




# #20

## Water Trails: Toccoa River Canoe & Kayak Trail - River South

### Toccoa River Canoe Trail

- 1 Deep Hole Rec. Area (put-in)
- 2 Swinging Bridge
- 3 Toccoa Valley Campground
- 4 Sandy Bottoms (take-out)
- 5 Shallowford Bridge
- 6 Toccoa River Rapids
-  Main Visitor Center
-  Downtown Visitor Center
-  Fishing Spots

Please note: Obey signs! Fishing, camping and entering onto private lands is illegal without land owner permission, as is fishing from the river from a boat, tube, or any other floating device where both sides of the river are privately owned.

For info about local outfitters, fishing guides, rafting, tubing and canoeing, see [www.BlueRidgeMountains.com](http://www.BlueRidgeMountains.com)

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# #20 Water Trails: Toccoa River Canoe & Kayak Trail

Red coordinates indicate GPS Fix

## The Toccoa River Canoe Trail

The Toccoa River Canoe Trail utilizes the Toccoa River from the launch at Deep Hole Recreation Area flowing west and north to its end at Sandy Bottoms Canoe Take Out. Enjoy views of forested public lands, pastoral private lands, laurel and rhododendron thickets and their associated wildlife, coupled with great fishing and some rapids make this the perfect canoe or kayak trip. The Canoe Trail is ideal for beginners and those who enjoy a less than vigorous float in a north Georgia mountain river. The river flow is dependent upon rainfall, and at times of low rain portions of the river might be shallow, requiring you to get out and pull your boat through the shallows. Check with the US Forest Service about conditions by calling the Blue Ridge Ranger District at 706-745-6928.

The Canoe Trail begins on the north bank of the river and flows gently west and north in a meandering manner. River flow is generally 3-4 miles per hour. Driving time from Blue Ridge GA to the put-in at Deep Hole is about an hour, and setting up your take-out shuttle at Sandy Bottoms and getting back to the put-in requires more time, so plan accordingly. This adventure is best started early in the day.

## The Toccoa River

The Toccoa River, one of Georgia's most pristine trout streams, has its headwaters in Union County, flows into Fannin County and becomes the major feeder stream for Blue Ridge Lake. It resumes its flow below the Blue Ridge dam and travels north into Tennessee, where it is known as the Ocoee River. Water quality is good and trout fishing is excellent. Add beautiful scenery and mild rapids and you have the perfect environment for canoeing, tubing, fishing, camping and all kinds of outdoor recreation.

## Lake Blue Ridge

Lake Blue Ridge is a 3,290-acre lake, providing over 100 miles of mostly public shoreline. The surrounding area has National Forest campsites, several boat ramps, a full service marina and public swimming and picnic areas, including Morganton Point and Lake Blue Ridge Recreation areas. Lake Blue Ridge is the only small-mouth bass lake in Georgia and the only lake in the state where you can catch a Muskie, a game fish of the Pike family. All kinds of water adventures are available on Lake Blue Ridge from fishing to pontoon boating, waterskiing, kayaking or just picnicing and relaxing on the shores of this gorgeous mountain lake.

## Getting to the put-in and take-out points to set car shuttles:

### 1 Deep Hole Campground & Recreation Area

Deep Hole is a U.S. Forest Service recreation area with eight campsites and access to the Toccoa River for fishing and canoe or kayak launch. A picnic area has six tables for day use.

**Deep Hole is the put-in for the Toccoa River Canoe Trail**, which follows 13.8 miles of river from Deep Hole Recreation Area to the take-out at Sandy Bottoms. Along the way are forests, pastoral rural valleys, mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets and lots of wildlife. Good fishing and a few rapids make this a great canoe trip, especially for beginners.

Deep Hole and the Toccoa River are located 14.8 miles from Morganton on GA Hwy 60. From the intersection of Hwy 515 and Hwy 5 (McDonalds) in Blue Ridge, follow Hwy 515 East approximately 4 miles to the traffic light at Hwy 60. Turn right and go to the stop sign; then turn left on Hwy 60. Go 1.5 miles into Morganton, then turn right on Hwy 60 South toward Dahlenega for 14.5 miles to Deep Hole Recreation Area, entrance is on the right (dirt/gravel all weather road). **N 34°44.574' W084°08.345'**

### 2 Swinging Bridge.

A 260-foot suspension bridge crosses the Toccoa River on the Benton MacKaye Trail. You will pass under the Swinging Bridge on the Toccoa River Canoe Trail, and the shady, forested campground area on the right bank is a nice place to stop for a break or a picnic. To drive to the spot, from the intersection of Hwy 515 and Hwy 5 (McDonalds) in Blue Ridge, follow Hwy 515 East approximately 4 miles to the traffic light at Hwy 60. Turn right and go to the stop sign; then turn left on Hwy 60. Go 1.5 miles into Morganton, then turn right on Hwy 60 South toward Dahlenega for 11.3 miles passing Skeenah Mill. Another .7 miles on the right is FS 816, turn right and follow gravel road about 3 miles to the parking area. Short hike down to the Toccoa River & Swinging Bridge. **N 34°44.212' W084°10.027'**

### 3 Toccoa Valley Campground

Toccoa Valley Campground is located 12 miles out Aska Road. The facilities include waterfront campsites with full hook-up and tent camping, restrooms and hot showers. TVC offers tubing, kayaking and rafting on the Toccoa River, offering launch and pick-up service for six miles of tubing on the Toccoa. Camping is open March through October with water activities beginning Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. Closed Sundays. Call 706-838-4317 for reservations, or at [www.toccoavalleycampground.com](http://www.toccoavalleycampground.com). **N 34°45.804' W084°14.983'**

### 4 Sandy Bottoms Canoe Take-out Point

Take Aska Road from its start in Blue Ridge approximately 8.3 miles south to the Shallowford Bridge on left. Cross Shallowford Bridge and follow the dirt road 1.3 miles to its intersection with Old Dial Road. Turn right on Old Dial, go .6 miles and you'll find Sandy Bottoms Canoe Launch and Campground, which is a great place to get your feet wet! The campground has four sites, each with a cooking grill, picnic table, lantern pole and tent pad.

**Sandy Bottoms is the designated take out point for the Toccoa River Canoe Trail.** **N 34°47.170' W084°14.398'**

### 5 Shallowford Bridge

The historic Shallowford Bridge was built in 1920 and is one of the last remaining bridges of its kind. The area of the Toccoa between Shallowford Bridge and Sandy Bottoms Canoe launch is a designated "Delayed Harvest" trout stream. Fishermen are allowed to catch and release only until May 15th each year. Take Aska Road from its start in Blue Ridge approximately 8.3 miles south to bridge on left. **N 34°47.029' W084°15.562'**

### 6 Toccoa River Rapids

The Toccoa River Rapids are located approximately 7 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 76 and Aska Road. This is a popular spot to view the rapids from Aska Road. **CAUTION:** Make sure you don't miss the take-out point at Sandy Bottoms if you are paddling. or you will wind up here confronting serious rapids. **N 34°47.451' W084°16.564'**

**A Word to the Wise ...** Be prepared for wilderness and carry the 10 Essentials (wiki or Google it). Life vests are required. See the USFS web site at [www.fs.fed.us/conf/](http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/).

Take care of Blue Ridge! The law of the forest is "leave no trace". See [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org) for info. Please pack in all you will need and pack out all your trash. If you build a fire, never leave it unattended. Use good judgment when paddling and hiking, particularly around waterfalls and rapids where rocks are often wet, moss covered and slippery. In hunting season, wear a brightly colored vest.

Unexpected encounters with animals can be pleasurable or problematic. Look for hawks soaring silently above and woodpeckers, turkeys and mountain grouse near the forest edges. The flash of a white-tail deer is an every day occurrence. More rare is sighting a black bear or bobcat. Most animals will flee the presence of humans, but be on the lookout for copperheads, wasps, yellow jackets and other biting, stinging critters.



FANNIN COUNTY  
CHAMBER & CVB



**Main Visitor Center:** 152A Orvin Lance Drive, Blue Ridge, GA 30513 800-899-MTNS

**Downtown Visitor Center:** 282 West Main St., Blue Ridge  
**GA McCaysville Visitor Center:** 53 East Market St.

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