



Preparing to paddle the Neuse from Kinston
Photo by Lucy Marston

The Neuse River Paddle Route —MST Segments 11A-16A

SMITHFIELD TO THE NEUSIOK TRAIL

By **Sound Rivers**

An alternative way to complete the MST through North Carolina's coastal plain is to paddle the Neuse River for 170 miles from Smithfield to the northern end of the Neusiok Trail in the Croatan National Forest near Havelock.

The Neuse River runs 227 miles from Falls Lake to Pamlico Sound. Marking the Falls Lake dam as River Mile 0, the MST portion runs from River

Mile 45.8 to 215.8. These river miles correspond to Eastbound (EB) Mile 51.3/Westbound (WB) Mile 13.5 in Segment 11 and EB Mile 46.5/WB Mile 21.3 in Segment 16 of the MST hiking route.

Beginning as a fast-moving, narrow river, the Neuse gradually widens and slows, occasionally splitting into multiple channels. By the time it reaches Pine Cliff Recreation Area, where the MST paddle route ends, it has formed a 2.5-mile-wide estuary. The river flows on another eleven miles to empty into Pamlico Sound, where it spreads to five miles wide.

Throughout your paddle the shores are heavily forested, often with a wilderness feel. In places, the banks fall away at water level; in other places—notably Cliffs of the Neuse State Park—they can range as high as 90 feet above the river. Around every bend you will find new wonders: cypress swamps; sand banks and bars for camping; birds of every description (heron, kingfisher, osprey, warblers); and wildlife coming down to drink from the river.

The few towns along the river present welcome opportunities to get a meal, explore eastern North Carolina's history, camp, or just take a break. In Goldsboro, Kinston, and New Bern (as well as in Cliffs of the Neuse State Park), you will find walking trails that State Parks has accepted for inclusion in a planned continuous MST hiking route paralleling the Neuse.

For an advanced look, take a virtual trip down the river using Google Earth or Mapquest Satellite. In addition, we highly recommend using a good GPS device for navigation on the river. This guide provides coordinates to help locate nearly every feature on the river, many of which can be difficult to find from a boat. People interested in paddling the entire river should contact Sound Rivers for further information.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Abundant birds, wildlife, and native plants
- An experience of wilderness in the midst of an urban and agricultural part of North Carolina

- Historic towns and villages on the river—including Smithfield, Seven Springs, Kinston, and New Bern—where you can stop for a meal, drink, and stroll
- Parks welcoming you to special spots along the river, including Howell Woods, Old Waynesborough, and Cliffs of the Neuse
- The majesty of the river when it widens to more than two miles as you reach Pine Cliff Recreation Area at the end of your journey



Cypress swamp at Old Waynesborough Park in Goldsboro
Photo by Neil Bartlett

Total Distance: 170.0 miles

Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Updates

When planning your trip using this guide, take a moment to see whether Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (Friends) has posted any updates about the trail route by visiting Friends’ “Trail Updates” page at MountaintoSeaTrail.org/updates.

Trail Angels

The MST is fortunate to have many Trail Angels: friendly people who have volunteered to provide assistance to long-distance hikers and paddlers ranging from local information to lodging and food. We greatly appreciate our Trail Angels’ willingness to give back to the hiking community and the MST. For information about Trail Angels in Segments 11A-16A and the services they can provide, see MountaintoSeaTrail.org/the-trail/trail-angels.

Camping/Lodging

Note: All prices listed in this guide are for comparison only and are subject to change at any time.

When the river is low, it may be impossible to climb the banks of the river, so campsites listed here may be inaccessible. During these times, many sandbars are usually exposed, and these are good and legal campsites. However, watch the weather because rain upstream can cause the water level to rise rapidly. Friends recognizes that long distances between campsites on this route are a challenge, and is supporting Sound Rivers and local governments to improve camping options. Please do not jeopardize access for others by camping on private land without permission. Paddlers should plan their trip to match up to the facilities described in the guide.

River Mile 65.0, right

Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, 6601 Devils Racetrack Rd., Four Oaks, 27524; N35.4106, W78.2838. (Inaccessible at low water levels.) The campsite has two raised shelters and large platforms with picnic benches and pit toilet but no water. Call Johnston Community College at 919-938-0115 or email jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu to reserve a site.

River Mile 95.0, left

Old Waynesborough Park, US 117 Alt., Goldsboro, 27530; N35.3715, W78.0176. Look for the campsites in a grassy area with a large inlet. For permission to camp, call 919-731-1653.

River Mile 117.0, right

Alan Daly Campground, 643 River Rd., Seven Springs, 28578; N35.2551, W77.8849. Call 919-734-4616 to camp in this private RV campground on the river.

River Mile 119.1, right

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park, 240 Park Entrance Rd., Seven Springs, 28578, 919-778-6234; N35.2402, W77.8838. You can tie up a boat at the state park sandbar and hike about 300 yards to the park campground, which has picnic tables, grills, water, showers, and electricity. There is also a primitive group camping area about 400 yards away that can accommodate groups of up to 30 people; this area has drinking water, waterless toilets, picnic tables, fire pits, and grills. To reserve a site at either camping area, go to www.ncparks.gov/cliffs-of-the-neuse-state-park or call 877-722-6762.

River Mile 121.5, right

Neuse River Trading Post, 102 Main St., Seven Springs, 28578; N35.2289, W77.8461. For permission to camp, call 919-222-9290.

River Mile 144.9, right

Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground, 403 W. Caswell St., Kinston, 28501; N35.2604, W77.5843. Campground has hot showers, fire rings, picnic tables, and a dump station. Call 252-939-3362 for a reservation.

River Mile 175.0, left

Pelican Landing Fishing Camp, Vanceboro, 28586; N35.2777, W77.2517. You will see two ramps. Land at the first. Tent camping is \$5 with water and privies. No alcohol is allowed. Call Johnny at 252-617-2778 or after hours at 252-244-1214.

River Mile 205.2, right

Fishers Landing Campground, Croatan National Forest, US 70 E., Riverdale, 28560; N35.0004, W76.9738. Free campsites, water, picnic tables, and pit toilets available year-round. Reservations are not needed.

River Mile 207.2, right





Neuse River Campground (known locally as Flanners Beach), Croatan National Forest, US 70 E., Riverdale, 28560; N34.9841, W76.9480. This fee campground has water, a full bathhouse, and picnic area. Campsites can be reserved at www.recreation.gov or 877-444-6777.

Also check Friends’ “Trail Angels” page at MountainstoSeaTrail.org/the-trail/trail-angels for additional camping and lodging options.

Food/Supplies

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| River Mile 46.0 | Smithfield Town Commons; N35.5128, W78.3498 |
| River Mile 99.8 | US 117 boat ramp (across bridge from ramp); N35.3482, W78.0240 |
| River Mile 121.5 | Seven Springs; N35.2289, W77.8461 |
| River Mile 144.9 | Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground, Kinston; N35.2604, W77.5843 |
| River Mile 194.3 | Persimmons Restaurant, 100 Pollock St., New Bern, 28560. This restaurant has a landing beach and mini-mart right behind it. N35.1064, W77.0346. |

Water/Restrooms

- | | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| River Mile 46.0 | Smithfield Town Commons; N35.5128, W78.3498 |   |
| River Mile 99.8 | US 117 boat ramp, Goldsboro; N35.3482, W78.0240 |   |
| River Mile 121.5 | Seven Springs; N35.2289, W77.8461 |   |
| River Mile 144.9 | Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground, Kinston; N35.2604, W77.5843 |   |



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms










Supplies



Water



Picnic

- River Mile 175.0 Pelican Landing Fishing Camp, Vanceboro; N35.2777, W77.2517  
- River Mile 191.5 Glenburnie Park, New Bern; N35.1397, W77.0598  
- River Mile 205.2 Fishers Landing Campground, Havelock; N35.0004, W76.9738  
- River Mile 207.2 Neuse River (Flanners Beach) Campground, Havelock; N34.9841, W76.9480  
- River Mile 215.8 Pine Cliff Recreation Area, Havelock; N34.9389, W76.8221 

River Outfitters

Neuse Adventures, 2975 Covered Bridge Rd., Clayton, 27527, 919-553-3295, johnny@neuseadventures.com; www.neuseadventures.com.

Paddle Creek, 9525 Capitol Blvd., Wake Forest, 27587, 919-866-1954, info@paddlecreeknc.com; paddlecreeknc.com.

Frog Hollow Outdoors, 614 Trent Dr., Durham, 27705, 919-416-1200, info@froghollowoutdoors.com; www.froghollowoutdoors.com. Frog Hollow offers shuttles for the entire length of the Neuse River Paddle Trail; see <http://www.froghollowoutdoors.com/nc-piedmont-overnight-trips/neuse-river-paddle-trail-blueway>.

Others Who Can Assist with Logistics

Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, 6601 Devils Racetrack Rd., Four Oaks, 27524, 919-938-0115; jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu. In addition to river camping, Howell Woods can offer shuttles, road access to the river, and river guide/friend opportunities.

Hope Floats NC, 414 James Tart Rd., Lillington, 27546, 910-890-1094; hopefloatsnc.com. Hope Floats NC is a diverse group of paddlers who have been affected by cancer. Each year, the first week in April, they organize a 200-mile, 8-day, supported paddle of the Neuse River to raise money for the American Cancer Society. The trip runs from Anderson Point Park in Raleigh (River Mile 16.2) to Oriental, which is on the opposite side of the river from Pine Cliff Recreation Area (River Mile 215.8) where

the Neusiok Trail begins. Friends will recognize people who do this trip as having completed Segments 11A-16A of the MST. If you are seeking to complete these segments of the MST and would be interested in a supported trip, Hope Floats NC may be an option for you. Please understand, however, that the purpose of Hope Floats NC is to raise money to fight cancer. To participate, you will be expected to raise funds, cover expenses for your part of the trip, and demonstrate your ability to undertake a paddling trip of this length. Anyone interested in participating should contact Chris Tart at hopefloatsnc@gmail.com or 910-890-1094 by October 1st of the year before the paddle.

Sound Rivers, 2207 Trent Blvd., New Bern, 28562, 252-637-7972, info@soundrivers.org; soundrivers.org. The New Bern office of Sound Rivers is willing to store canoes and kayaks for people working to complete the MST who paddle the Neuse and plan to continue hiking east toward Jockey's Ridge. They may also be able to provide assistance if winds make it difficult for you to paddle all the way to Pine Cliff.

Signs/Blazing

The only mileage signs along the river lead from a split in the river around River Mile 90 to Old Waynesborough Park. The signs are brown plastic posts four inches wide with white lettering showing incorrect mileage. They are on river-right, and the first one indicates to turn left at the split.

Cautions

Recreation on the river may be relaxing or thrilling, but it should always be safe. Three currently known dangers on the Neuse are 1) strainers; 2) the former Duke Energy power plant at River Mile 84.3; and 3) wind, waves, and boat traffic when the river widens into an estuary from approximately River Mile 175 until the end of your journey at River Mile 215.8, when the river is 2.5 miles wide. Friends and Sound Rivers provide the information below to help you plan your trip, but all paddlers on the river do so at their own risk.

Be alert at all times for **strainers**—trees and branches that the water flows through. They can appear at any time or place along the river, and they can be deadly obstacles on a river. Water passes through, but solid objects like boats or people do not. Avoid these hazards by crossing to a clear area

of the river. If a strainer completely crosses the river, the safest practice is to portage around. Because strainers come and go, this guide cannot list them. Some strainers may be identified on Friends' "Trail Updates" page at MountainstoSeaTrail.org/updates. If you find a strainer not shown there, or if you discover that a listed strainer is gone, please let Friends know at info@MountainstoSeaTrail.org.

River Mile 84.3 At Duke Energy's retired H.F. Lee power plant upstream from Goldsboro (N35.3809, W78.0900), a sluice intake gate on river right has become blocked by trees and debris and should be considered extremely dangerous. Do not attempt to paddle this route, and stay as far to river left through this section as possible to avoid being captured by the current.

River Mile 175 to 215.8 At River Mile 175, the river begins to widen into an estuary. By the time you reach New Bern at River Mile 194, the river is a mile wide. At River Mile 215.8 when you reach the end of this MST segment at Pine Cliff Recreation Area, the river is 2.5 miles wide. Winds, waves, and boat traffic can pose a real danger, particularly in cold weather. As the river widens, hug whichever shoreline will best protect you from the predominant winds, which can create large waves breaking onto the opposite shore. If they are coming from the southwest, follow the right shore as you head downstream. If the wind is out of the north, hug the left shore. The water along the shorelines is generally shallow, but it can still be very dangerous, especially if the weather and water are cold. If you are approaching New Bern and the winds are coming from the north, you will need to be hugging the left shore, on the opposite side of the river from New Bern, downstream campsites, and Pine Cliff Recreation Area (the end of the segment). In that event, you can land at the Bridgeton boat landing at River Mile 191.8 and stay there until the winds abate and you can cross the river or you can continue your paddle to the Minnesott Beach ferry landing at River Mile 215.8 and then ride the ferry over to Pine Cliff Recreation Area to continue your MST hike. Friends and Sound Rivers advise that only experienced, strong paddlers should attempt this part of the journey, and all paddlers who attempt it do so at their own risk.

What to Take

You will need a boat (canoe or kayak) that can carry enough camping gear for a seven- to ten-day trip. You will need a sturdy paddle because you may

need to use it to pole over low spots. A properly-fitting PFD/life vest is essential and must be worn at all times. Underwater snags can roll you when you least expect it.

A kayak skirt may be useful, especially when the river widens and is affected by the wind. Wear proper footwear at all times to prevent cuts. Rain or wind pants work great because they will not absorb water if you need to wade through water or get splashed while paddling. A long-sleeve wicking shirt works to wick away sweat, dry paddle splash, and as a sun block.

For camping, your regular backpacking gear will work great. The difference is that you will need to pack it in dry bags. For kayaks, multiple small bags work better than large. Cameras and cell phones must be waterproof or carried in a dry box or bag. The rule is that kayak dry hatches are not always dry.

You will need to carry 1 to 1.5 gallons of water per day. You should be able to carry all the food you will need and not have to re-supply considering the available restaurants along the way. A “U” bolt attached through your upper deck will allow you to lock your boat while on a water/restaurant walk.

Low-impact Ethics

To ensure the river is clean for everyone to enjoy, remember to “leave it as you found it” by following these guidelines:

Dispose of litter properly—pack it out

- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Never throw any garbage into the water.
- Plastics are dangerous to wildlife—baggies, sixpack rings, and other clear plastics float on the water.

Display courtesy and respect to riverfront landowners.

- Many access points are located on public property, but most of the shoreline—and river bottom are privately owned.
- Many landowners enjoy the stream’s peace and solitude from their property. Share the same courtesy that you would want.

Leave what you find

- Leave artifacts and natural objects undisturbed.

Respect wildlife

- Never feed wildlife. It damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife by storing food and trash securely.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times—mating, nesting, or when food is scarce.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Friends office: 919-825-0297 or info@MountainstoSeaTrail.org

Sound Rivers: New Bern office, 252-637-7972; Raleigh office, 919-856-1180; or info@soundrivers.org

NC Wildlife Resources Commission Boating Access:
www.ncpaws.org/wrcmapbook/baa.aspx

Johnston County Tourism: www.johnstoncountync.org

Goldsboro/Wayne County Tourism: www.greatergoldsboro.com

Kinston/Lenoir County Tourism: www.visitkinston.com

New Bern/Craven County Tourism: www.visitnewbern.com

Trail Maps

Google map of the entire MST: MountainstoSeaTrail.org/map

Neuse Riverkeeper Map: soundrivers.org/recreation (scroll to the bottom of the page for a link to the Google map)

Other Valuable Links

Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center:
www.johnstoncc.edu/howellwoods/about

Old Waynesborough Park, Goldsboro:
www.oldwaynesborough.org/home

Cliffs of the Neuse State Park: ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/clne/main.php

Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground:
www.neusewaypark.com/454/Neuseway-Nature-Park




New Bern Parks: newbern.recdesk.com/recdeskportal/Home/tabid/5063/Default.aspx

Croatan National Forest: www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5425535.pdf


Hope Floats NC (organization that organizes a fundraising paddle on the Neuse): hopefloatsnc.com

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Page 1)


Smithfield Town Commons

Downtown Smithfield, Market St.
 (NC 210) Bridge
 River Mile 46.0, left
   F
 N35.5145, W78.3483


Richardson Bridge Boat Access

Goldsboro
 River Mile 73.5, left

 N35.3753, W78.1982





Ferry Bridge Boat Ramp

Goldsboro
 River Mile 80.6, right

 N35.3569, W78.1370


Stevens Mill Rd. Bridge Boat Access

Goldsboro
 River Mile 89.7, left

 N35.3668, W78.0829

Old Waynesborough Park

801 US 117 Bypass South,
 Goldsboro
 River Mile 95.0, left
   
 N35.3728, W78.0163






NC 111 Bridge Boat Access

Goldsboro
 River Mile 113.1, left

 N35.2616, W77.9107


Seven Springs Boat Access

Seven Springs
 River Mile 121.5, right
    
 N35.2289, W77.8461


Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground

401 W. Caswell St., Kinston
 River Mile 144.9, right
    
 N35.2601, W77.5854


NC 11 Bridge Boat Access

Kinston
 River Mile 145.3, right

 N35.2581, W77.5914


Maple Cypress Boat Access

360 Maple Cypress Rd., Grifton
 River Mile 170.0, left

 N35.3135, W77.3030

Cow Pen Landing Boat Access

1199 Cow Pen Landing Rd.,
 Vanceboro
 River Mile 181.4, left

 N35.2384, W77.1668

Spring Garden Boat Access

585 NW Craven Middle School
 Rd., New Bern
 River Mile 183.2, right

 N35.2191, W77.1485

PRIMARY PARKING LOCATIONS (Page 2)

Glenburnie Park

340 Glenburnie Dr., New Bern
 River Mile 191.5, right
 (P) (Water) RR
 N35.1377, W77.0619

Union Point Park

210 E. Front St., New Bern
 River Mile 194.5, right
 (P) (Water) (Restrooms) (Picnic) (Supplies) (Lodging)
 N35.1049, W77.0348

Fishers Landing

New Bern
 River Mile 205.2, right
 (P) (Water) (Restrooms) (Picnic)
 NN35.0004, W76.9738

Neuse River (Flanners Beach) Campground

NC 1107, New Bern
 River Mile 207.2, right
 (P) (Water) (Restrooms) (Picnic)
 N34.9841, W76.9480

Pine Cliff Recreation Area

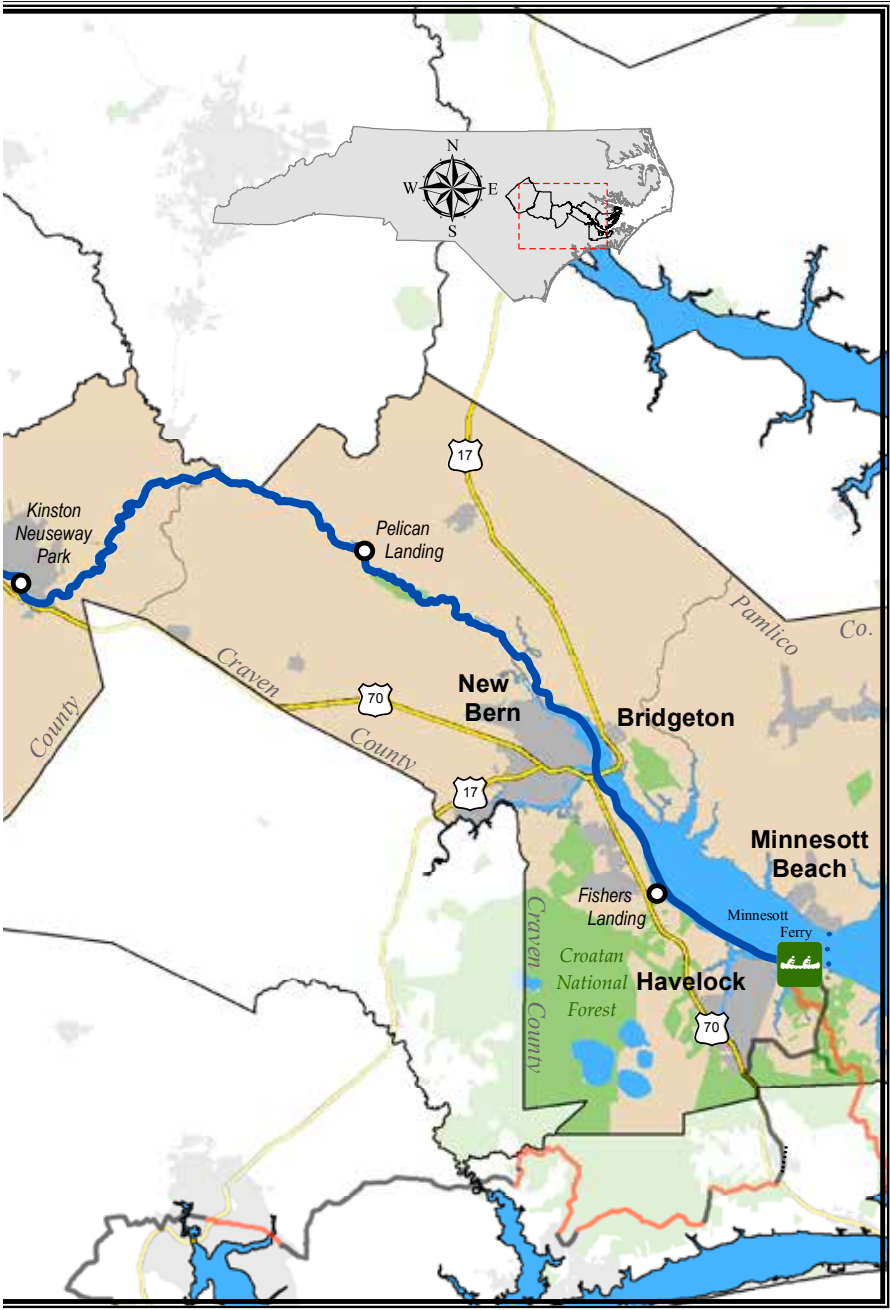
US Forest Service Rd. 132,
 Havelock
 River Mile 215.8, right
 (P) (Water) (Restrooms) (Picnic)
 N34.9389, W76.8221



Turtle sunning on a log
 Photo by William Reed Lovick



Map produced for Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail by Curtis Belyea, 2018.










Directions

Smithfield Boat Launch to Howell Woods Camp—19.2 miles

To begin the MST Neuse River Route, launch at the Smithfield Boat Launch at the end of N. Front St. Just 0.2 mile downstream is a park, the Smithfield Town Commons, which is a good lunch and water spot. The hiking route diverges from the river route below here. A few miles below Smithfield, pass under the I-95 bridge. Downstream from here, the river enters a vast wild area with several “oxbows.” There are hardly any signs of civilization. Howell Woods Camp is river-right (N35.4106, W78.2838) with camping platforms and pit toilet (no water), but is inaccessible at low water levels. The campsite is part of the 2800-acre Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center owned by Johnston Community College. Call ahead to 919-938-0115 or email jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu for permission to camp. Be careful not to miss the camp because it is a long way to another good campsite. Note that the campsite may be inaccessible at low water.

River Mile

- 45.8 Smithfield boat launch, left N35.5145, W78.3483 
- 46.0 Smithfield Town Commons (W. Market St. [NC 210] bridge), left N35.5128, W78.3498   
- 49.8 S. Brightleaf Blvd. bridge N35.4817, W78.3695
- 49.9 RR bridge N35.4813, W78.3693
- 51.1 I-95 bridge N35.4776, W78.3681
- 65.0 Howell Woods Campsite, Four Oaks, right. To camp, call 919-938-0115 or email jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu. N35.4106, W78.2838 
 

Howell Woods Camp to Old Waynesborough Park—30.0 miles






Continue downriver in isolation for many miles. You will pass through an area of beautiful cypress trees. When you come to the Duke Energy power plant on river right you will see a large lift gate. The route through this gate is blocked by trees and debris and should be considered extremely dangerous. Do not attempt to paddle this route, and stay as far to river left through this section as possible to avoid being captured by the current. The Neuse splits at N35 21.162, W78 02.349. Take the left-hand branch



Barred owl in Old Waynesborough Park in Goldsboro
Photo by Neil Bartlett

to Old Waynesborough Park. You will start seeing brown state park mileage signs. Old Waynesborough Park (919-731-1653) is river-left after a sharp bend. Look for the campsites in a grassy area with a large inlet and a tall wooden observation deck.

River Mile

- 65.0 Howell Woods Campsite, Four Oaks, right. To camp, call 919-938-0115 or email jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu. N35.4106, W78.2838 
 
- 73.5 Richardson Bridge boat access, left N35.3753, W78.1982 
Beautiful cypress area
- 76.4 **CAUTION:** The river splits. Take the left channel to avoid many strainers in the other channel.
- 80.6 Ferry Bridge boat ramp, right N35.3569, W78.1370 
- 84.3 Retired Duke Energy power plant. **CAUTION:** The route through the gate (river right) is blocked by trees and debris and should be considered extremely dangerous. Do not attempt to paddle this route, and stay as far to river left through this section as possible to avoid being captured by the current. N35.3809, W78.0900



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic



Mural under the bridge in downtown Smithfield
 Photo by JoEllen Mason











- 89.7 Stevens Mill Rd. bridge boat access, left N35.3668, W78.0829
- 90.3 Neuse River splits; take the left branch for Old Waynesborough Park N35.3545, W78.0432
- 95.0 Old Waynesborough Park, Goldsboro, left. To camp, call 919-731-1653. N35.3715, W78.0176

Old Waynesborough Park to Seven Springs—26.5 miles

Paddle a short 4.8 miles to the US 117 boat ramp river-left. Land and cross the bridge to restaurants, convenience store, and water. Continue down-river past 90-foot-high banks at Cliffs of the Neuse State Park river-right. Seven Springs is a must stop with small-town friendly people; two restaurants; and an outfitter, Neuse River Trading Post, that provides campsites. To camp, call 919-222-9290. Seven Springs was where the Confederate ironclad ram *Neuse* was built, and the Civil War Battle of Whitehall was fought.

River Mile












- 95.0 Old Waynesborough Park, Goldsboro, left. To camp, call 919-731-1653. N35.3715, W78.0176
- 99.8 US 117 boat ramp, left (before bridge) N35.3482, W78.0240

- US 117 bridge N35.3443, W78.0273
- 100.0 RR bridge N35.3400, W78.0239
- 102.4 Arrington Bridge Rd. bridge N35.3372, W77.9975
- 106.6 NC 581 boat access, right N35.3135, W77.9450 
- 113.1 NC 111 bridge boat access, left N35.2616, W77.9107 
- 113.3 Cliffs of the Neuse State Park paddle launch site, right N35.2613, W77.9069
- 117.0 Alan Daly Campground, right. Call 919-734-4616 to camp. N35.2551, W77.8849 
- 119.1 Cliffs of the Neuse State Park sandbar, right. See the “Camping” section for this segment for information about tying up your boat and camping here. N35.2402, W77.8838 
- 121.5 Piney Grove Church Rd. bridge N35.2293, W77.8464
Seven Springs boat access, right. To camp at Neuse River Trading Post, call 919-222-9290. N35.2289, W77.8461    
 

Seven Springs to Kinston Neuseway Nature Park—23.4 miles

A short paddle takes you through farmland and forest with good sandbars for breaks and a lunch stop. Around Kinston, you will probably see the first powerboats of the trip. The Kinston Neuseway Nature Park is river-right with a floating dock. They have a shower and plenty of tent camping for \$6. Check in at the nature center. Kinston is home to the Mother Earth Brewery, which gives tours; many great restaurants; a life-sized model of the Confederate ironclad ram *Neuse* (built upstream in Seven Springs); and a museum with the original boat that was scuttled to avoid capture.

River Mile

- 121.5 Seven Springs boat access, right. To camp at Neuse River Trading Post, call 919-222-9290. N35.2289, W77.8461    

- 123.4 NC 903 bridge N35.2329, W77.8210
- 128.3 Hardy Bridge Rd. bridge N35.2246, W77.7669
- 143.4 US 70/258 boat access, Kinston, right N35.2607, W77.6191 
- 144.9 Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground, Kinston, right. To camp, call 252-939-3362. N35.2591, W77.5840   
 

Kinston Neuseway Nature Park to Pelican Landing Fishing Camp—30.1 miles


The river continues through farmland, and the banks are lower with more marshes and birds. There is a beach river-left after an island, downstream 4.0 miles from Contentnea Creek. Pelican Landing Fishing Camp is river-left. You will see two ramps. Land at the first. Tent camping is \$5 with water and privies. No alcohol is allowed. To camp, call Johnny at 252-617-2778 or after hours at 252-244-1214.

River Mile

144.9 Kinston Neuseway Nature Park and Campground, Kinston, right.





To camp, call 252-939-3362. N35.2591, W77.5840   



145.3 NC 11 bridge boat access, right N35.2574, W77.5905 




















Summer river at Old Waynesborough Park in Goldsboro
Photo by Neil Bartlett

- 146.3 US 258 bridge N35.2465, W77.5831
- 147.9 RR bridge N35.2436, W77.5578
- 154.6 NC 55 bridge N35.2958, W77.4967
- 163.5 Contentnea Creek, left N35.3398, W77.3909
- 167.2 Beach on left after island
- 170.0 Maple Cypress boat access, left N35.3135, W77.3030 
- 175.0 Pelican Landing Fishing Camp, Vanceboro, left. To camp, call 252-617-2778. N35.2777, W77.2517   

Pelican Landing Fishing Camp to Fishers Landing—30.2 miles

From this point, the river widens and slows. The shore is lined with cypress swamps and the channel markers are topped with osprey nests. When the predominant winds come from the southwest, follow the right shore. If the wind is out of the north, hug the left shore. Glenburnie Park river-right has restrooms and water. Further downstream is downtown New Bern with many restaurants, hotels, and bed-and-breakfasts; the NC History Center; and Tryon Palace, former home of the British colonial governor. At New Bern, the river is over a mile wide and has become an estuary. *Note:* As you continue downriver toward Fishers Landing, the river widens further to 2.5 miles. Wind, waves, and boat traffic can make the river very dangerous in this area, particularly in cold weather. Read the “Cautions” section for this segment for more information about this part of the river. Fishers Landing (look for steps up the bank) is a free campground with water and pit toilets.

River Mile

- 175.0 Pelican Landing Fishing Camp, Vanceboro, left. To camp, call 252-617-2778. N35.2777, W77.2517   
- 181.4 Cow Pen Landing boat access, left N35.2384, W77.1668 
- 183.2 Spring Garden boat access, right N35.2191, W77.1485 
- 184.7 NC 43 Washington Post Rd. bridge N35.2105, W77.1230
- 191.5 Glenburnie Park, right N35.1397, W77.0598   
- 191.8 Bridgeton boat landing, left N35.1447, W77.0478 
- 193.3 RR Bridge N35.1201, W77.0412
- 194.3 Persimmons Restaurant, right N35.1064, W77.0346  
- 194.5 Union Point Park/New Bern, right N35.1049, W77.0348      



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water







Picnic



Sunset over the Neuse at Cherry Point
Photo by Dolly M. Woodell





197.8 US 17 bridge N35.0955, W77.0332

205.2 Fishers Landing, right N35.0004, W76.9738    

Fishers Landing to Pine Cliff Recreation Area—10.6 miles

The river is 2.5 miles wide at this point. Wind, waves, and boat traffic can make the river very dangerous in this area, particularly in cold weather. Read the “Cautions” section for this segment for more information about this part of the river. About two miles past Fishers Landing is Flanners Beach Campground, which has showers and campsites for \$20. Pine Cliff Recreation Area is 8 miles downriver. There are restrooms and a picnic shelter, but camping is not allowed. This is the end of the Neuse River paddle trail. The Neusiok Trail, part of MST Segment 16, starts here.

River Mile

205.2 Fishers Landing, right N35.0004, W76.9738    

207.2 Neuse River (Flanners Beach) Campground, right N34.9841, W76.9480    

211.2 Slocum Creek, right N34.9516, W76.8942

214.0 Hancock Creek, right N34.9390, W76.8530

215.8 Minnesott Beach (ferry landing), left N34.9397, W76.8220



215.8 Pine Cliff Recreation Area, right N34.9389, W76.8221



Camping



Lodging



Parking



Food



Restrooms



Supplies



Water



Picnic