Distance: 9 miles  
Starting Elevation: 160 feet  
Ending Elevation: 135 feet

Obstacles/Rapids:  
From the Augusta Canal diversion dam to Hammonds Ferry, there are numerous shoals. Hammonds Ferry Shoals is a class II rapid (see entry below), but can be avoided by picking your way through the shoals on the Georgia side of the river. DON’T FORGET! You need a helmet on to run Hammonds Shoals!

Restroom Facilities:  
Mile 0  Restrooms at Savannah Rapids Pavilion  
Mile 5  Hammonds Ferry Porta Toilet  
Mile 8.5  Porta Toilets at Augusta Campsite

Points of Interest:  
**Mile 0—Augusta Canal**—Built in the 1840s, the Augusta Canal originally facilitated navigation around the Savannah’s shoals and had the added benefit of bringing water and power supply to the city. Today, while Petersburg boats no longer carry goods to points upstream, the canal still provides water and power to the city. Opened in 1846, by 1848 the first mills began popping up along the Canal, harnessing the canal’s flow to operate a grist, saw and textile mill. During the Civil War the Canal attracted the huge Confederate Powder Works which supplied munitions for the Confederate Army, and after the war, more textile mills sprang up along the Canal—all harnessing the canal’s flow to mechanically power looms and other equipment. In 1890, the first hydro-electricity plant went up on the canal, firing up the city’s streetcars and streetlights—not to mention the mills and other businesses. But alas, the canal’s heyday would soon come to an end. Cheap electricity (Stevens Creek Dam) rendered the canal obsolete in terms of power production and the dawn of railroads had long since eliminated the need for river navigation. From the 1920s through the 1960s the Canal languished and city leaders were left wondering what to do with the historic waterway. There were proposals to build a modern power plant on its banks; there were even plans to drain the watery path and convert it to a road. Ultimately, it was the threat of this alteration of the Savannah dates back thousands of years.

**Mile 2—I-20**—Of Paddle Georgia’s six adventures since 2005, only one did not pass beneath an interstate highway (the Flint in 2008). I-20 extends 1,535 miles from Florence, South Carolina to Kent, Texas. The interstate was built in the 1960s and 70s. Before the dawn of railroads and automobiles, the rivers were our superhighways.

**Mile 3.5—Augusta Waterworks**—You’ll see the Augusta Waterworks pumping station at river right sitting on land between the Canal and the river. The structure began pumping the city’s drinking water from the canal in the 1890s. Today, the City of Augusta pumps from 24 to 45 million gallons a day from the Canal to provide Augsustans with water.

**Mile 3.5—Hammond Shoals**—Hammond Shoals stretches across the width of the Savannah, interrupted by a series of mid-river islands. These shoals mark the last gasp of the Piedmont on the Savannah. The shoals are named for a Hammond (John or Leroy—the history books are not clear) who attempted to establish a tobacco and cotton trading center here in 1790 called Campbell Town as a rival to traders on the Augusta side of the river. Hammond ran a successful ferry here and the competition to broker the products of the region’s farms became intense. In 1799, legend has it, Hammond was mysteriously killed. Campbell Town did not recover and the Georgia businessmen (and Augusta) would ultimately go on to dominate the local economy.

**Mile 7.5—Augusta Riverfront**—Augusta’s riverfront includes the Morris Museum of Art, the Augusta Marriott, a riverfront amphitheater, Oglethorpe Park and Ft. Discovery—a science museum—not to mention row upon row of boat slips. With a population of over a half million people, Augusta ranks as Georgia’s second largest city. Riverfront marinas sell snacks and drinks. In 2009, a report by the non-profit organization Environment Georgia determined that when it comes to toxic discharges, the Savannah is Georgia’s most polluted river—and the fourth most polluted river in the country. In 2005, wastewater treatment plants and industries discharged more than seven million pounds of toxic pollutants to the river—including 38,000 pounds of chemicals know to cause cancer. Heavy industry in Augusta contributes to this pollution as does industrial facilities located between Augusta and Savannah. The Savannah Riverkeeper, whose office overlooks our take out point, is working to stem this tide of pollutants.