The Orange River Conservation Area is comprised of three separate properties, Reynolds Marsh Overlook, Marsh Island Preserve and Orange River Landing. Two water access sites provide paddlers with miles of fresh water to explore.

Orange River Landing was acquired in 2003. The property consists of 8.3 acres with 940 feet of frontage on the Orange River. The access road ends at a gravel landing suitable for small trailered boats as well as hand-launching (space for turning and parking is very limited). This property was the site of a steam-powered sawmill in the early 1920s, footings from the mill can be seen just south of the landing.

Reynolds Marsh Overlook was acquired in 2008. The property is 1.4 acres and has 310 feet of shorefront. Reynolds Marsh Overlook provides hand-carry access to the river.

Marsh Island was acquired in 2012, with 240 acres and 2.2 miles of shorefront. During 2013, a short trail and two day use sites will be developed.

The properties were purchased with support from the Small Craft Access Trust Foundation, North American Wetlands Conservation Act Funds and donations from the community.

 Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maintains the Orange River Management Area due to the river’s ecological significance. The Orange River provides one of the more important Inland Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitats in Downeast Maine. It provides undisturbed nesting and uncontaminated feeding areas. The area is also home to bald eagles, provides deer wintering areas and supports brook trout fisheries.

One State of Maine endangered birds may be spotted along the Orange River, the least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*). The least bittern is an elusive bird and is rare in Maine due to loss of habitat. The least bittern is the smallest heron found in America, with a wingspan of 16-18 inches. This secretive bird spends its time exploring among the reeds. When alarmed, the least bittern freezes in place with its bill pointed up and sometimes even sways with the wind blowing through the reeds.
Reynolds Marsh Overlook and Orange River Landing both provide water access for canoes and kayaks. The two properties are close enough to offer an easy one-way or round-trip paddle between them. Several day-use sites are ideal pullouts to stop for lunch or to watch for wildlife. Orange River Landing is about 2.5 miles downstream from Reynolds Marsh Overlook.

Please note that the Orange River is dammed to provide optimal habitat. Paddlers should expect higher water levels in the spring and early summer and lower water levels in late summer and fall. The beavers are quite active on the Orange River and their dams may span the width of the waterway at times.

Water access from Reynolds Marsh Overlook is from a short trail that starts on the left side of the parking lot.

**PRESERVE GUIDELINES**

Our goal is to minimize human impact and protect this area’s wildlife, plants and natural features while allowing low-impact public recreation. Help us protect this special place by observing the following guidelines:

- Visit only during daylight hours and at your own risk;
- Please practice “carry-in/carry-out” and “leave no trace” ethics;
- Camping, fires and ATVs are not permitted;
- Keep dogs under voice control or on leash at all times;
- If you are out in early summer, please steer clear of nesting birds.

**GETTING THERE**

**Reynolds Marsh Overlook**

*From the North*, take US. Route 1 to Whiting. Go 3 miles past the Route 189 turn-off. The parking lot will be on your right.

*From the South*, take Route 1 10.2 miles past the Route 191 turn-off in East Machias. Look for the parking lot on the left.

**Orange River Landing**

*From the North*, take US Route 1 to Whiting. Go 0.8 miles past the Route 189 turn-off to Playhouse Lane. Go 0.1 mile and turn right onto Landing Road. Take Landing Road past the house (where it becomes dirt) to the end where there is a small 2-car parking lot.

*From the South*, take US Route 1 12 miles past the Route 191 turn-off in East Machias. Look for Playhouse Land on the left and proceed as listed above.

Thank you for helping preserve the Orange River for current & future generations!