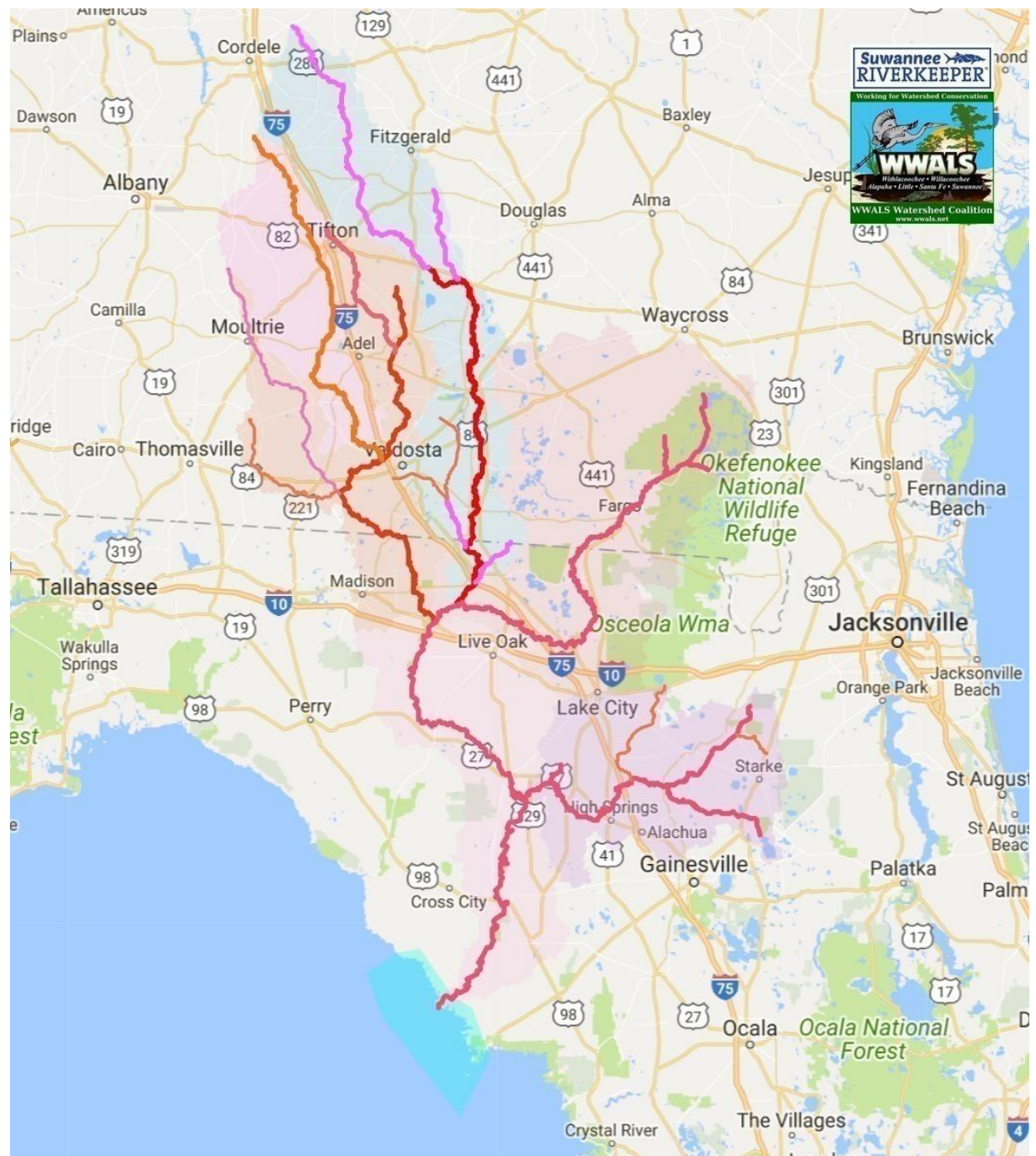
Since 2016, [Suwannee Riverkeeper®](#) is a project and a staff position with WWALS as the Waterkeeper® Alliance Member for the Suwannee River Basin and Estuary.

Suwannee River Basin

10,000 square miles
maybe 500,000 people

Bigger than six states
Fewer people than any

Fifteen rivers, including
Withlacoochee, Little,
Willacoochee,
Alapahoochee,
Alapaha, Little Alapaha,
Dead, Black,
Suwannee, Little, Santa
Fe, New, Sampson,
Ichetucknee, Gopher,
and sometimes
Okapilco Rivers.

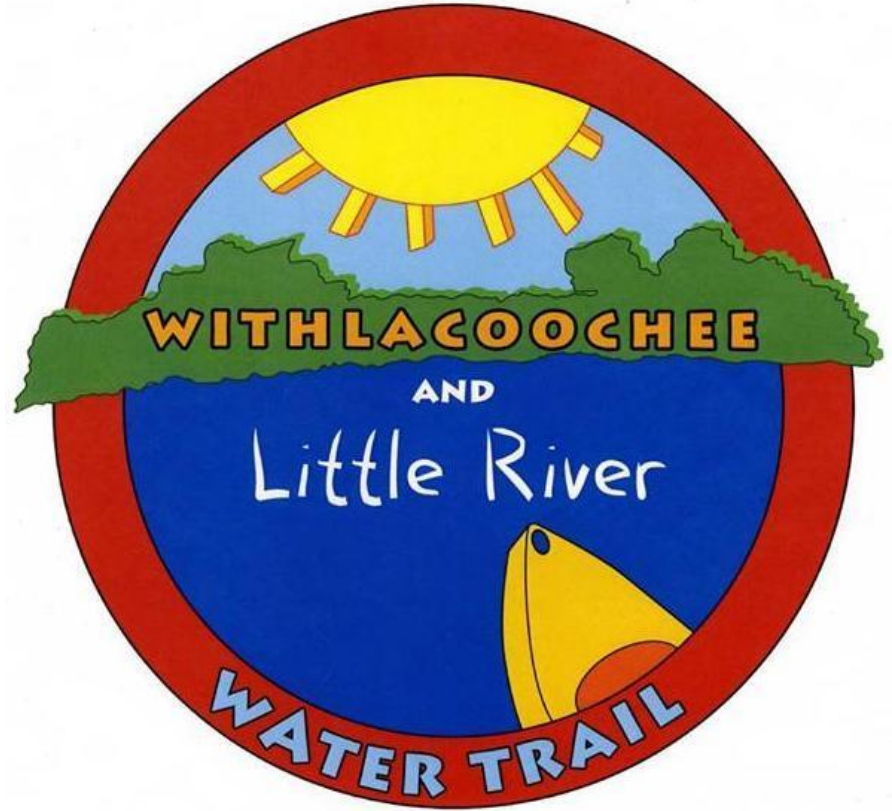


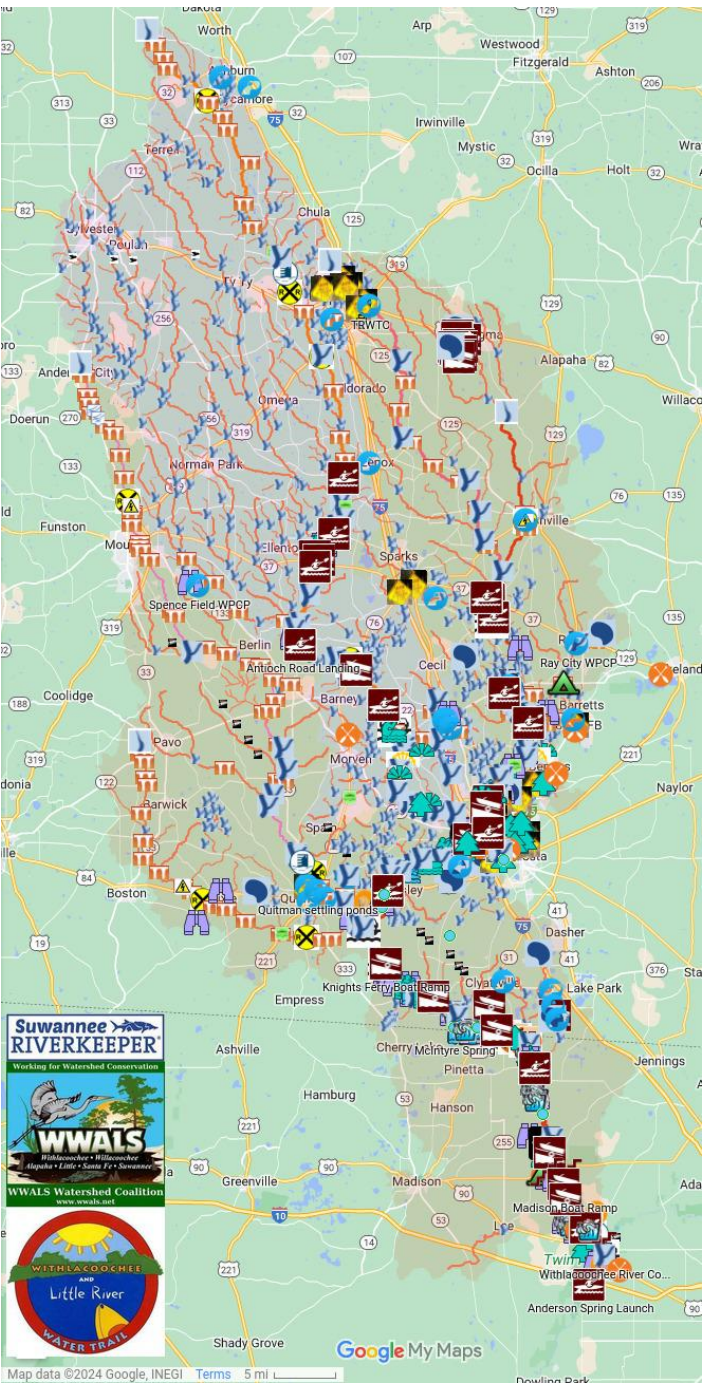
Withlacoochee and Little River Water Trail (WLRWT)

<https://wwals.net/maps/withlacoochee-river-water-trail/>

Two dozen landings on two tea-colored blackwater rivers in two states,

- plus Reed Bingham State Park on the Little River and Langdale Park on the Withlacoochee River,
- two of only six second magnitude springs in Georgia ([McIntyre Spring](#) and [Arnold Springs](#)),
- and in Florida first-magnitude Madison Blue Spring State Park and many other springs all the way to the Suwannee River.
- With beaches, shoals, and bridges.
- Online maps and web pages, and z-fold printed brochure

























5th Mayor and Chairman's Paddle
Now free! Thanks,

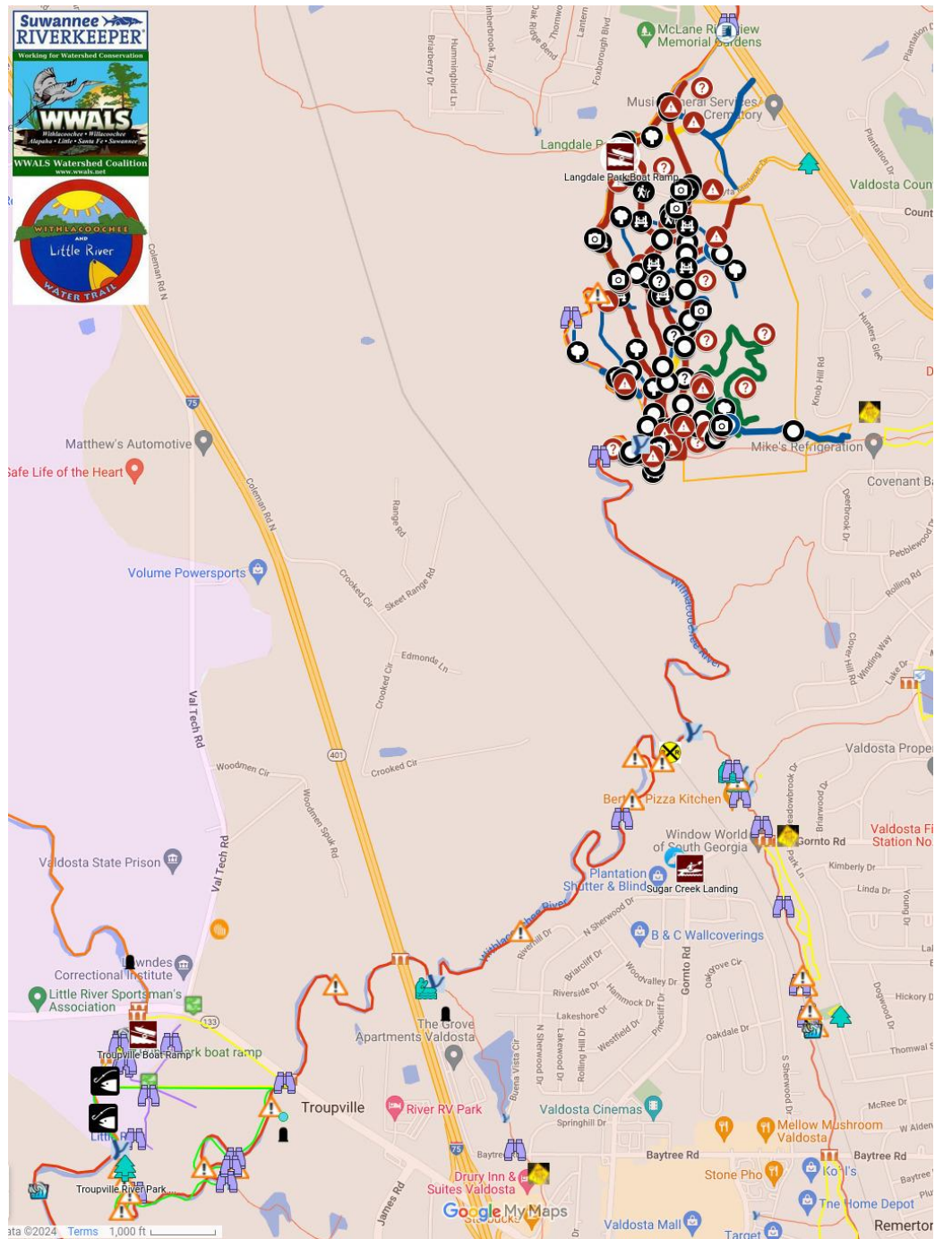
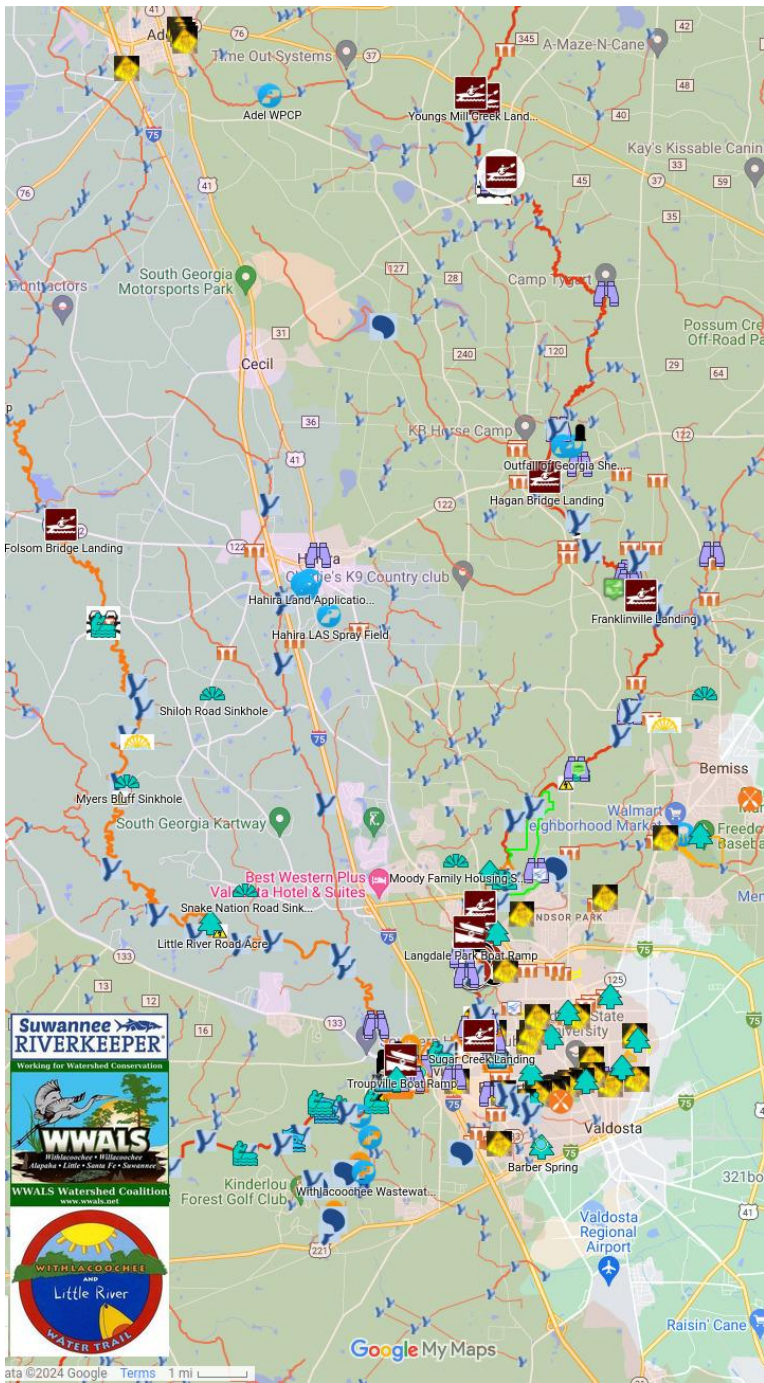



























Withalacochee River 2024-03-02
Georgia Power

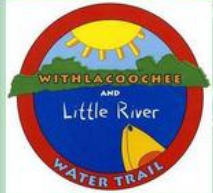
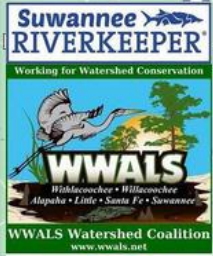
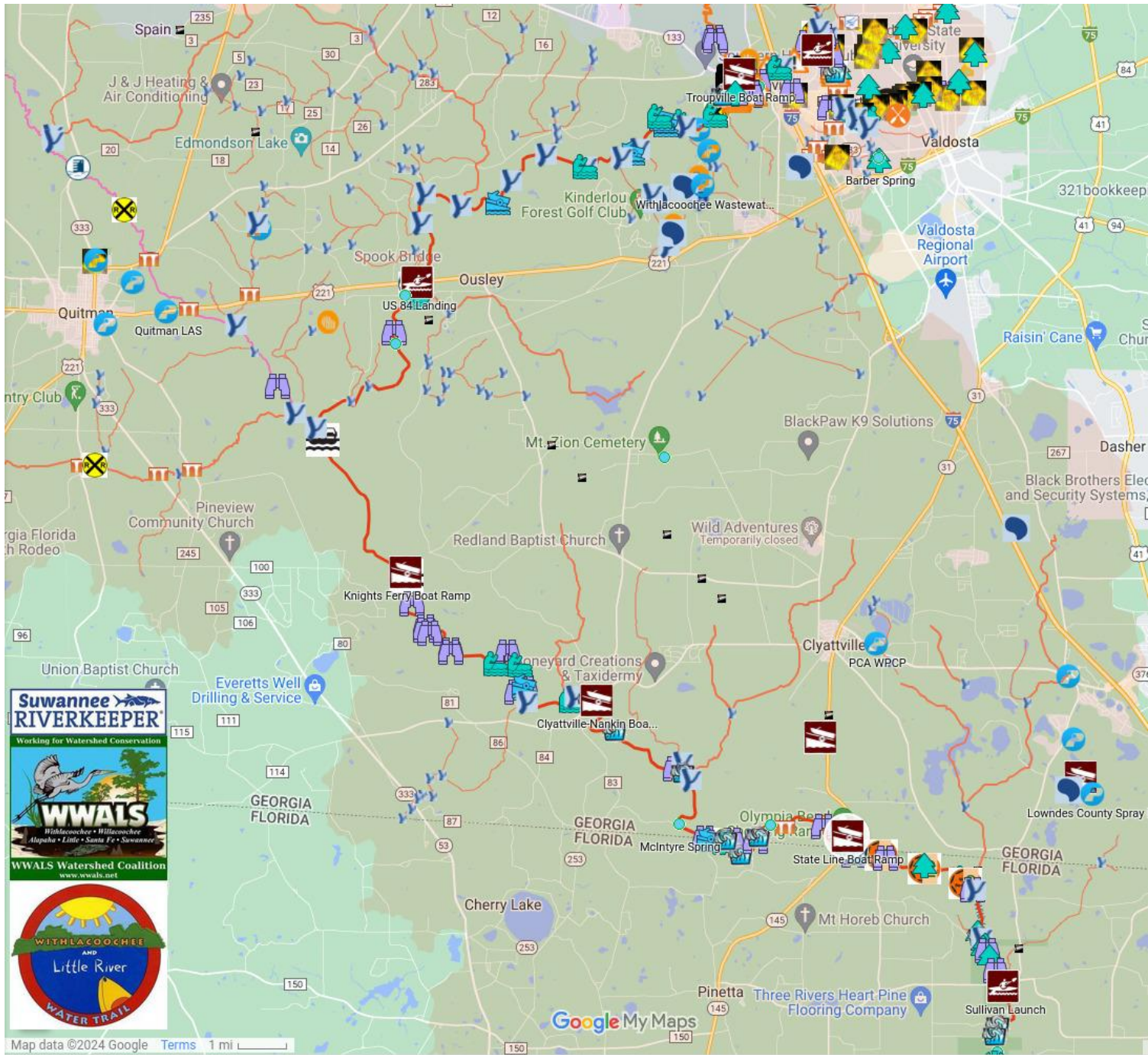


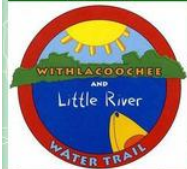
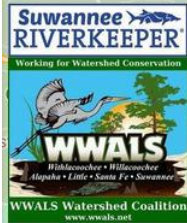
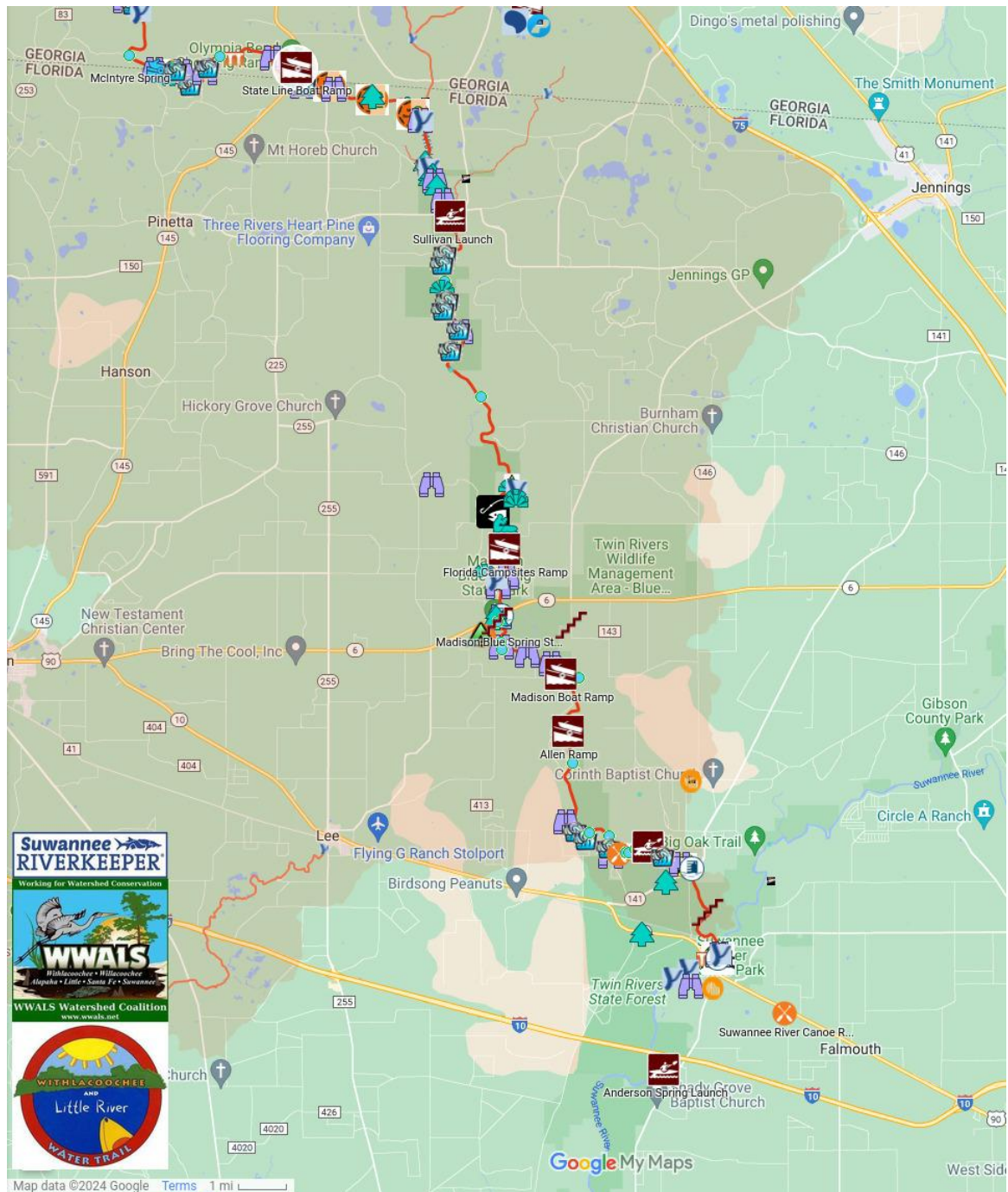
WLRWT Access

WLRWT Access Point	Ramp	Launch	Amenities	Miles to Next	Paddle Time	Latitude, Longitude	Low	High	Gauget
<u>Withlacoochee River</u>									
97.63 Youngs Mill Creek Landing @ GA 37, Cook Co., GA				12.95	6.5	31.120974, -83.323322	122.6 feet (2.3')	131 feet (10.7')	Skipper Bridge
84.68 Hagan Bridge Landing @ GA 122, Lowndes Co., GA				4.9	2.5	31.013966, -83.299306	122.6 feet (2.3')	131 feet (10.7')	Skipper Bridge
79.78 Franklinville Landing @ Franklinville Road, Lowndes Co., GA			 	10.97	5.5	30.981249, -83.268027	122.6 feet (2.3')	131 feet (10.7')	Skipper Bridge
68.81 Langdale Park Boat Ramp Lowndes Co., GA			  	3.14	1.6	30.88747, -83.32395	116 feet (5.7')	123 feet (12.7')	Valdosta
65.67 Sugar Creek Landing @ Gornto Road, Lowndes Co., GA				13.91	7.0	30.85857, -83.3206	116 feet (5.7')	123 feet (12.7')	Valdosta
51.76 US 84 Landing Lowndes Co., GA				8.51	4.3	30.793608, -83.451435	85.5 feet (2.0')	94 feet (10.5')	Quitman



WLRWT	Access Point	Ramp	Launch	Amenities	Miles to Next	Paddle Time	Latitude, Longitude	Low	High	Gauget
43.25	Knights Ferry Boat Ramp Lowndes Co., GA			 	6.58	3.3	30.71205, -83.45554	85.5 feet (2.0')	94 feet (10.5')	Quitman
36.67	Clyattville-Nankin Boat Ramp Lowndes Co., GA			 	8.88	4.4	30.675895, -83.393153	85.25 feet (1.8')	99 feet (15.5')	Quitman
27.79	State Line Boat Ramp @ GA 31, Lowndes Co., GA			  	5.34	2.7	30.637844, -83.311149	85.25 feet (1.8')	99 feet (15.5')	Quitman
22.45	Sullivan Launch @ CR 150, Madison Co., FL			 	8.81	4.4	30.595667, -83.26	52.5 feet (6.0')	61.5 feet (15.0')	Pinetta
13.64	Florida Campsites Ramp @ NW 47th St, Hamilton Co., FL			 	1.67	0.8	30.501128, -83.242411	52.5 feet (6.0')	61.5 feet (15.0')	Pinetta
11.97	Madison Blue Spring State Park Launch @ FL-6, Madison Co., FL			 	1.99	1.0	30.480792, -83.244315	40.1 feet (0.1')	50 feet (10.0')	Madison
9.98	Madison Boat Ramp @ NE River Park Rd, Madison Co., FL			 	1.73	0.9	30.465512, -83.223793	40.1 feet (0.1')	50 feet (10.0')	Madison
8.25	Allen Ramp @ SW 64th Way, Hamilton Co., FL			 	11.37	5.7	30.449167, -83.221328	40.1 feet (0.1')	50 feet (10.0')	Madison





Contact

We're all ears for suggestions & participation.

wwalswatershed at gmail.com

850-290-2350 or 229-242-0102

WWALS, P.O. Box 88, Hahira, GA 31632

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<http://www.meetup.com/Withlacoochee-Alapaha-Suwannee-Rivers-WWALS-Outings/>

