



Sand dune ridges in Imperial Sand Dunes National Recreation Area, Southern California. Bill Fortney



The Knife's Edge, steep ridge near St. George, Utah. Bill Fortney



Fort Loudon, on Fort Loudon Lake, Tennessee. Bill Fortney

Suwanee River

Pilot's Log

Date: May 2, 2008

Flight time: 7:00 a.m.

Visibility: Clear

Conditions: 61 degrees, Light winds

Base of Operation: Suwanee County
Airport, Florida

Field Elevation: 104 msl

Altitude range: 104 to 956 msl



The Southern Mangrove graces much of the banks of the Suwanee and contribute to the deep brown color of the water. Bill Fortney

The Suwanee River (also spelled Suwannee River) is a major river of southern Georgia and northern Florida in the United States. It is a wild blackwater river, about 266 miles long. At the time of the Spanish exploration of the area in the 1530's, the river banks were inhabited by the Timucuan people, who named it Suwani, meaning "Echo River". In the 18th century, Seminoles lived by the river. The steamboat *Madison* operated on the river before the Civil War.

This river is the subject of the Stephen Foster song "Old Folks at Home", in which he calls it the Swanee River. Foster had named the Pedee River of South Carolina in his first lyrics. When told of the Suwanee he thought it fit the lyrics much better. It was called Swanee River because Foster had misspelled the name. Foster never saw the river he made world famous in his song.

As a Kentuckian I have heard the songs and music of Stephen Foster for all of my life. When flying over the Suwanee and seeing it winding through the Florida pines, I could softly hear the strains of "Old Folks at Home" winding through my mind like the river below!



Great sentinels stand watch over the Valley. Mark Kettenhofen