

RELEASE: FLORIDA MEN CANOE ENTIRE 240-MILE SUWANNEE RIVER IN 48 HOURS

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Florida Men Complete Nonstop 242-Mile Paddle of the Suwannee River in 2.5 to Spotlight Wild Florida

SUWANNEE RIVER, FL — In an inspiring demonstration of endurance and purpose, six Florida men, **Mason Gravley, Jordon Wolfram, Zach Franco, Bo Meyering, Robin Beemer, Daniel Weber** successfully canoed the entire **Suwannee River**, over **242 miles**, in just **2.5 days**. Launching from the headwaters in Georgia's Okefenokee Swamp at daybreak on **9/26** and finishing in the Gulf at Suwannee, FL on **9/28, World Rivers Day**, the group completed the nonstop journey to raise awareness for the urgent protection of this area of the **Florida Wildlife Corridor**, and the connection of water and land between Georgia and Florida.

The expedition, which began at daybreak from Stephen Foster State Park in Georgia on Friday, September 26th and concluded after sunset on Sunday, September 28th, combined grueling physical effort with a message rooted in conservation. Two of the paddlers work for Florida conservation groups. **Franco**, the Conservation Partnership Coordinator at Archbold Biological Station in Lake Placid; **Gravley**, the Impact Campaigns Manager at the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation in St. Pete.

"This wasn't just an adventure, it was an invitation to explore our wild places," said Gravley. "We wanted to see this iconic waterway ourselves, and share the experience with others to show what's at stake. The Suwannee flows through some of the most intact and beautiful wildlands in Georgia and Florida, and we need to keep it that way, and there's a tremendous amount of good work being done to protect the area in both states."

The crew had some incredible encounters and adventures, including avoiding 200-pound jumping Suwannee Sturgeon, hallucinations from sleep deprivation, very low water levels, and heat exhaustion.

Throughout their 2.5-day push, the team paddled constantly with little to no sleep, navigating through the night under moonlight over the familiar tannin-stained waters. The journey highlighted how conservation easements, public lands, and the Florida Wildlife Corridor help safeguard the river's flow, its floodplain forests, the wildlife that depend on them, not just here at the Suwannee River, but nearly everywhere in Florida.

"Protecting the Suwannee means protecting everything it connects," Franco added. "This river doesn't exist in isolation, it's part of a living corridor that's still vulnerable to fragmentation."

The team's goal was to have a real adventure on the river and spark public appreciation for the connected landscapes that make up the Corridor, especially as land loss in Florida continues as the state welcomes approximately 1,000 new residents per day.