

# Backyard Boogie

June 26

**Distance:** 14 miles

**Obstacles/Rapids:** **Mile 3**--Jones Bridge Shoals—The main channel of the river is funneled to river right due to a series of shoals that stretches across the river downstream from the bridge, forcing the flow over a small ledge that creates some waves. Upon passing beneath the remains of Jones Bridge work your boat to river right and follow the main channel through the shoals. Follow the chute that leads from the shoreline to the center of the river and then bear slightly right following the main current through the bottom of the chute.

**Mile 6**--McAfee Bridge—On the downstream side of Holcomb Bridge, the pillar of the old McAfee Bridge and other rocks narrow the river's flow into a swift moving chute that flows from river left in front of the water intake facility to the center of the river. At Holcomb Bridge ferry to river left and follow current through chute.

**Mile 10**--Island Ford Shoals—While the river does not flow through this field of shoals and boulders with much velocity, it should be navigated carefully to avoid getting grounded on shallow boulders hidden just beneath the water's surface. Generally, the best course through this obstacle is river left along the shoreline.

**Mile 14**--Take Out—Not an obstacle, but perhaps confusing. Do not take out at the long boat dock or the boat ramp that you will see upon reaching Chattahoochee River Park on river right. Continue past boat ramp about 100 yards to the beach-like launch site for the park's canoe/paddle boat rental facility. Take out there and move your boat to grassy area surrounding rental building.

<b>Restroom Facilities:</b>	Mile 0	Medlock Bridge
	Mile 3	Jones Bridge Park
	Mile 6	Garrard Landing Park
	Mile 10	Island Ford Shoals
	Mile 14	Chattahoochee River Park

**Points of Interest:** **Mile 1**—Dean Gardens—the crown jewel of North Fulton County opulence. At the time of its completion in 1992, this estate constructed by Larry Dean, one of Atlanta's most successful and unusual entrepreneurs, was the state's largest residence. The 32,000-square foot home (and 10,000-square foot carriage house) sits on 60-acres that includes a conservatory, amphitheater, wedding chapel, man-made lake, an 18-hole golf course and extensive formal gardens. You'll see it on a ridge at river right. It's BIG and pink! The best view is from far river left.

**Mile 3**—Jones Bridge Park—The site of a former ferry crossing. When you reach the park, you'll pass beneath the remains of Jones Bridge, built in 1904. The bridge lasted less than 40 years. When it deteriorated in the 1930s, Gwinnett and Fulton counties couldn't agree on repairs so the bridge was closed. Legend has it that half the bridge was dismantled by thieves in the 1940s who stole part of the steel structure to sell as scrap metal.

**Mile 6**—McAfee Bridge—On the downstream side of Holcomb Bridge stands the remains of McAfee's Bridge. In 1834 workers built the bridge by stacking large flat stones one on top of the other until the pillars reached the top of the river bank. At the time of the Civil War this was the only bridge spanning the river aside from a railroad bridge between Marietta and Atlanta. It was destroyed during the war. The original Holcomb Bridge was built atop the same pillars. You'll notice that no mortar appears to have been used between the stones.

**Mile 10**—Island Ford Shoals—Headquarters of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area are located up a short trail from the boat ramp/dock on river left before reaching the shoals. The log-construction headquarters building was once used as a summer home by Sam Hewlett, a former Georgia Supreme Court Justice. It was built in the 1930s using timber from the Okefeenokee Swamp and stone from Stone Mountain. You'll find interpretive displays and a gift shop inside.

## **Narrative:**

Through this 14-mile stretch of river you will pass two drinking water intake facilities (Atlanta/Fulton County near John's Creek--rope swing near the intake facility--and Dekalb County at Holcomb Bridge). The Chattahoochee quenches the thirst of almost half of Georgia's 8 million residents, serving Metro Atlanta as well as Gainesville, LaGrange and Columbus. Atlanta's dependence on the Chattahoochee is unique and remarkable. No other major metropolitan area depends on a smaller drainage basin for its primary drinking water source. Atlanta, poorly chosen as the site of a major city in so far as water resources are concerned, sits a mere 80 miles from the spring that begins the Chattahoochee. In fact, among major American cities, only Denver, Colorado sits at a higher elevation than Atlanta. This geography has placed water use issues at the forefront of state policy for many years and created the ongoing "Water Wars" between Georgia, Alabama and Florida. On an average day 443 million gallons of water are used in Metro Atlanta. Per capita water use is about 149 gallons a day. Here, it should be noted that we can survive on less than a gallon a day.

