

Walnut Grove Road to Kennedy Park

The Walnut Grove Road to Kennedy Park section is a good option if you are looking for a short urban paddle, though there is a real possibility of dangerous “strainers,” or downed trees, near the I-40 bridge, where a log jam is often present. Otherwise, this is a relatively easy paddle. Under normal conditions, you can paddle this section without having to get out of the boat to portage or wade through shallow water. There are no trail markers, as the river is well-channelized and the route is clear. There is a nice sand bar across the river from the Kennedy Park boat ramp - a good spot for picnicking.

On this 5.1 mile section, you will pass under the Shelby Farms Greenline Trail Bridge - a recently converted old railroad bridge - as well as the I-40, Summer Ave., and Covington Pike Rd. bridges. When approaching the I-40 bridge and the potentially dangerous accumulation of logs usually found there, please paddle cautiously and choose the best route for conditions.

To reach the launch ramp by car, take Walnut Grove Rd. east, cross the bridge over the Wolf, turn right at the first possible gravel exit and park under the bridge close to the ramp. If you miss this first right turn, go a little further east down Walnut Grove and turn right at the BMX Bike Park; continue right onto a gravel road leading down to the bridge and boat ramp.



The Kennedy Park take-out is a concrete boat ramp on river right. Don't miss this take-out unless you are prepared to paddle on to the next one, 11 miles down-river at Mud Island! To reach Kennedy Park by car, exit I-240 at Covington Pike, drive north, and turn left, or west, onto Raleigh LaGrange Rd. The park entrance will be about a mile down on the left; the address is 4575 Raleigh LaGrange Rd. Drive all the way to the

back of the park, past the ball fields. Look for a gravel road leading to a paved parking lot and boat ramp. Because the ramp area is sometimes closed, we recommend that you scout this area before paddling.

A word of caution: While WRC is unaware of any vehicle break-ins at Kennedy Park, the boat ramp area is relatively remote and unlikely to be patrolled regularly by police or other security personnel. You may want to have someone stay with the shuttle vehicles and wait for the paddlers, or time the arrival of both the boaters and the shuttle vehicles so that they coincide.