

Challenger Check-In Day and Inspection Procedures
Ft. DeSoto Park, East Beach
Friday, March 6, 2026
9:00am* to 2:30pm

PRIOR to arriving on Check-In Day

- Read the WaterTribe Warning
 - **NOTE:** This form is not turned in but must be understood by you and your shore contact.
- Print the three forms identified below, which are found under your event at www.watertribe.com. Read and fully complete the forms. (**NOTE:** There will be a minimal number of extra forms at check-in. Please bring the forms with you with each form printed on a separate sheet of paper.)
 1. WaterTribe Waiver
 2. Float Plan Be
 - Be sure contact phone numbers are correct.
 - Provide a detailed description of your vessel
 3. American Canoe Association (ACA) Waiver (Use the Minor waiver for any crew under the age of 18.)
 - If you are an ACA member, please write your membership number where noted.
 - If you are not an ACA member, you will mark the box in the upper right of the form and pay \$10 for an event membership. Cash is preferred. Checks should be made out to WaterTribe, Inc.
- Configure your US Coast Guard approved PFD with the required equipment attached (i.e. PLB, knife, whistle). The PLB and whistle must be attached with lanyards. If you only have one safety knife, it must be attached with a lanyard. If you have a backup safety knife, only one has to be attached with a lanyard. You will be asked to demonstrate deploying your primary safety knife with either hand.

Check-In Steps*

First Step – Arrive at the East Beach (for those driving to the beach, turn left at the stop sign facing the ranger station. East Beach is the first beach on your right.)

- If arriving at the beach by vehicle or vehicle/trailer, park in the East Beach parking lot (vehicles with trailers please park in the northern lot closest to the Park road)

- Payment of the parking fee may be made using the Park Mobile app or a credit card.
- If arriving via water, please see number 2 of the Third Step below.
- Gather fully configured PFD (see above) and the three required, printed and completed forms.

Second Step - Proceed to Pavilion 14

- Present your fully configured PFD, PLB and tracker for inspection.
- After passing this initial inspection, you will be directed to a volunteer to:
 - Hand in your completed paperwork.
 - Receive a green wrist band, which identifies to all volunteers that you have completed the pre-inspection process.
 - Pay for ACA (American Canoe Association) membership unless already a member
- Following handing in your paperwork proceed to the t-shirt area:
 - Collect your t-shirt
 - Sign up for the Saturday, March 14th award ceremony and Feast in Key Largo.
 - Receive Park long-term parking information

Third Step (two options)

1. Move Your Boat to the Beach from the parking lot

- Volunteers on the beach will be checking for the green wristband to confirm the Second Step has been completed prior to placing a boat on the beach.

2. Sail to the beach

- Arrive between 9am-1pm
- Place your boat on the sand. Volunteers will be there to greet you.
- Proceed to Pavilion 14 to completed pre-inspection
 - You will need the three completed forms, fully configured PFD with PLB and tracker
- Return to your vessel (see Fourth Step)

NOTE: All boats must be set up and inspected no later than 2:30pm unless otherwise approved by Chief.

Fourth Step - Boat/Gear Inspection

- **If you have not completed a WaterTribe Challenge**, your boat and gear will be inspected by Chief or a designated volunteer. Designated inspector volunteers will be on the beach and identified by a green t-shirt and carrying a clipboard. As soon as your boat is ready and all your gear displayed, locate an inspector.
- **If you have completed a WaterTribe Challenge**, print the Equipment Inspection Sheet and bring it with you to complete as you set up your boat and gear. After you complete the form, place it in the designated box on the table where you handed in your event forms. Be sure to put your WaterTribe name at the top and sign the bottom.

Fifth Step - Mandatory Captain's Meeting for All Challengers

- Pavilion 14, 3:00 pm
- A group photo will be taken immediately following the Captain's Meeting on the steps of the Pavilion 14 facing the beach. Please move there as quickly as possible.

A few FYIs about Ft. DeSoto Park

- Drones are not permitted anywhere on Park property.
- There is no stealth camping in the Park. You will be ticketed by local law enforcement.
- Alcohol is not permitted anywhere in the Park.
- Pets are not permitted on any beach in the Park. Service Animals trained to perform specific tasks to aid a person with a disability are welcome. Emotional support or companion animals are not permitted.

*Volunteers will be ready at 9am to welcome each Challenger and begin the check-in process. Please note historically the first hour is busiest.