

River Scouts

Help scout the East Branch Little Calumet River for log jams to preserve its accessibility and natural beauty.

The Indiana Dunes National Park and Northwest Indiana Paddling Association partner to keep the river free for paddlers and anglers. We need help from paddlers who can report on the location of jams.



This new River Scout program is an adaption to the COVID crisis. We can only send out small chainsaw crews to clear jams, so we rely on scouts working on their own, or at safe social distances, to tell us where the jams are located. You are our eyes and ears on the water!

We have three excellent put-in/take-out docks along the six miles we currently keep open. You can choose a float plan that will take you for as short a trip as you wish or navigate the entire stretch.

Contact the National Park Volunteer Program office if you wish to participate. Stop in the office Wednesday 9:00-3:00 at 618 Mineral Springs Road, Porter or rmail parkconnection@gmail.com.

Guidelines

Requirements

- You must be an experienced paddler, supply your own kayak or canoe, and wear a Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device.
- You must be on-boarded with the National Park Volunteer Program.
- We cannot provide shuttling service due to the pandemic. You must either paddle upstream and back (or the reverse) or arrange for you own shuttle if paddling downstream only.
- You should be familiar with the river. Note that the swamp is somewhat confusing to navigate. The rapids under IN-49 and any jam presents particular risks.

What You Do

Float whatever length you want of the river section we are monitoring. The section we are monitoring now is between Brummitt Road and Howe Road. If you like, you can call or email Rob to find out what has not been done recently.

If you find an obstruction – something that requires you to turn around or get out of your boat to get around – take a picture and fill out a worksheet, and send copies to blueways@nwipa.org. We do not completely clear fallen trees out of the river so that habitat is preserved, and so often leave only a narrow opening; if you can paddle through the opening, that is not a jam. If you are at low water (e.g. close to 3') but can scrape across a log without getting out, that is also not a jam. When in doubt, go ahead and report it. Please include in the email the length of the river you surveyed, along with pictures of each jam and the worksheet.

Watch for results shared periodically via emails and on the [NWIPA Facebook page](#).

We encourage you to pick up trash as you go; we have mesh bags to collect the trash in. Leave the mesh bags near the road at any of the launches.

When To Go

First, when NOT to go! Do not go if the water level is above 4' or rising. Check the level at [this website](#). Do not go out if thunder, lightning, rain or high winds are predicted. Other than that, choose any time that is convenient to you.

Put In Locations

You can put in anywhere you want, but we recommend the three installed launches.

1. *Upstream end:* Wykes-Plampin Preserve
 - Brummitt Road just south of Indian Boundary. Park adjacent to the put-in or at the school.
2. *Middle:* Walner Preserve
 - Taylor Street, just west of Calumet, about a half mile north of Indian Boundary. There is a gravel parking lot there.
3. *Downstream end:* Howe Road in the National Park
 - Howe Road bridge about a half mile south of Oak Hill. Park in the wide "circle" just south of the bridge, or the Mnoke Prairie parking lot just south of there.

Questions?

Give me a call or drop me an email or text.

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