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WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity
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WWALS Watershed Coalition 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.

Suwannee RIVERKEEPER® is a program and a paid staff position of WWALS.



February 27, 2024

To: Rep. James Burchett (176), james.burchett@house.ga.gov
Cc Rep. John Lahood (175), john.lahood@house.ga.gov,
: Rep. Dexter Sharper (177), dexter.sharper@house.ga.gov,
Rep. John Corbett (174), john.corbett@house.ga.gov,
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Rep. Clay Pirkle (169), clay.pirkle@house.ga.gov,
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Rep. Bill Yearta (152), bill.yearta@house.ga.gov,
Rep. Noel Williams (148), noel.williams@house.ga.gov,
Rep. Patty Bentley (150), patty.bentley@house.ga.gov

Re: Navigable stream additions to HB 1397

Rep. Burchett,

You are invited to the Mayor and Chairman's Paddle on the Withlacoochee River just west of Valdosta, this Saturday, March 2, 2024. <https://wwals.net/?p=64095>

Thank you for introducing HB 1397. And thank you for including all of the reaches of the Little and Withlacoochee Rivers that are in the WWALS Withlacoochee and Little River Water Trail and all the reaches of the Alapaha River that are in the WWALS Alapaha River Water Trail, as well as the Suwannee River in the WWALS Suwannee River Water Trail.

<https://wwals.net/water-trails/>

I am somewhat mystified as to why Bird Wing Run is listed in HB 1397 as the upper limit for Middle Fork Suwannee River? People paddle down the Middle Fork from Maul Hammock Canoe Shelter, after starting at Kingfisher Landing.

Could you please add to the list of navigable streams in HB 1397:

- East Fork Suwannee River downstream of Canal Run Campsite
 - This is a popular paddling path at least as far upstream as Billys Island.
- Alapahoochee River downstream of GA 376
 - The Alapahoochee River from GA 376 to the Alapaha River is part of the WWALS Alapaha River Water Trail. <https://wwals.net/maps/alapaha-water-trail/arwt-map/arwt-access/#Alapahoochee-River>
 - Paddlers went from GA 376 all the way down the Alapahoochee River to the Alapaha River in Florida, October 30 and 31, 2010, [Alapahoochee River – Kayak Trip / Canoe Trip](#), paddling.net; see <https://wwals.net/2014/01/03/alapahoochee-river/>
 - WWALS paddled from GA 135 on the Alapahoochee to the