

GET OUT and Play!

ON THE HIWASSEE RIVER

Whether you are stepping into your boat or board for the first time or have logged enough hours on the water to rival the guides in the Valley, having a little back-pocket information is key. Here is some simple information about some of the Tennessee River Valley's best paddles—where to show up, how to get there and what to bring along for the ride.

One of the most amazing things about the Tennessee River system and its tributaries is how easy it is for you to get to places to relax and play. As part of our mission of service, TVA manages its public lands and waters to support recreation so that the Tennessee Valley remains one of the best places in the country to live, work and play.



THE HIWASSEE RIVER BLUEWAY

Looking for a great destination for a family paddling trip? You cannot do better than the beautiful, wide Hiwassee River, part of the Tennessee River system. From its headwaters in northern Georgia, the Hiwassee rambles 147 miles through western North Carolina and east Tennessee before it empties into the Chickamauga Reservoir above Chattanooga, Tenn. Whitewater paddling is popular in the river's upper reaches near Reliance, but much of the Hiwassee's water is Class I, signifying a smooth ride with few obstructions and small waves—in other words, perfect, for kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding and float fishing.

There are 20 public access sites to the Hiwassee River where you can put in or take out your paddle craft—and endless ways to plan a trip between them. Assuming three miles per hour is your average speed, you easily could enjoy short stretches of the river in an afternoon, with stops to explore islands and other natural features along the way. To make a multi-day trip, just plan to stay at one of the adjacent campgrounds or in the small towns that line the river's shores.



Rainbow Trout
(*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)

Check out Hiwasseeblueway.com for up-to-date information. Grab your paddles, your gear and this map, and let your imagination be your guide. All you need to do is get out there and have a good time. Share your own stories and photos on Instagram or Twitter using #TVAfun, or at www.facebook.com/TVA using our #TVAfun tab.

For fishing regulations and license requirements, please check with TWRA or visit www.gootdoorstennessee.com.

BE A GOOD STEWARD

The Hiwassee River is known for its clean water and pristine rural shorelines. Here's how you can play a part in keeping the river beautiful:

- **Stay on the path.** Shorelines are fragile ecosystems; please restrict launching and landing to designated areas only.
- **Leave no trace behind.** No littering—whatever you pack in, you pack out.
- **Look, don't touch.** Do not disturb any natural or cultural resources you may encounter.
- **Respect private property.** Do not trespass above the high water mark.
- **Be a happy camper.** Camp only in designated areas.
- **Don't play with fire.** No campfires unless otherwise designated.



TVA PUBLIC LANDS

The public lands entrusted to TVA for stewardship are available for hiking, birdwatching, camping, fishing, hunting and other informal recreational pursuits. You just need to remember that camping is allowed for up to 14 days, and that you need to follow state hunting seasons and regulations. Also, motorized vehicles, cutting of removing vegetation or removal of cultural artifacts are not allowed on TVA public lands. For more information visit www.tva.com/publiclandrules, or call the TVA's Public Lands Information Center at (800) TVA-LAND (toll-free).

TVA'S DAMS

The Hiwassee River is regulated by three large Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) tributary dams in western North Carolina and northern Georgia: Chatuge Dam, Apalachia Dam and Hiwassee Dam.



When paddling near a dam, please know: Water release schedules can change without notice due to unanticipated changes in weather conditions and power system requirements. The depth and swiftness of the river can change rapidly. Your safety depends on obeying all posted safety regulations and warnings. Information about the generation releases from Chatuge Dam, Apalachia Dam and Hiwassee Dam can be found on TVA.com and TVA's Lake Info app. TVA's recreational release schedule for Apalachia can be found online at www.tva.gov/Environment/Lake-Levels/

Apalachia. Or you can call (800) 238-2264 (toll-free) and select option 4 for predicted unit schedules and x22 for Apalachia information by phone. It is important to understand the water schedule before paddling or swimming in the river as the water's current and depth can change rapidly. Generally, two units (or 2,800 cfs) provide conditions to paddle in the upper reach. Fishermen often prefer one unit flow or minimum flow for wading.

Trip Essentials

- Map
- Whistle or other sound signaling device
- Certified life jacket for each person
- Photo identification
- Drinking water (no glass, please)
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Extra clothes and waterproof bags
- Mobile phone (coverage subject to availability)
- Camping supplies, if camping
- Fishing license, if fishing
- Other personal items as needed

PADDLE POINTERS

Follow these 12 tips to help keep your next paddle trip safe:

Know Your Limits—Paddle water that is appropriate to your skills. Not sure about where to find it? Talk to a local paddle shop owner about good places to paddle for every skill level.

Keep an Eye on the Weather—Storms can spring up quickly in the south bringing lightning, high winds and choppy water. Point your prow toward shore whenever you hear thunder, no matter how distant.

Follow the Law for recreational vessels of the United States.

Bring Flotation—Always wear a Coast Guard-approved lifejacket, type two or three at minimum. Children under 12 years of age must wear a lifejacket.*

Wear a Helmet—If you fall in, a helmet can protect your head from hard or sharp objects that may be lurking below the surface.

Watch for River Hazards—Watch for fallen tree limbs, barbed wire, bridge piers and other hazards that can snare or entangle you.

Be Visible...and Audible—Keep alert to other boats. If you believe another boat has not seen you, blow your whistle* and wave your paddle to alert the other boat. A flashlight* is required if you plan to paddle after sunset.

Dress for Success—Wear clothing sufficient to prevent hypothermia and/or sunburn.

Wear Sunscreen—The CDC recommends applying a sunscreen with a SPF of at least 15 to help prevent sunburn and skin damage.

Don't Paddle Alone—Paddling is an activity that is always better with friends and family, anyway.

Never Drink and Paddle*—Alcohol impairs coordination and judgment.

Communicate Your Plan in Advance—Plan ahead, and let someone who's not going to be aboard know your paddling agenda. Be aware that some sections of the river have no cell phone service.

*U.S. Coast Guard Requirement

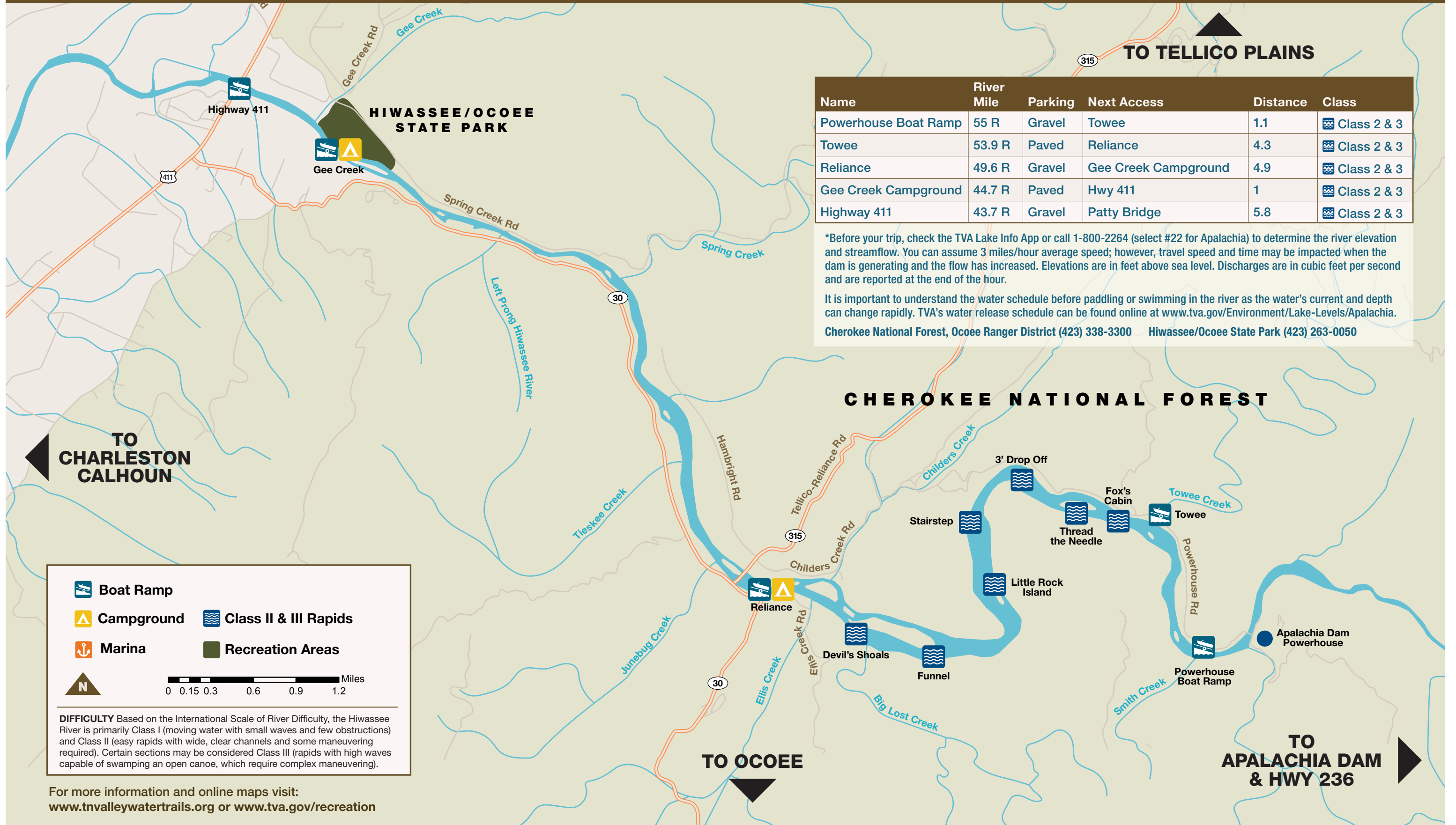
PARTNERS:

#TVAfun

tva.com | [facebook.com/TVA](https://www.facebook.com/TVA) | [@TVAnews](https://twitter.com/TVAnews) | [@TVA](https://www.instagram.com/TVA)



UPPER HIWASSEE RIVER



Name	River Mile	Parking	Next Access	Distance	Class
Powerhouse Boat Ramp	55 R	Gravel	Towee	1.1	Class 2 & 3
Towee	53.9 R	Paved	Reliance	4.3	Class 2 & 3
Reliance	49.6 R	Gravel	Gee Creek Campground	4.9	Class 2 & 3
Gee Creek Campground	44.7 R	Paved	Hwy 411	1	Class 2 & 3
Highway 411	43.7 R	Gravel	Patty Bridge	5.8	Class 2 & 3

*Before your trip, check the TVA Lake Info App or call 1-800-2264 (select #22 for Apalachia) to determine the river elevation and streamflow. You can assume 3 miles/hour average speed; however, travel speed and time may be impacted when the dam is generating and the flow has increased. Elevations are in feet above sea level. Discharges are in cubic feet per second and are reported at the end of the hour.

It is important to understand the water schedule before paddling or swimming in the river as the water's current and depth can change rapidly. TVA's water release schedule can be found online at www.tva.gov/Environment/Lake-Levels/Apalachia.

Cherokee National Forest, Ocoee Ranger District (423) 338-3300 Hiwassee/Ocoee State Park (423) 263-0050

- Boat Ramp
- Campground
- Marina
- N
- Class II & III Rapids
- Recreation Areas

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles

DIFFICULTY Based on the International Scale of River Difficulty, the Hiwassee River is primarily Class I (moving water with small waves and few obstructions) and Class II (easy rapids with wide, clear channels and some maneuvering required). Certain sections may be considered Class III (rapids with high waves capable of swamping an open canoe, which require complex maneuvering).

For more information and online maps visit:
www.tnvalleywatertrails.org or www.tva.gov/recreation

DISCLAIMER: The featured map is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended, and should not be relied upon or to provide accurate locations, directions or data. Paddle at your own risk. Fallen trees, built structures, and other hazards are present in the water throughout the Hiwassee River Blueway system. Be alert to weather conditions, water levels and river traffic. Know your abilities. Boating involves some risk of drowning, injury, or death. TVA is not responsible for your personal safety or for your vehicle, and is not liable for injury to you or damage to your vehicle, boat or personal property.