

*Visit Natural*  
**NORTH FLORIDA®**

**Guide to State-Designated Paddling Trails**



Compiled from Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails  
(<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/paddle.htm>)

This paddling guide can be downloaded at  
<http://www.naturalnorthflorida.com/download-center>

Compiled March 1, 2016

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## Florida's Designated Paddling Trails

From spring-fed rivers to county blueway networks to the 1515-mile Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail, Florida is endowed with exceptional paddling trails, rich in wildlife and scenic beauty.

If you want to explore one or more of the designated trails, please read through the following descriptions, click on a specific trail on our main paddling trail page for detailed information, and begin your adventure!

The following maps and descriptions were compiled from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails. It was last updated on **March 16, 2016**. While we strive to keep our information current, the most up-to-date versions are available on the OGT website: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/guide/paddle.htm>

The first Florida paddling trails were designated in the early 1970s, and trails have been added to the list ever since. Total mileage for the state-designated trails is now around 4,000 miles. The Florida Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) coordinates the designated trails and works with or seeks to identify local and regional managers. For a waterway to be included as a state-designated paddling trail, a government body or non-profit entity must agree to manage the trail and apply for designation through an established process: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/designation/>.

If you have noticed changes in access or other features while on a trail, please contact the OGT paddling trails coordinator, Liz Sparks: [liz.sparks@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:liz.sparks@dep.state.fl.us).

Local outfitters, paddling clubs and the non-profit Florida Paddling Trails Association (<http://www.floridapaddlingtrails.com/default.asp><http://www.paddleflorida.org/>) are good sources for learning about the numerous non-designated paddling trails. Also, taking guided trips with groups such as Paddle Florida are great ways to break into multi-day adventures on the water, .

Before you embark on some of the river trails, take a look at this chart to determine if water levels are adequate for an enjoyable trip:

<http://www.floridapaddlingtrails.com/showpage.asp?page=minflowflorida>.

### **Paddling Skill Levels**

There are waterways for all skill levels. Just remember to stay safe. This link to trip tips and safety information may assist you in planning your trip:

[http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/paddling/Segments/Tips\\_Safety.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/paddling/Segments/Tips_Safety.htm).\_

The trail guides and this overview offer recommended skill levels for the various trails. Here are general definitions for these levels.

*Beginner:* New to paddling and may need tips and/or instruction. Prefers short trips of 1-5 miles on protected waters

*Intermediate:* Paddlers with knowledge of basic strokes and rescue techniques and some paddling experience on both river trails and open water in various weather conditions. Prefers trip distances of 5-10 miles and sometimes longer under favorable conditions.

*Advanced:* Seasoned paddlers who possess the skills and experience to paddle a variety of water types and conditions. Comfortable with paddling more than 10 miles in a day.

For more details about paddling skill levels, log onto this website:

<http://www.kayaktraining.com/ACA%20Training%20Assessments.htm>

# Florida Designated Paddling Trails

## Aucilla River



259

19 27

257B

Lamont

JEFFERSON

MADISON





Aucilla River Paddling Trail Map

257A

Eridu

TAYLOR

14

-  Designated Paddling Trail
-  Wetlands
-  Water
-  Designated Paddling Trail Index

0 1 2 4 Miles

# Aucilla River Paddling Trail Map

N



**# 1: Herndon Landing**  
N30.31754 W-83.81561

**# 3: Old Railroad Bridge**  
N30.2799 W-83.8422

**# 2 Reams Landing**  
N30.172751 W-83.504424

**#3, Jones Mill Creek**  
N30.254567 W-83.897367

**Scout Rapids**  
N30.2458 W-83.9143

**#4, End of Trail,**  
N30.2105 W-83.9218

- Florida National Scenic Trail
- Aucilla River Designated Paddling Trail
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

0 0 1 2 Miles



## The Waterway

With high limestone banks and an arching canopy of live oaks, cypress and other trees, the [Aucilla](#) River is as picturesque as it is wild. The river is designated a [National Recreation Trail](#) and runs 75 miles to the Gulf of Mexico, much of it within the [Aucilla Wildlife Management Area](#) and lands managed by the [Suwannee River Water Management District](#). Only about a third is navigable as the river plunges underground near Goose Pasture Road and reappears nearby as a chain of sink holes strewn through a lush, primal landscape. The Aucilla emerges about eight miles later at Nutall Rise and totally changes character, becoming flatter, wider and brackish as it ends with majestic vistas of the Gulf of Mexico. Hike on stellar trails, paddle the historic Slave Canal in addition to nearby [Wacissa River Paddling Trail](#) and Econfina Rivers, and enjoy abundant wildlife in this photographer's dreamscape.

## The Paddling Experience

This river is not recommended for beginners as tight turns, rocky shoals, and a short stretch of rapids can be challenging, especially at low water. Expert paddlers can add an additional 10 miles of difficult paddling by launching from Federal Rd. (north of US 19/27) to Herndon's Landing but it is typically clogged with numerous log jams. A better option is to begin a 15-mile trip at Herndon's Landing and take out before the river dives underground just north of Goose Pasture Rd. Do not launch from the US 19/27 or CR 14 bridges as was recommended in former editions of the map guide. At certain times of the year, access points might require a 4-wheel drive vehicle. Call the Suwannee River Water Management District for updates on road conditions and permission to camp overnight along the Aucilla or at Goose Pasture Group Campground: 386-362-1001. You are allowed to camp overnight on the Aucilla with permission but overnight parking is not allowed so you must arrange to be dropped off.

The water [gauge](#) at Lamont should be between 48 and 50 feet for ideal paddling. You can also call the Suwannee River Water Management District 24-hour water level hotline at 386-362-6626. If the river is below 48 feet at Lamont, downed trees and rocky areas will make for a tough trip. You can order a more detailed [guide](#) to the *Rivers of AWE: Aucilla, Wacissa and Econfina Rivers* through the Wildlife Foundation of Florida.

## Access Points

There are a numerous access sites on both sides of the Aucilla River, a select few are included below. There are more available on FWC Public Boat Ramp Finder [website](#) with photos and Google maps.

### **#1 Start of the trail, Herndon Landing, CR 257A entrance, west side of the river.**

This is an unimproved access suitable for hand launching boats only, with very remote parking. *From US 27, turn south onto CR 257A. After 4 miles, turn left onto Lanier Grade (CR 257A intersects this road twice—it is best to take the second one, indicated by a small brown sign reading "Middle Aucilla"). Follow Lanier Road 0.7 miles, turn right at the fork and proceed 0.2 miles to kiosk, bear left a short distance, then turn right almost immediately on first dirt road to the river. Look for Herndon Landing Ramp sign*



**#2, Mile 2.0, Reams Landing, Mt. Gilead Rd., east side of the river**

There is the only paved boat ramp on the east side of the Aucilla and there is also an unpaved, sandy launch a half mile further up the road. Directions to the paved launch: *From US 19/27 turn south on CR 257A. In 7 miles cross the Aucilla River, and the road becomes CR 14. A short distance south of the Aucilla River Bridge, turn left (east) on Mt. Gilead Rd (aka Rocky Ford Cemetery Rd). Drive 2.0 miles, stay left at the fork in the road, go 0.8 miles and look for "River Access 24.4" sign, follow to the river.*



**#3, Mile 4.7, Old Railroad Bridge, west side of the river**

This is an unimproved access on the west side of the river, suitable for hand launching boats only, with very remote parking. *From US 19/27, turn south onto CR 257A and drive 6.1 miles. Look for "Lamont Tract, CR 257 Entrance sign", turn left and proceed 0.2 miles to fork in the road. Look for "Old Railroad Bridge Launch" sign, go 0.7 miles to river.*

**#4, Mile 10, Jones Mill Creek (River Access 17.6), west side of the river**

This is an unimproved access on the west side of the river suitable for hand launching boats only, with very remote parking. About a mile downstream from this access point are a short stretch of rocky shoals, the Aucilla Rapids. Stop and scout before running as conditions may be challenging depending on water levels; portage if uncertain. *From US 19/27, turn south onto CR 257A. After 4.6 miles, turn right onto Walker Springs/Thomas City Road and then 3.6 drive miles to O'Neil Tram. Turn left and go 5.7 miles to graded road on the left. Turn and proceed 1 mile to river launch. There is no road sign.*

**#5, Mile 15, end of the trail, east side of the river.**

**Be sure to leave the river at this point as a short distance downstream the river dives underground.** *From US 19/27, turn south onto CR 257A. In 7 miles cross the Aucilla River, and the road becomes CR 14. Continue to the Cabbage Grove Fire Tower, and turn right onto Powell Hammock Rd. Follow 2 miles to Goose Pasture Rd, and turn right. Follow 0.8 miles to a gravel road heading off to the right (north) (GPS: N30.2005 W83.9219). Turn and go 0.6 miles to a river access on the left.*

**Outfitters and Shuttle Service**

[Wacissa River Canoe Rentals](#), 850-997-5023



## Base Camp

Plan on camping several days at the [Goose Pasture Group Campground](#) on the nearby Wacissa River to explore this exceptionally scenic area. There is a group camp adjacent to the public campground with portable toilets and covered pavilion. Neither campground charges any fees and both are closed during general gun season. Call the Suwannee River Water Management District for permission to camp overnight along the Aucilla at (386) 362-1001 or make reservations and get the gate code to the group camp.

## Florida National Scenic Trail

Mix up your adventure and take a hike along a popular segment of the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#). There is a kiosk and limited parking as the trail crosses Goose Pasture Road. Heading north from the kiosk, the Aucilla River Trail is draped along a picturesque portion of the river's east bank. The Aucilla Sinks Trail traces the river's mysterious disappearing act south of Goose Pasture Road. Sink holes reveal the underground course of the ink-black Aucilla River, framed by graceful palms in a rugged wilderness landscape. Orange blazes mark the tree-lined trail, making it easy for hikers to explore this geologic wonderland. Wear orange during [hunting season](#).



## History

From MyFWC.com: For more than 12 thousand years people have inhabited the land around the Aucilla and Wacissa rivers. Indians hunted and fished the abundant resources in and around the rivers, where archeologists documented many seafood middens and prehistoric artifacts. To protect these and other cultural resources, artifact removal is illegal.

Before the first Europeans arrived, the climate was drier and the sea level lower than today. Dry land extended miles into what is now the Gulf of Mexico and water levels were lower in rivers and lakes. The Aucilla was a series of separate sinkholes that were a major source of fresh water, attracting mastodons and other large animals. North Florida's first inhabitants used chert (quartz) spear points attached to shafts to hunt for big game around these watering holes. In 1993, archeologists from the University of Florida recovered a 7.5-foot mastodon tusk from a prehistoric site along the Aucilla River. Eight long cut-marks at the base of the tusk indicated it had been removed from the skull by humans. Radiocarbon dated the tusk at 12,200 years ago, one of the earliest records of human activity in Florida.

As Florida's climate became wetter and forests replaced grasslands, the Indians hunted deer and other animals in the forests, fished and gathered freshwater snails and other mollusks. By A.D. 400, villages were built up, and people had constructed ceremonial mounds. Archeologists refer to this as the Weedon Island culture, named for an archeological site found in the Tampa Bay area. In the spring of 1902 and 1918, archeologist Clarence Moore excavated two mounds along the Aucilla River that he associated with a nearby

village. Moore uncovered numerous burials containing skeletal remains as well as decorative ceramic burial goods.

The rich resources and the accessibility of two rivers attracted those determined to profit from the bounty. Slaves deepened a natural channel between the Wacissa and the Aucilla rivers, but the Slave Canal was abandoned. Later, Seminole Indians used the dense swamps to successfully attack the Army soldiers who could not defend against the guerrilla tactics.

Lumbermen removed most of the old-growth cypress from the swamps early in the 20th century. They constructed raised roadbeds (trams) for locomotives to haul huge timbers out of the swamps. Stands of native longleaf pine were replanted with fast-growing slash and loblolly pines for pulpwood. Today, some of these trams still provide roadways for vehicles, while others are smaller pathways for hikers, cyclists and wildlife.



*Aucilla Rapids, photos Liz Sparks*



# Itchetucknee Paddling Trail Map



Access Point: Itchetucknee Head Spring

Access Point: Dampier's Landing

Access Point: Last Take Out

Itchetucknee Springs State Park

COLUMBIA

27

-  Itchetucknee Paddling Trail
-  Springs
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Florida Conservation Lands
-  Florida State Parks
-  Wetlands

0 0.275 0.55 1.1 Miles

## The Waterway

This scenic waterway begins near the beautiful headspring of Ichetucknee Springs at the north end of [Ichetucknee Springs State Park](#). Made up of nine springs, the Ichetucknee River's 72-degree year-round water flows three miles through the park boundaries. The park protects spectacular habitats that are home to a variety of wildlife and plant life that can be seen both above and below the surface of the crystal clear water.

## The Paddling Experience

Ichetucknee River is suitable for beginners and offers an easy 3-mile paddle or paddle 6-mile roundtrip from either end. The river is very popular during the summer months attracting hundreds of visitors who drift slowly on floats and tubes which can be rented outside the park boundaries. The best time to paddle is between Labor Day and Memorial Day holiday weekends when the crowds have disappeared and wildlife is abundant. Inflatable canoes, kayaks and rafts are not permitted to launch from the North End the day after Labor Day through the Friday before Memorial Day unless they are Coast Guard Certified as a vessel. Paddlers are permitted to take food and drink on the river in non-disposable containers only. **PADDLERS MUST BE ON THE RIVER NO LATER THAN 3:00 PM.** During the summer-season, there is an in-park shuttle service available. During the off-season, you must hike between access points, arrange your own shuttle, or call a local outfitter.

Outside of the state park property it is possible to continue your journey an additional 2 miles before reaching the Santa Fe River, then another 4 miles downstream to a public launch on US 129. After leaving the park the river narrows and shoots rapidly under the US 27 bridge so approach with caution. Houses appear along the banks and dead trees may jam the river past the state park boundary. Santa Fe River boat traffic may be heavy during weekends.

## Access Points

*It is possible to make a round-trip excursion from either end of the trail. However the access points below begin at the north end of the park.*

### **Access #1, Start of the Trail, Ichetucknee Headspring**

The canoe/kayak launch charges a fee and is approximately 50 yards downstream from headspring at north end of the park. *From Fort White take US 47 north approximately 2 miles. Turn left at the blinking light at Elim Church Road. Drive about 4 miles to Ichetucknee Springs State Park North Entrance. Turn left into park.*

### **Access #2, Mile 2.0, Dampier's Landing**

About a 10 minute walk from parking lot located at south end of the park off US 27. *From Fort White, go west approx. 5 miles on US27 to Ichetucknee Springs State Park South Entrance. Turn right into park.*

### **Access #3, Mile 3.0, End of the trail, South Take-out**

This access is located just before US 27 Bridge. (This is the last chance to take-out within the park, the next

opportunity is the US 129 bridge, 6 miles further downstream.). *From Fort White, go west app. 5.5 miles on US27 to Ichetucknee Springs State Park Last Take-out Entrance right before the US 27 bridge. Turn right into park.*

## Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Adventure Outpost](#) (386) 454-0611  
[Ichetucknee Family Campground](#) (386) 497-2150  
[Santa Fe Canoe Outpost](#) (386) 454-2050

## Base Camp

There is no camping available in Ichetucknee Springs State Park. There is a small private campground at the north entrance, the Ichetucknee Family Campground. The closest state park option is [O'Leno State Park](#) near High Springs. One of Florida's first state parks, O'Leno State Park was first developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The park is located along the banks of the scenic [Santa Fe River](#), a designated paddling trail and tributary of the Suwannee River. It features sinkholes, hardwood hammocks, river swamps and sandhills. As the river courses through the park, it disappears underground and reemerges over three miles away in [River Rise Preserve State Park](#).

O'Leno State Park offers visitors the opportunity to unwind in a natural setting. Visitors can enjoy a day of hiking or biking on the park's shaded trails. The Santa Fe River is a beautiful spot to launch a canoe or try your hand at fishing along its banks. Pavilions are located along the river's edge, providing a serene backdrop for picnicking and relaxing. The shady, full-facility campground is the perfect place for a relaxing overnight stay. O'Leno State Park is located on U.S. 441, six miles north of High Springs

## History

Perhaps the Ichetucknee's greatest historical treasure is the Mission de San Martin de Timucua. This Spanish/ Native American village was one of the major interior missions serving the important Spanish settlement of St. Augustine. The mission, built in 1608 flourished through most of that century. The river and springs were used consistently by even earlier cultures of Native Americans, dating back thousands of years. During the 1800s, early travelers on the historic Bellamy Road often stopped at Ichetucknee Springs to quench their thirst. Later that century, a gristmill and general store were located at Mill Pond Spring. With high quantities of limestone at or just below the ground surface, the area became early headquarters for North Florida's phosphate industry in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Small surface mines are still visible throughout the park. Continuing through the 1940s, cypress and longleaf pine forests were harvested by the local timber and naval stores industries. Ichetucknee Springs State Park was purchased by the State of Florida in 1970 from the Loncala Corporation to preserve one of the state's outstanding natural wonders. In 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior declared the Ichetucknee Spring a National Natural Landmark



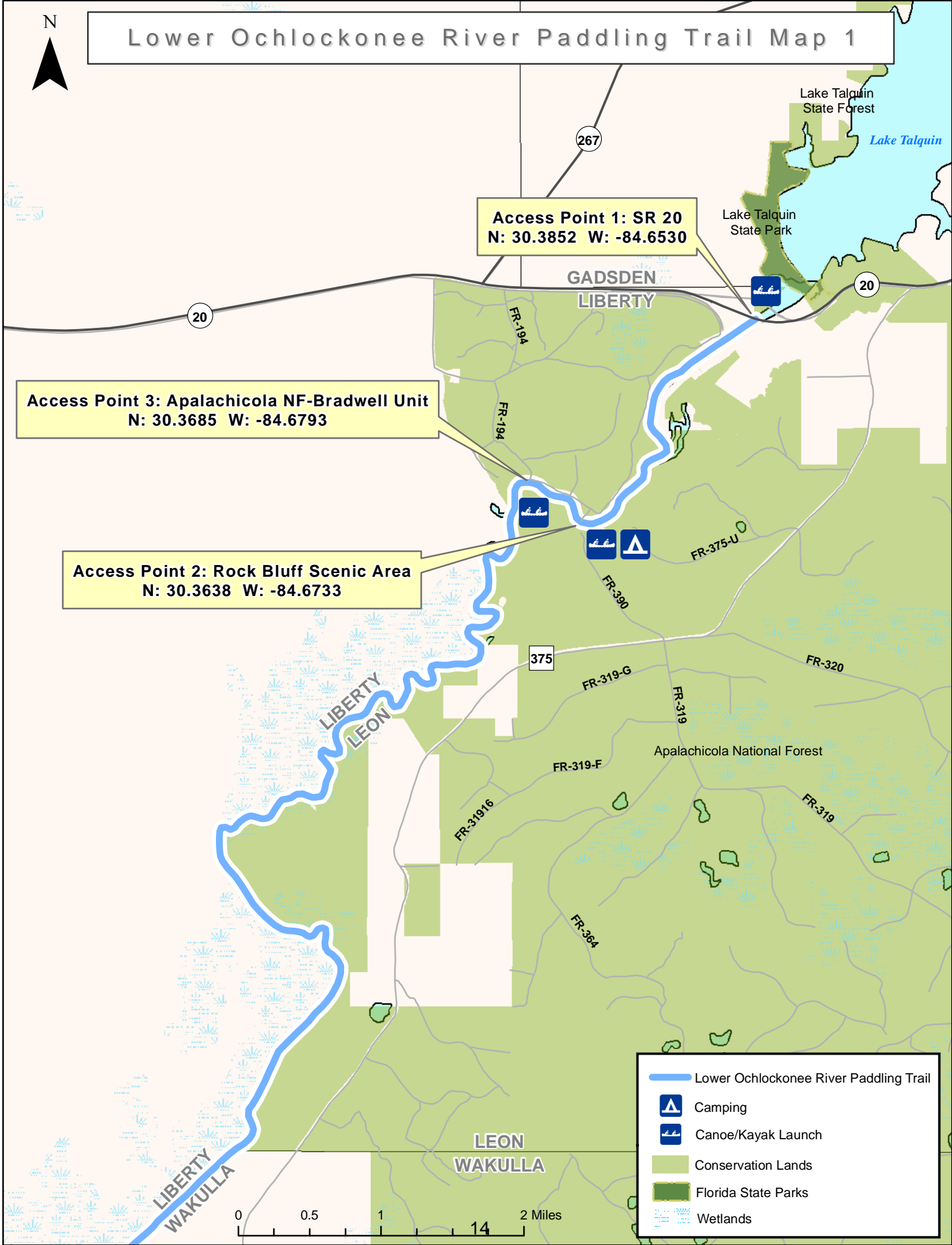


# Florida Designated Paddling Trails

## Lower Ochlockonee River



# Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail Map 1



**Access Point 3: Apalachicola NF-Bradwell Unit**  
N: 30.3685 W: -84.6793

**Access Point 2: Rock Bluff Scenic Area**  
N: 30.3638 W: -84.6733

- Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Conservation Lands
- Florida State Parks
- Wetlands



# Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail Map 2



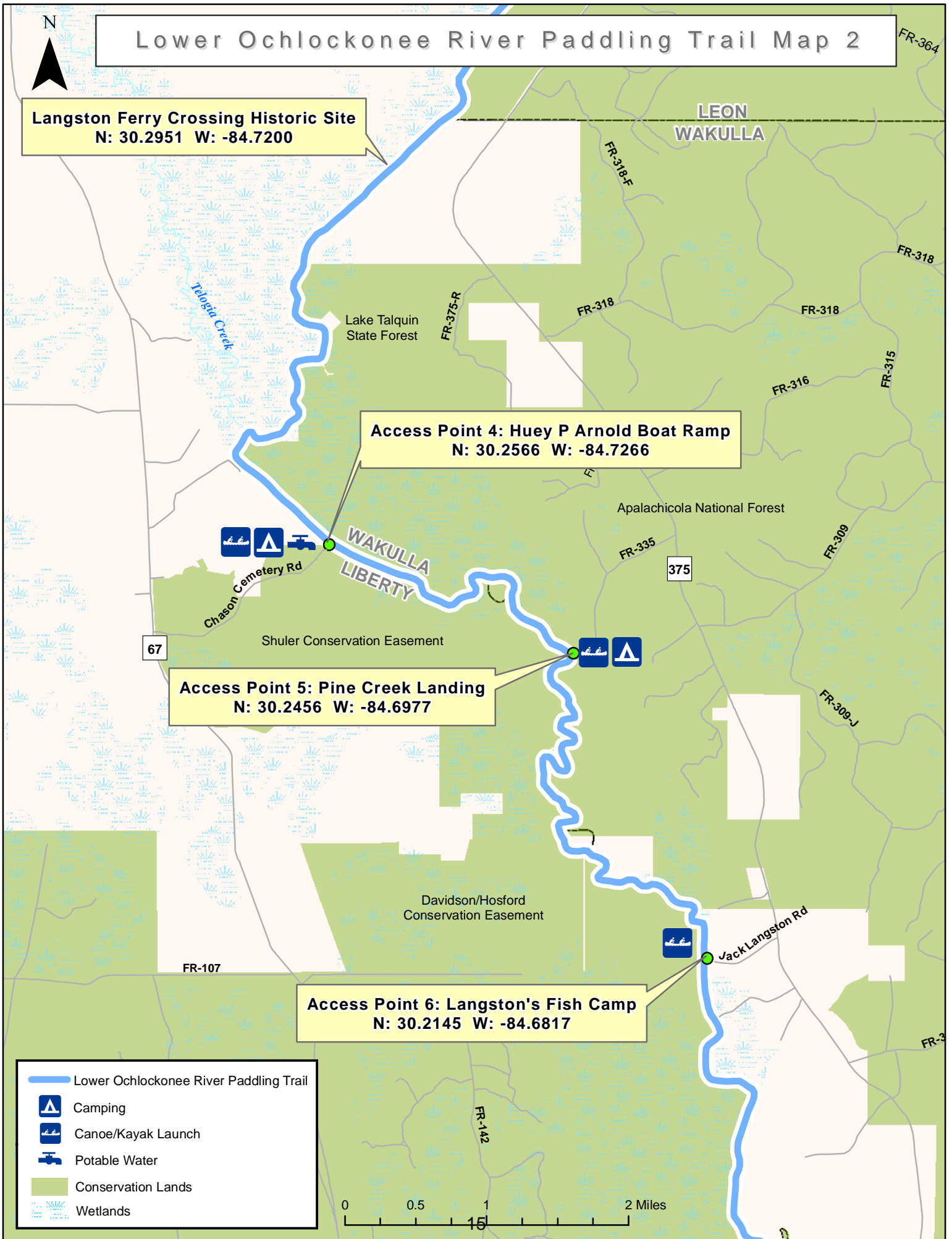
**Langston Ferry Crossing Historic Site**  
N: 30.2951 W: -84.7200

**Access Point 4: Huey P Arnold Boat Ramp**  
N: 30.2566 W: -84.7266

**Access Point 5: Pine Creek Landing**  
N: 30.2456 W: -84.6977

**Access Point 6: Langston's Fish Camp**  
N: 30.2145 W: -84.6817

- Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Potable Water
- Conservation Lands
- Wetlands



# Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail Map 3

N



Davidson/Hosford  
Conservation Easement

Jack Langston Rd

**Access Point 6: Langston's Fish Camp**  
N: 30.2145 W: -84.6817

**Access Point 9: Porter Lake  
Campground**  
N: 30.1765 W: -84.6758

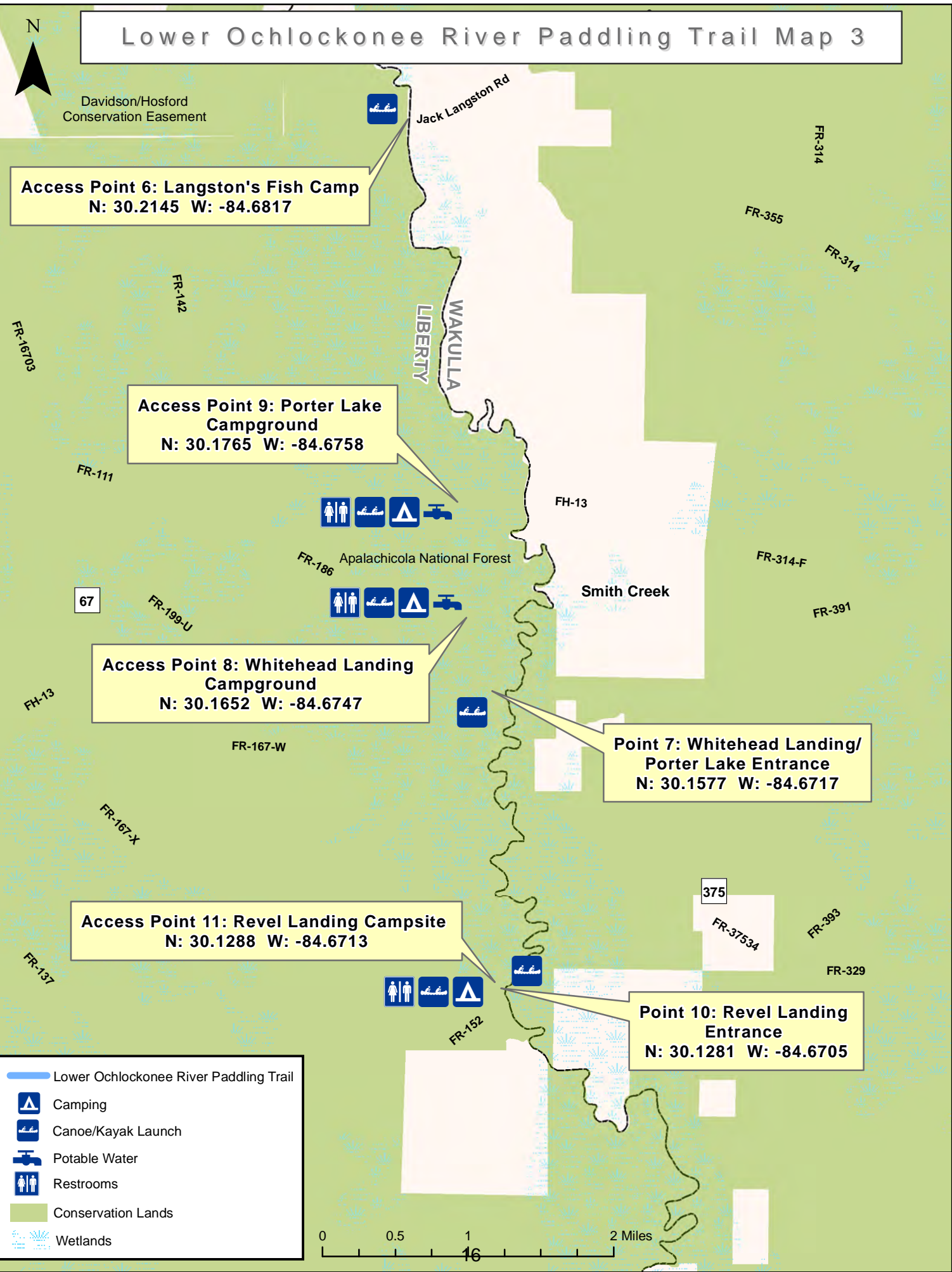
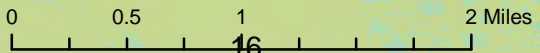
**Access Point 8: Whitehead Landing  
Campground**  
N: 30.1652 W: -84.6747

**Access Point 11: Revel Landing Campsite**  
N: 30.1288 W: -84.6713

**Point 7: Whitehead Landing/  
Porter Lake Entrance**  
N: 30.1577 W: -84.6717

**Point 10: Revel Landing  
Entrance**  
N: 30.1281 W: -84.6705

- Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Potable Water
- Restrooms
- Conservation Lands
- Wetlands



# Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail Map 4



**Mack Slough Entrance**  
N: 30.1077 | W: -84.6477








**Access Point 13: Mack Landing Campground**  
N: 30.0946 W: -84.6461

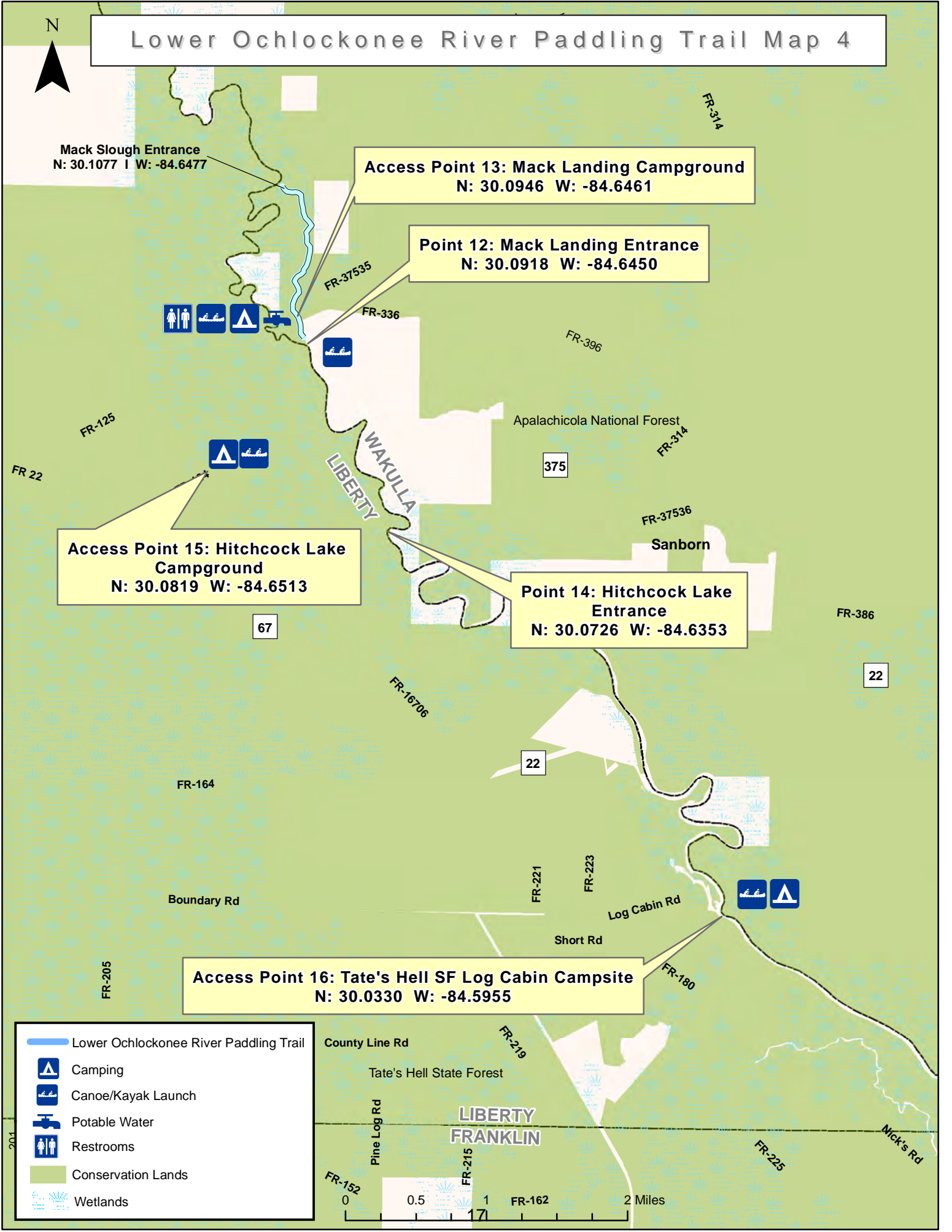
**Point 12: Mack Landing Entrance**  
N: 30.0918 W: -84.6450

**Access Point 15: Hitchcock Lake Campground**  
N: 30.0819 W: -84.6513

**Point 14: Hitchcock Lake Entrance**  
N: 30.0726 W: -84.6353

**Access Point 16: Tate's Hell SF Log Cabin Campsite**  
N: 30.0330 W: -84.5955

-  Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail
-  Camping
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Potable Water
-  Restrooms
-  Conservation Lands
-  Wetlands



# Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail Map 5

N



22

Sopchoppy

**Access Point 18: Wood Lake Campground**  
N: 30.0260 W: -84.5659

299

**Point 17: Wood Lake Entrance**  
N: 30.0231 W: -84.5633

**Access Point 19: Womack Creek Recreation Area**  
N: 30.0023 W: -84.5402

**Access Point 20: Ochlockonee River State Park**  
N: 29.9993 W: -84.4804

FR-338 Apalachicola National Forest

319

St Marks National Wildlife Refuge

FR-337

Ochlockonee River State Park

Nick's Rd



Jeff Sanders Rd

FR-176

WAKULLA  
FRANKLIN



Loop Rd

Rock Landing Rd

Tate's Hell State Forest

FR-450

- Lower Ochlockonee River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Potable Water
- Restrooms
- Showers
- Conservation Lands
- State Parks
- Wetlands



FR-451

FR-449

FR-455

FR-454

## The Waterway

Most of this scenic river winds through the rugged wilderness of the Apalachicola National Forest and other public conservation lands, past high pine bluffs and dense hardwoods. Near Ochlockonee River State Park, the end of the trail, the river widens and motorboats are more common as the river nears Ochlockonee Bay and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. Releases from the Jackson Bluff Dam vary water levels, and downed trees and log jams may be present during low water and after storm events. Campsites, campgrounds and fish camps are numerous.

## The Paddling Experience

This long paddling trail is not suitable for beginners due to areas of navigational difficulty. Low water may require portaging while high water can make conditions dangerous. The river above Hitchcock Lake is more unpredictable, with numerous twists and turns. The full trip from SR 20 to Ochlockonee River State Park is about 62 miles, but paddling to some campgrounds off the river will add distance. It is important to note that there is a 12-mile stretch between Bradwell and the Arnold Ramp with no access points, so plan accordingly. Recommended minimum flow level for the [Smith Creek gauge](#) is 6.2 feet and 3.0 feet at the [Bloxham gauge](#). Most of the access points are in very remote locations and leaving a vehicle overnight may be risky, consider contacting an outfitter for shuttling or arrange for safe parking.

## Access Points

### #1, Start of the Trail, SR 20,

There are private fish camps on both sides of the river and [Ed & Bernice's Fish Camp](#) seafood restaurant and campground is just south of the bridge. These private launches require a small fee and offer a more secure parking situation than leaving a vehicle overnight at the bridge. *Directions: Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to the Ochlockonee Bridge, access is a on the northwest side or better private options can be found at fish camps on south side of the bridge.*

### #2, Mile 2.0-- Rock Bluff Scenic Area

The road to the area is unimproved and it is a steep drop to the river. *Directions: Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to FR 390 west to Rock Bluff Scenic Area.*

### #3, Mile 3.0-- Bradwell Unit, Apalachicola National Forest -

*Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee across the Ochlockonee River to the entrance of the Apalachicola National Forest. The Bradwell Unit is on the south side of SR 20. Dirt road ends at access on the river.*

### #4, Mile 15-- Huey P. Arnold Boat Ramp

*Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee across the Ochlockonee River to SR 65. Take SR 65 south to SR 67 east. Take SR 67 approximately 9.5 miles to Chason Cemetery Road (on the east side of SR 67) and follow the road to the river.*

**#5, Mile 18-- Pine Creek Landing**   

Primitive camping and boater access to the Ochlockonee River. Used as a hunt camp during general gun season. *Take SR 20 to CR 375, turn south, go 10 miles to FR 335. Turn west on FR 335 for 1.5 miles to landing.*

**#6, Mile 22-- Langston's Fish Camp (private)**

Step back in time at this colorful private fish camp with simple rental cabins and a small fee for launching. This should not be confused with the historic Langston Ferry Crossing site, which is above Pine Creek Landing and is marked by a sign on the west side of the river. *Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to Jack Langston Road west to the fish camp.*

**#7, Mile 30 – entrance of channel to Whitehead Landing/Porter Lake Campgrounds** N: 30.1577 W: -84.6717

**#8, 0.5 miles side trip -- Whitehead Landing Campground**   

Whitehead Landing is a small campground and day use area on a tributary to the Ochlockonee River. The river may be accessed by boat from the concrete boat ramp. Campers can select campsites under the trees. *From SR 20, take CR 375 south 17 miles to FH 13/CR 368. Turn west, cross Ochlockonee bridge, then go 2.5 miles to FR 186, turn east on FR 186 to Whitehead Landing Campground.*

**#9, 1.5 mile side trip -- Porter Lake Campground**   

Primitive camping and fishing on Porter Lake and access for paddlers into winding channels through the floodplain forest of the Ochlockonee River basin. Trailhead along the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#). Used as a hunt camp during general gun season. *Directions: Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to CR 368/FH 13 west. Porter Lake is on the south side of the road just past the bridge.*

**#10, Mile 35-- Entrance of channel to Revell Landing** N: 30.1281 W: -84.6705

**#11, 0.8 mile side trip - Revell Landing Campsite**  

Primitive camping and boater access to the Ochlockonee River. Used as a hunt camp during general gun season. *From SR 20 take CR 375 south 17 miles to FH 13/CR 368. Turn west, cross Ochlockonee bridge, go 4 miles to CR 67. Turn south for 3.5 miles to FR 152, go east 1 mile to landing*

**#12, Mile 39.5, Entrance of channel to Mack Landing** (N: 30.0918 W: -84.6450)

**#13, 0.2 mile side trip – Mack Landing Campground**   

*Directions: From Tallahassee, take SR20 west. Turn left on to CR 375. Turn right at the sign for Mack Landing. Drive approximately 1.5 miles to the end of the entrance road. The primitive campground is on the left. The boat ramp is straight ahead.*

**#14, Mile 41.5, Entrance of channel to Hitchcock Lake** (N: 30.0726 W: -84.6353)

**#15, 1.5 mile side trip to Hitchcock Lake Campground**  

Primitive camping and boater access to the Ochlockonee River. Used as a hunt camp during general gun season. *Directions: Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to CR 368/FH 13 west. Take CR 368/FH 13 to CR 67 south. Continue on CR 67 to FR 184 east and follow the road to the river.*



**#16, Mile 48.5, Tate's Hell State Forest Log Cabin Campground,**  

Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to CR 368/FH13 west. Take CR 368/FH 13 to CR 67 south. Continue on CR 67 to Short Road, turn left and follow to campsites about 1.7 miles. From Carrabelle, head north on CR 67 about 14 miles and turn right onto Short Road and follow to campsites about 1.7 miles

**#17, Mile 51.5, Entrance of channel to Wood Lake Recreation Area** N: 30.0231 W: -84.5633

**#18, 0.3 mile side trip to Wood Lake Campground,**   

Primitive camping and day use, with picnic tables and access for boaters to the Ochlockonee River. Used as a hunt camp during general gun season. *Directions: Follow U.S. 319 south to downtown Sopchoppy and head west on CR 22 for almost 4.5 miles. Turn south on FR 340 and travel 0.8 miles. Follow road to FR 338 south for 2 miles to campground sign.*

**#19, Mile 55, Womack Creek Recreation Area**      

Womack Creek Rec Area is a well-maintained campground with restrooms, hot showers, and picnic pavilions. Take SR 20 west out of Tallahassee to CR 375. Take CR 375 south to CR 368/FH 13 west. Take CR 368/FH 13 to CR 67 south. Continue on CR 67 to Rock Landing Road east. Continue on Rock Landing Road and turn left onto Jeff Sanders Road and continue to river. From Carrabelle, it is about 10.5 miles on CR 67 north to Rock Landing Road

**#20, Mile 62, End of the Trail, Ochlockonee River State Park**       

From Tallahassee take U.S. 319 south through Sopchoppy and continue south 4.5 miles to park entrance.

## Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Wilderness Way](#) 850-877-7720

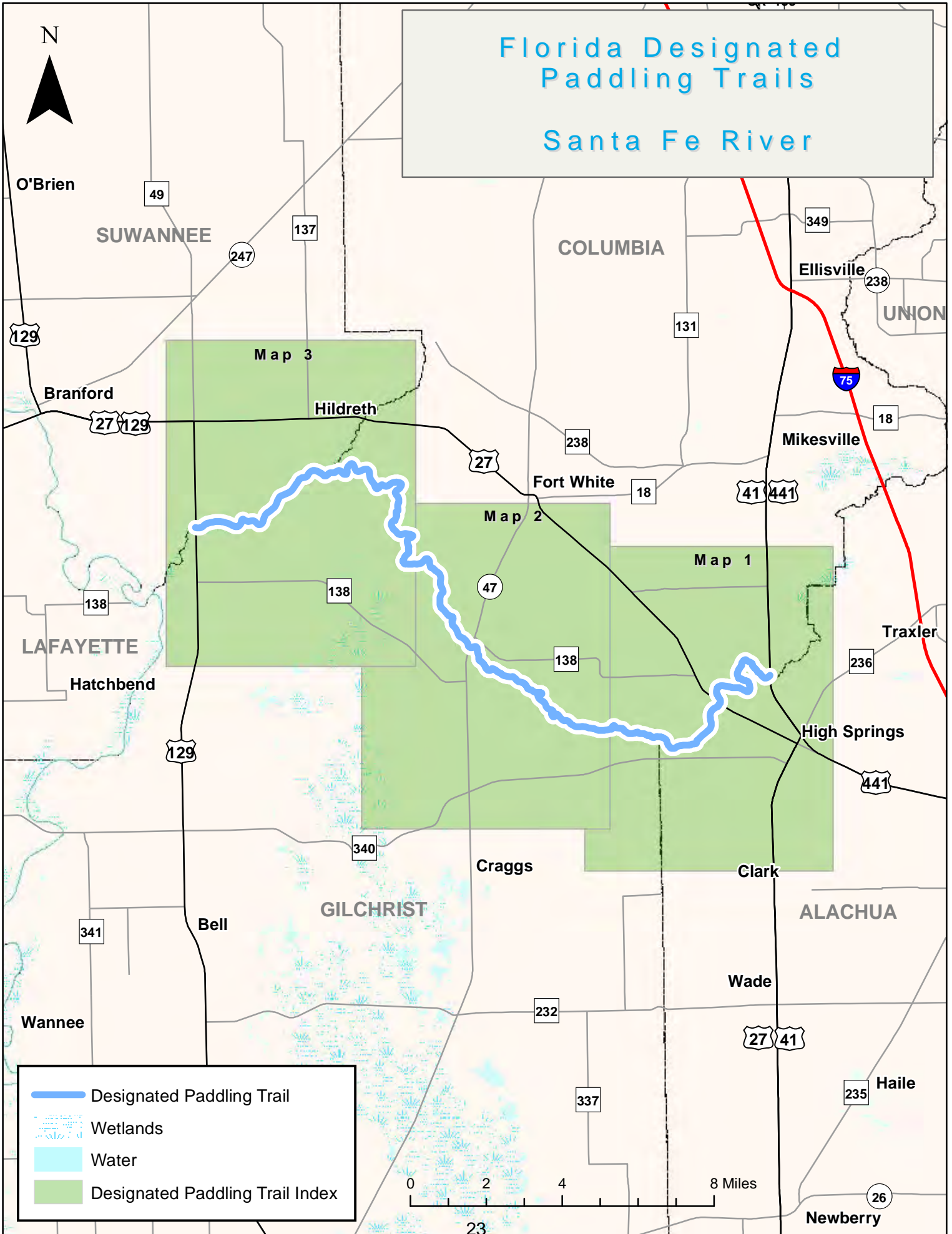
## Base Camp

Keep an eye out for the [Ochlockonee River State Park's](#) famous white squirrels and enjoy star gazing in dark night skies. This jewel of a park is a great place to get away for a weekend or a week-long vacation. Picnic facilities and a swimming area are located near the scenic point where the Ochlockonee and Dead Rivers intersect. Ochlockonee, which means "yellow waters," is a mix of brackish, tidal surge, and fresh water. Pristine and deep, the river empties into the Gulf of Mexico. Trails allow visitors to explore the park and see the diverse wildlife, including the red-cockaded woodpecker, and natural communities such as pine flatwoods and oak thickets. A universally accessible boat ramp provides easy access to the river. Both freshwater and saltwater fish inhabit the waters around the park, including largemouth bass, bream, catfish and speckled perch. For overnight visitors, there are full-facility campsites with access to restrooms and showers. Youth group camping is also available.



# Florida Designated Paddling Trails

## Santa Fe River



# Santa Fe River Paddling Trail Map 1

N



778

COLUMBIA

**Access Point 1: US 41/441 Bridge**  
N: 29.8521 W: -82.6116

41 441

River Rise Preserve State Park

138

**Access Point 2: US 27 Bridge**  
N: 29.8441 W: -82.6308

27

McCall Park

Camp Kulaqua Conservation Easement

NW 210TH LN

236

RUM ISLAND RD

**Access Point 2: US 27 Bridge**  
N: 29.8441 W: -82.6308

MAIN ST

High Springs

441

Poe Springs Park

340

ALACHUA

NW 174TH ST

GILCHRIST

27 41

Santa Fe River Paddling Trail

Springs

Canoe/Kayak Launch

Restrooms

Florida Conservation Lands

Florida State Parks

Wetlands

0 0.45 0.9 1.8 Miles  
24

# Santa Fe River Paddling Trail Map 2

N



Ft White Mitigation  
Park Wildlife &  
Environmental Area

Ichetucknee  
Conservation  
Area

Loncala, Inc.  
Conservation Easement #1

COLUMBIA

47

**Access Point 4: CR 47 Bridge**  
N: 29.8646 W: -82.7399

138

138

Santa Fe Springs Conservation Area

GILCHRIST

341

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

-  Santa Fe River Paddling Trail
-  Springs
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Florida Conservation Lands
-  Wetlands

# Santa Fe River Paddling Trail Map 3

N



264TH ST

49

137

Ichetucknee Springs State Park

27 129

27

SUWANNEE

**5: Ichetucknee River Confluence**  
N: 29.9324 W: -82.8002

COLUMBIA

129

**Access Point 6: US 129 Bridge**  
N: 29.9119 W: -82.8602

290TH ST

296TH ST

Ichetucknee Conservation Area

Ft White Mitigation Park Wildlife & Environmental Area

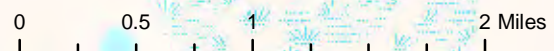
Radcliffe Tract

GILCHRIST

138

Loncala, Inc. Conservation Easement #1

-  Santa Fe River Paddling Trail
-  Springs
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Florida Conservation Lands
-  Florida State Parks
-  Wetlands



## The Waterway

The picturesque Santa Fe River curves past hardwood hammocks and through river swamps on its way to joining the Suwannee River. Many clear [springs](#) feed the Santa Fe and a dip in the crystal waters provides relief on hot days. Some privately owned ones charge admission to enter and will be posted as such as you enter the spring run. There are other publicly owned parks that do not charge. Small shoals are present during low water, which can be attempted by intermediate paddlers. The Santa Fe River goes underground in O'Leno State Park and reemerges over three miles away in River Rise State Park as a circular pool before resuming its journey to the Suwannee River. From the put-in near US 41/441 it is possible to paddle about 5 miles roundtrip to visit the River Rise. This is a remote and beautiful area and it is worth paddling upstream to enjoy the wilderness scenery.

## The Paddling Experience

The 26-mile scenic Santa Fe paddling trail is suitable for beginners in general, depending on water levels. It is a well-loved river and may be crowded with tubers and boaters during summer and weekends. Lose the crowds and visit on weekdays or during Florida's pleasant winter months. Avoid leaving vehicles overnight in remote places; contact outfitters listed below for shuttling and safe parking. River levels at the [SRWMD gauge](#) at the US 441 Bridge should be above 32 feet for adequate water between US 441 and US 27. If river levels are below 31.5 feet at the same gauge, there will be some shallow spots below the US 27 Bridge that may require pushing or pulling your boat for short stretches.

It is permissible to camp on Suwannee River Water Management District property on the west side of the river between Ginie Springs and the SR 47 Bridge. There is no charge but you must call first at (386) 362-1001 or 1-800-226-1066 (Florida only) during business hours Monday - Friday.

## Access Points

### #1, Start of the Trail, US 41/441 Bridge

This launch is only a couple of hundred yards from the US 41 bridge. *From the intersection of US 41 and CR 236 (Main Street) in High Springs, travel north on US 41 about one mile. As US 41 curves to the right look for a paved road to your left and follow down to the boat ramp at the end.*

### #2, Mile 3.0, US 27 Bridge

Lily Springs, a short distance downstream of the US 27 boat ramp, is the home of Naked Ed, a colorful local character, who is frequently clad in a loincloth (or not). He welcomes respectful visitors to the springs and he usually sits behind a privacy screen as he chats to visitors. *Parking area and boat ramp are on the northwest side of the bridge just a few miles west of High Springs on US 27*

### #3, Mile 7, Rum Island Park

The name "Rum Island" was believed to be derived from bootlegging and moonshine operations on the island in the early 1900s. Currently, no alcohol is allowed in the park. *Follow Highway 27 west out of High Springs*

*about 3 miles to County Road 138 (yellow flashing light). Turn left and drive 2 miles to Rum Island Road (look for a large sign) and take a left. Follow about 1.5 miles to the park. Rum Island Spring is a short distance from the launch.*

#### **#4, Mile 12, CR 47 Bridge**

Travel 4.5 miles southwest of Fort White on CR 47. Cross bridge and turn left into small recreation area and launch managed by Gilchrist County.

#### **#5, Mile 26, End of the Trail, US 129 Bridge**

The beautiful spring-fed river Itchetucknee River flows into the Santa Fe about six miles upstream from US 129. The Itchetucknee is popular with tubers within the State Park boundaries and motorboats cluster at the confluence with the Santa Fe. It is possible to paddle upstream a distance of about six miles into the Itchetucknee State Park, although the current may be strong. Motorboat traffic may be heavy between the confluence of the Santa Fe and Itchetucknee Rivers and US 129, especially during weekends and holidays. A few fishing boats venture upstream of the CR 47 bridge

### **Outfitters and Shuttle Service**

[Adventure Outpost](#), 386-454-0611

[Rum 138](#), 386-454-4247

[Santa Fe Canoe Outpost](#), 386-454-2050

### **Base Camp**

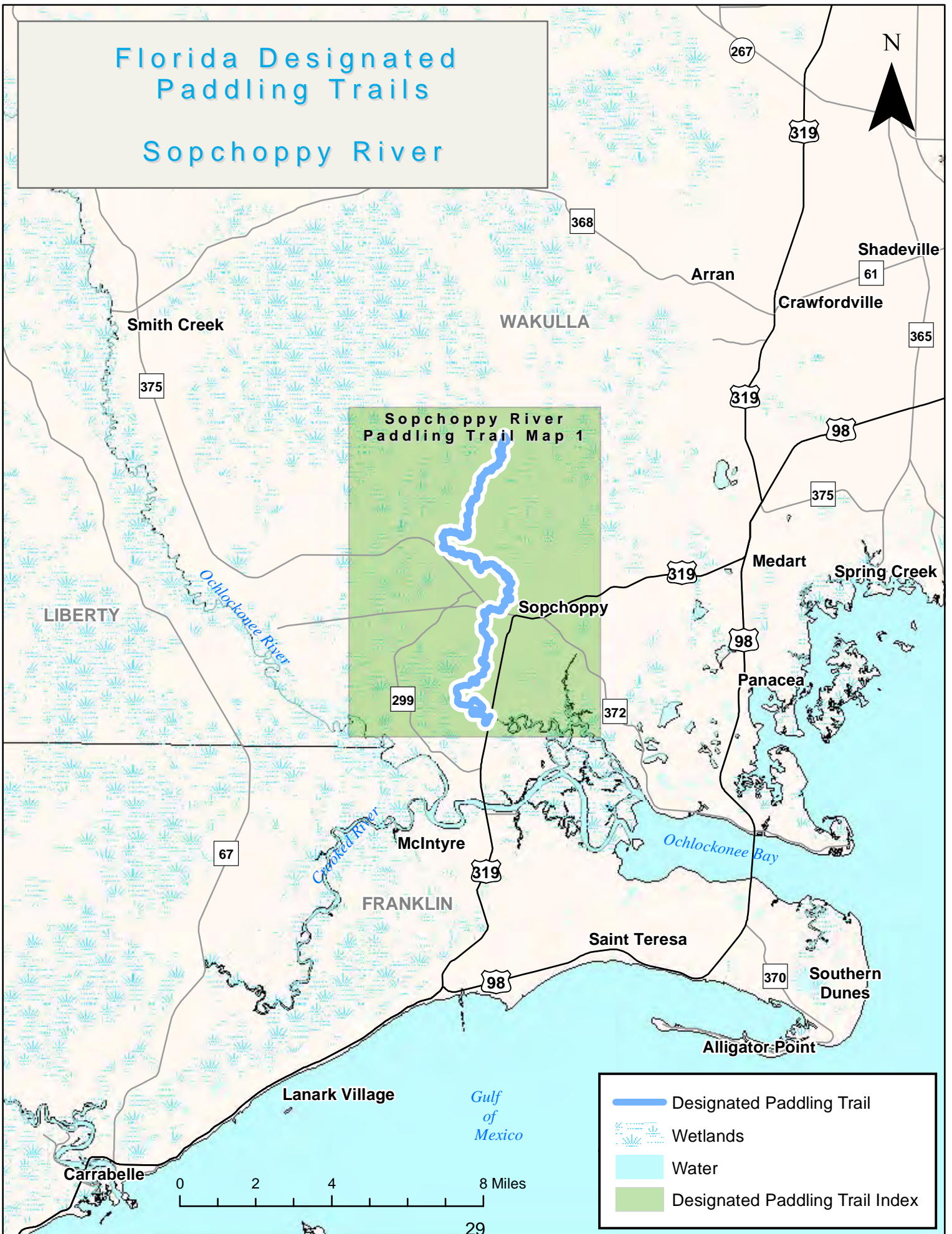
One of Florida's first state parks, [O'Leno State Park](#), was first developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The park is located along the banks of the scenic Santa Fe River, and features sinkholes, hardwood hammocks, river swamps and sandhills. As the river courses through the park, it disappears underground and reemerges over three miles away in River Rise State Park. O'Leno State Park offers visitors the opportunity to unwind in a natural setting. Visitors can enjoy a day of hiking or biking on the park's shaded trails. The Santa Fe River is a beautiful spot to launch a canoe or try your hand at fishing along its banks. The shady, full-facility campground is the perfect place for basecamp to explore the area's natural beauty. O'Leno State Park is located on U.S. 441, six miles north of High Springs.

At [River Rise Preserve State Park](#) equestrians, hikers and off-road cyclists can explore over 35 miles of trails. Equestrians can end the day camping overnight with their horses at the park's primitive equestrian camp consisting of primitive campsites, a bathhouse, and a 20-stall horse barn available on a first-come-first-served basis. Located on US 27 just outside of High Springs.



# Florida Designated Paddling Trails

## Sopchoppy River



# Sopchoppy River Paddling Trail Map 1










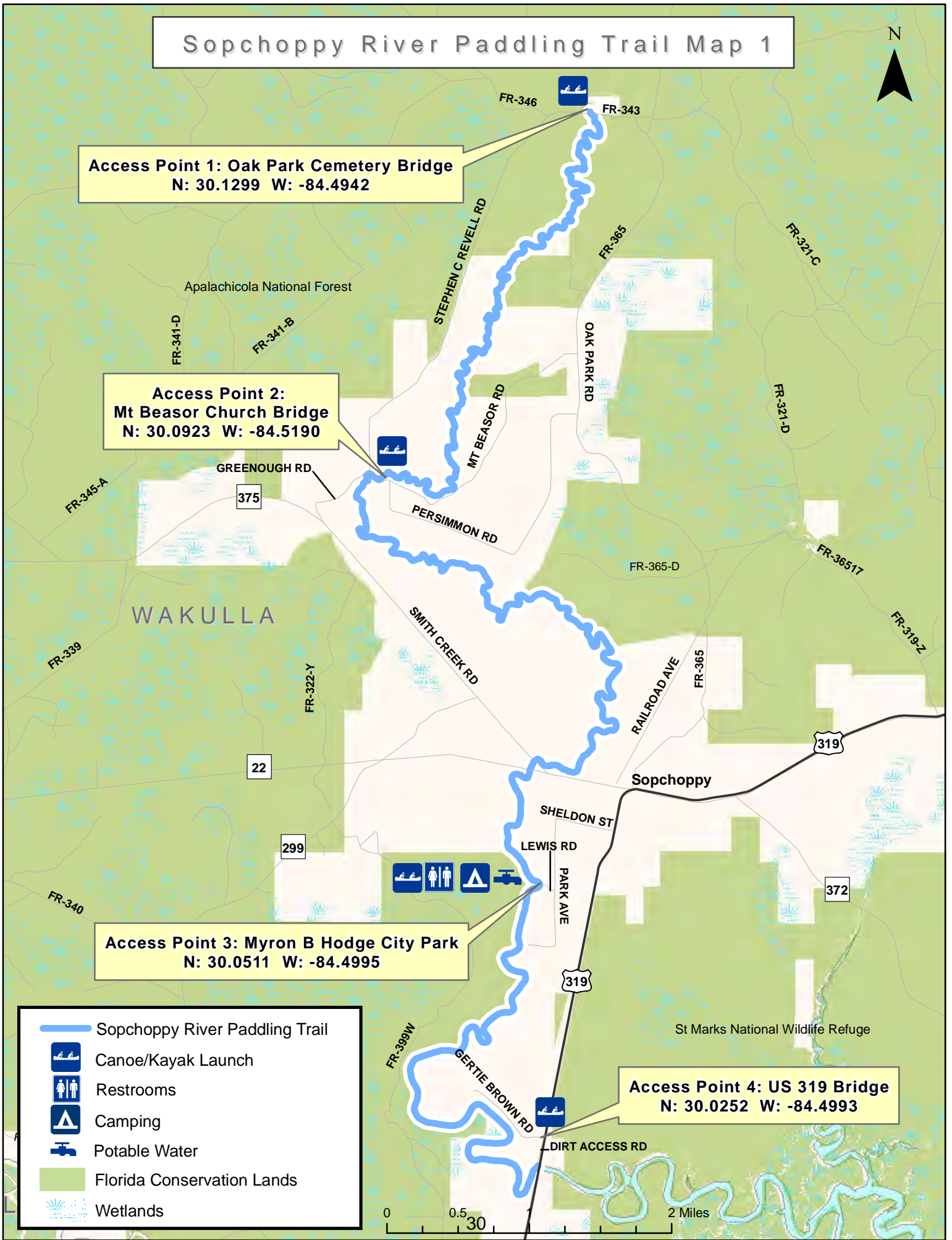
**Access Point 1: Oak Park Cemetery Bridge**  
 N: 30.1299 W: -84.4942

**Access Point 2: Mt Beasor Church Bridge**  
 N: 30.0923 W: -84.5190

**Access Point 3: Myron B Hodge City Park**  
 N: 30.0511 W: -84.4995

**Access Point 4: US 319 Bridge**  
 N: 30.0252 W: -84.4993

-  Sopchoppy River Paddling Trail
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Restrooms
-  Camping
-  Potable Water
-  Florida Conservation Lands
-  Wetlands



## Sopchoppy River Paddling Trail Trip Planning

**Overview:** This reddish-brown river—fed by wild swamps—twists around cypress knees and impressive exposed roots through the Apalachicola National Forest and beyond. Numerous sandbars make for scenic rest stops. Deer can often be seen along the shore or swimming across the river. In spring, wild azalea and other flowering plants add color to the shorelines. During low water levels, some pullovers and wading may be required.

**County:** Wakulla

**Nearest town:** Sopchoppy

**Trip length:** 15 miles

**Mileage:**

1. Mile 0—Oak Park Cemetery Bridge
2. Mile 5—Mount Beasor Church Bridge
3. Mile 10—Myron B. Hodge City Park (Sopchoppy City Park).
4. Mile 15—US 319 Bridge

\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mile).

**Difficulty:** Easy/Moderate (depending on water levels)

**Skill level:** Beginner/Intermediate (depending on water levels)

**Access Point 1 Put-in:** Oak Park Bridge (FR 346)

**Nearest town to put-in:** Sopchoppy

**Miles from put-in:** 6

**Directions to put-in:** Take FR 365 (River Rd.) north from Sopchoppy 5.6 miles to FR 343. Turn left (west) to bridge. Access

is southwest of the bridge with a steep climb down the bank to the river. Parking area is northwest of the bridge.

**Access Point 2 put-in:** Mt. Beasor Church Bridge

**Nearest town to put-in:** Sopchoppy      **Miles from put-in:** 3

**Directions to put-in:** Take SR 375 north from Sopchoppy, turn right (east) on Greenough Rd., bear right when the road forks. Park along shoulder near bridge but be careful of soft sand. For launching, it is a steep drop down to the river.

**Access Point 3 put-in:** Sopchoppy City Park (Myron B. Hodge Park)

**Nearest town to put-in:** Sopchoppy      **Miles from put-in:** in town

**Directions to take-out:** Heading south on 319, look for sign to the park and turn west on Sheldon Street. Continue to intersection of Park Avenue and turn left (south). The park is several blocks down on the right

**Access Point 4 Take-out:** US 319 Bridge

**Nearest town to put-in:** Sopchoppy      **Miles from put-in:** 3

**Directions to take-out:** Take US 319 south out of Sopchoppy and turn right (west) on Gertie Brown Rd, just before the bridge crosses the Sopchoppy river. Turn left immediately on a rough dirt track to access the take-out below the bridge.

**Driving distance from put-in to take-out:** About 8.6 miles

**Topo maps (USGS quads):** Sopchoppy, Sanborn, Crawfordville West

**Gazeteer page:** 49 & 50

**Outfitters within 20 miles of trail:**

[The Wilderness Way](#)

3152 Shadeville Road  
Wakulla Station, FL 32327  
(850) 877-7200

**Shuttle service offered:** Check with outfitters

**USGS link (water level info):**

[http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv/?site\\_no=02327100&PARAMeter\\_cd=00065,00060](http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv/?site_no=02327100&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060). Recommended level: between 9-11 feet.

**Break/Lunch areas:** Numerous sandbars along the river make pleasant break areas. There are also picnic tables, restrooms, and camping at the Sopchoppy City Park.

**Camping options:**

It is permissible to camp on national forest land along the Sopchoppy River except during the general gun hunting season. Check online for current dates for the Apalachicola Wildlife Management Area. Sopchoppy City Park has campsites and RV hookups. Call (850) 962-3873 for hours and fees.

Camping is also available in the nearby [Ochlockonee River State Park](#)

**Other lodging:**

[Wakulla County accomodations](#)

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** No alcohol in the city park

## **What to expect on the river:**

**Tidal influence:** Minor tidal influence downstream from the City Park

**Pull-overs:** Possible with low water levels

**Low branches:** None

**Narrow water:** None

**Shallow water:** Possible on upper segment of the river with low water levels

**Strong currents:** None

**Rocks:** None

**Houses:** A few residences are scattered along the river after the Oak Park Bridge near the town of Sopchoppy, and the last 2 miles before the 319 Bridge.

**Shoals:** None

**Tight turns:** None

**Open water:** None

**Springs:** None

**Potable water sources:** Sopchoppy City Park

**Wildlife:** Turtles, alligators, snakes, variety of birds, black bear, deer,

**Natural communities:** Pine flatwoods, blackwater stream, floodplain swamp,

**Portages:** Possible deadfall after storm events

**Swimming:** At your own risk

**Motorboats:** Small johnboats may be seen upstream from the City Park and downstream to US 319

**Expect at parking Oak Park Bridge:**

- There are no amenities at this site. An unpaved parking area is near the northwest side of the bridge. Access the river on the southwest end of the bridge. The slope to the river is steep; exercise caution.

**Expect at parking Mt. Beasor Church Bridge:**

- There are no amenities at this site and parking is limited. Park and access the river on the northeast end of the bridge, although be careful of loose sand. The slope to the river is steep; exercise caution.

**Expect at parking Myron B. Hodges Park (Sopchoppy City Park):**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Yes
- **Hours of operation:** Gates open at 6 a.m. and close at 9 p.m.
- **Camping:** Yes, and RV hookups
- **Camping fees:** Call 850-962-3873 for info.
- **Crowds:** Holidays and weekends may have heavy use
- **Boat Ramp:** Concrete ramp
- **Potable water source:** Yes

- **Canoe/kayak launch:** None, along launching is possible along the shore adjacent to the ramp.

### **Expect at Parking US 319:**

- There are no amenities at this site and parking is allowed only on the northeast side of the bridge on the dirt road that parallels US 319. Just before the bridge crosses the Sopchoppy River, turn right (west) on Gertie Brown Road. Turn immediately on your left following a rough dirt track to the take-out below the bridge.

### **Cultural and historical features along the trail:**

One of the oldest dated maps of Wakulla County (1683) names the Sopchoppy River the Rio Chachave. In one of the local Indian languages the word 'sokhe' meant convulsing or twisting and the word 'chapke' meant long. The name Chachave may be a Spanish rendition of the local name "Long Twisting River" for the Sopchoppy is certainly that. Another interpretation is that the name has been corrupted from "Lockchoppee" since this name appeared on an 1856 map. Lockchoppee or *lokchapi* signifies the "red oak" in the Muskogee language.

### **Notes:**

Some 50 miles in length, the Sopchoppy is a beautiful river with high, narrow limestone banks and unique cypress tree formations. The river is under federal consideration for designation as a Wild and Scenic River, although the process is on hold.

The rugged [Bradwell Bay Wilderness](#) borders the upper Sopchoppy River and features undisturbed swamp containing trees up to 400 years old. The bay also provides the river with the large source of tannins needed to give the river its characteristic



dark tea color. A portion of the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#) follows along the banks of the upper Sopchoppy River and into the Bradwell Bay area. Hiking maps can be obtained through the [Florida Trail Association](#).

Be sure to access the USGS website information listed above to determine the water levels as this river is difficult to paddle when water is low. The gauge should be between 9 and 11 feet. If the level is above 11 feet, the flow can be swift and suitable only for intermediate or advanced paddlers. The Sopchoppy experiences rapid fluctuations in water level following a storm and quickly drops in dry spells.



# Steinhatchee River Paddling Trail

- Steinhatchee River Paddling Trail
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Picnic Tables
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- Springs
- Wetlands
- Conservation Lands



**Access Point 1: Steinhatchee Falls**  
N: 29.746091° W: -83.342394°

**Access Point 2: Steinhatchee Boat Ramp**  
N: 29.671446° W: -83.390458°

**Access Point 3: Jena Boat Ramp**  
N: 29.670138° W: -83.389097°

Tennille

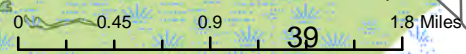
Steinhatchee Springs Tract

Steinhatchee Falls Tract

Steinhatchee Rise Tract

Steinhatchee

Jena



CR 361

SR 51  
STEINHATCHEE FALLS RD.  
STEINHATCHEE TRAIL RD.  
15TH ST E

98  
19  
27

SW 358 HWY

1ST AVE S

RIVERSIDE DR

SW 358 HWY

SW 820 ST

SW 320 AVE

## Steinhatchee River Trip Planning

**Overview:** The Steinhatchee River is a serene blackwater river forming the boundary between Dixie and Taylor Counties, entering the Gulf of Mexico along the Big Bend coastline between the small towns of Jena and Steinhatchee. It begins as a shady meandering waterway just below a limestone ledge that creates the picturesque and historic Steinhatchee Falls. The upper stretches of the river are pristine and remote with no houses visible the first mile or so. The river continues to widen as it nears the Gulf, a distance of 6-7 miles depending on where paddlers choose to take out. The Steinhatchee River is appropriate for beginning paddlers and canoes although windy conditions and tidal effects may be encountered near the mouth of the Gulf.

Be sure to bring along camera and binoculars to enjoy the abundant wildlife at a distance. And grab a pole to try your luck fishing for both freshwater and saltwater species. There are several excellent restaurants and a multitude of lodging options accessible on both sides of the river as it nears the Gulf.

**Counties:** Taylor, Dixie

**Nearest Towns:** Steinhatchee, Jena

**Trip length:** 6-7 miles

**Mileage:**

1. Mile 0—Steinhatchee Falls
2. Mile 6—Steinhatchee Boat Landing
3. Mile 7—Jena Boat Ramp

\*\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mile)

**Difficulty:** Easy – moderate depending on water levels, wind and tidal conditions

**Skill level:** Beginner to intermediate

### **Access Points:**

**Access Point 1 Put-in: Steinhatchee Falls:** N: 29.746091 W: -83.342394 (decimal-degrees)

*Directions: From US 98 turn west onto SR 51. Less than one mile on the left will be a sign for public access. Turn left onto the dirt road then turn right at the first intersection and follow the signs. The launch is at a small park with picnic pavilions and a portable restroom. The gate is open between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. No fees are required. The launch is suitable for small boats that can be launched by hand and canoes/kayaks. There is also a 3-mile multi-use loop trail that starts at the Falls and goes north through the woods and ends at the Tennille Trailhead on SR 51. Steinhatchee is the nearest town, 6 miles away.*

**Access Point 2 Take-out: Steinhatchee Boat Landing:** N: 29.671446 W: -83.39045°

*Directions: From Steinhatchee Falls travel back to SR 51 and turn left (south). Drive into Steinhatchee and turn right (west) on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Continue until road ends at a 'T', veer to the right and proceed a short distance to boat landing on the left. The launch has multiple concrete lanes, some fixed and floating docks, and can be busy on weekends and during*

scallop season. There is a launch fee with ample parking and portable restrooms. No overnight parking is allowed

**Access Point 3 Take-out: Jena Boat Ramp:** N: 29.670138 W: -83.389097

*Directions: From Steinhatchee Falls travel back to SR 51 and turn left (south). Travel into Steinhatchee and turn right (west) on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Turn left on 10<sup>th</sup> Ave and drive over the bridge crossing the river into the small town known as Jena. At the road junction turn right and head to public ramp at the end of the road. The launch is 2- lane concrete with no fees and accessible 24/7, limited parking during weekends and scallop season. No restrooms.*

There is also a small hand launch next to the Good Times Marina on the south side of the river.

**Gazeteer Page:** 62

**Outfitters & Shuttle Service:**

[River Haven Marina](#)

[Steinhatchee Landing](#)

[Suwannee Guides](#)

**Water level info:** Avoid paddling when the river nears flood stage as conditions are hazardous.

[www.mysuwanneeriver.com/30DayRiverLevels/30DayRiverLevels.aspx?staid=104](http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com/30DayRiverLevels/30DayRiverLevels.aspx?staid=104)

**Break/lunch areas:** Picnic pavilions and portable restrooms at Steinhatchee Falls

**Camping options:** Camping is not allowed along the river but is available in the area at private campsites: [www.steinhatcheeriverchamber.org/](http://www.steinhatcheeriverchamber.org/)

**Lodging options:** [www.steinhatcheeriverchamber.org](http://www.steinhatcheeriverchamber.org)  
[www.naturalnorthflorida.com/dixie-county-florida/lodging](http://www.naturalnorthflorida.com/dixie-county-florida/lodging)

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** none

**Expect on the River:**

**Tidal influence:** Time a trip with an outgoing tide for easiest paddling.

**Pull-overs:** None

**Low branches:** Possible on upper, narrower stretch

**Shallow water:** no

**Strong currents:** Currents depend on water levels and tidal influence, outgoing tide will increase the speed of current going downstream and incoming tide will do the opposite

**Rocks:** none

**Houses:** Houses begin about a mile and a half below the falls and continue to the Gulf

**Shoals:** Put in below the Steinhatchee Falls to avoid rocks

**Open water:** The river widens as it nears the Gulf and winds, currents, and tides will affect the experience.

**Springs:** small springs along the course of the river

**Potable water sources:** none

**Wildlife:** In the upper stretches of the river wildlife species include gopher tortoise, otter, wading birds, wild hog, swallow-tailed kite, Swainson's warbler, deer, turkey, and squirrel. Marine species of fish and wildlife appear as the river nears the Gulf. Spring and fall migration of diverse bird and butterfly species is spectacular along this coastline

**Natural communities:** floodplain swamp, bottom land forest, and mixed hardwood forest, give way to maritime hammock and salt marsh as the river nears the Gulf

**Portages:** none

**Motorboats:** Boat traffic increases as the river widens, the boat launches can be busy on weekends

**Cultural and historical features along the trail:** *(From the Florida Dept of State, Division of Historical Resources website)*

Located at the mouth of the Steinhatchee River, Deadman Bay was on Spanish maps by the early 1500s. Spanish Conquistador Panfilo de Narvaez came through the area in 1529 followed by Hernando de Soto ten years later. DeSoto crossed the Steinhatchee River at the "Falls" which also served as a crossing point for native Americans and settlers in the 1800's. In 1818 General Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) also crossed at the Falls on his way to dispatch the Seminoles who were raiding "white" settlements. In 1838 General Zachary Taylor (1784 -1850) was sent to put down the Seminoles during the Second Seminole War. Fort Frank Brook was established up the Steinhatchee River in the same year and abandoned in 1840. In 1879 James Howard Stephens (1825-1906), a local pioneer, offered land for a post office changing the name from Deadman Bay to Stephensville. In 1931 the community was renamed Steinhatchee after the river. The name Steinhatchee was derived from the Native American "esteen hatchee" meaning river (hatchee) of man (esteen). Steinhatchee's long history of human habitation includes prehistoric man dating from 12,000 BC, pirates from 15th through 18th centuries, loggers in the 1800s, and sponge divers in the 1940s and 50s. Today commercial fishermen, shrimpers, and crabbers continue to make a living along the Gulf.

Canoes and flat boats were the first means of transportation across the river. A ferry was used up until 1948 when a one lane swing bridge that had been removed from Scott's Ferry, near Blountstown, was installed. This bridge served until 1983 when the present concrete bridge was constructed. Electricity came to Steinhatchee in 1945 and telephone service was established in 1948

The towns at the entrance of the Steinhatchee River are an important stop on the [Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail](#) and the 1,500-mile [Circumnavigation Trail](#) that embraces the coastline of Florida.



# Wacissa River Paddling Trail Map 1



TRAM RD

Wacissa

259

Thomas City

Limestone

LIMESTONERD

GAMBLE RD

PINHOOK RD

WACISSA SPRINGS RD

WALKER SPRING

59

Headwaters of the  
Wacissa River



**Access Point 1: Wacissa Springs**  
N: 30.3402 W: -83.9911

**Big Blue Spring**  
N: 30.3278 W: -83.9848

BRITTLE CAMP RD

**Calico Landing**  
N: 30.3060 W: -83.9822

JEFFERSON

GRADE 31

GRADE 35

CALICO HILL RD

MAGNOLIA BOG RD

FLATROCK RD

BIG ISLAND RD

GRADE 33

NASTY BLOCK RD

SAWDUST PILE RD

**Calico Landing**  
N: 30.3060 W: -83.9822

Aucilla Wildlife Management Area

WILLIAM'S CAMP RD

MAGNOLIA BOG RD

GRADE 34

GRADE 25

TOOLE'S HAMMOCK RD

APALACHEE GRADE

GRADE 26

GRADE 19 1/2



44

Wacissa River Paddling Trail

Canoe/Kayak Launch

Restrooms

Florida Conservation Lands

Wetlands



# Wacissa River Paddling Trail Map 2



**Welaunee Landing**  
N: 30.2343 W: -83.9754

Hells Half Acre

**Access Point 2: Goose Pasture Rec Area**  
N: 30.2031 W: -83.9692

**Main River Channel**  
N: 30.2018 W: -83.9713

Goose Pasture  
GOOSE PASTURE RD



Wacissa Conservation Area

Aucilla Wildlife Management Area

JEFFERSON

**Slave Canal Entrance**  
N: 30.1816 W: -83.9682

Aucilla River

TAYLOR

**Access Point 3: Nutall Rise Landing**  
N: 30.1475 W: -83.9689

AUCILLA LANDING RD



Nutall Rise

POWELL HAMMOCK GRADE

Buckhorn

Snipe Island Unit

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

45

- Wacissa River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Restrooms
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

# Wacissa River Paddling Trail Trip Planning

**Overview:** Spring-fed and rich in wildlife, the Wacissa River has lured paddlers for thousands of years, beginning with Florida's earliest Native Americans and their dugout canoes. The river begins as a wide marshy waterway, ideal for beginners, but the current quickens as the river narrows in the middle stretch. Wading birds, alligators, otters, and various raptors can often be spotted. The lower Wacissa spreads out into several braids through a swamp called Hell's Half Acre. Paddlers must take care to find the entrance to the Slave Canal in order to paddle to the take-out at Nutall Rise on the Aucilla River.

**Counties:** Jefferson

**Nearest towns:** Wacissa, Monticello,  
Tallahassee

**Trip length:** 15 Miles

**Mileage:** Mile 0—Wacissa Springs  
Mile 10—Goose Pasture Recreation Area  
Mile 15—Nutall Rise Landing

\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mile).

**Difficulty:** Easy (upper section) to Moderate (middle and lower)

**Skill level:** Beginner to Intermediate

## Access Points

**Access Point 1 Put-in:** Wacissa

**Nearest town to put-in:** Wacissa

**Miles from put-in:** 1

**Directions to put-in:** From town of Wacissa, take SR 59 south. When SR 59 turns west, continue straight ahead until the road dead ends in the park.

**Access Point 2 Put-in:** Goose Pasture Recreation Area

**Nearest town to put-in:** Wacissa

**Miles from put-in:** 30

**Directions to put-in:** From the town of Wacissa, take SR 59 fourteen miles south to US 98. Turn left (east) onto US 98 and travel for about 8.5 miles, turning left onto the third road (Powell Hammock Grade) after the Aucilla River Bridge. Take this road north past a limerock mine for about 4 total miles. Turn left onto a graded limestone road and follow signs to Goose Pasture another 3.7 miles.

**Access Point 3 Take-out:** Nutall Rise

**Nearest town to take-out:** Wacissa

**Miles from take-out:** 22

**Directions to take-out:** From town of Wacissa, take SR 59 fourteen miles south to US 98. Turn left (east), onto US 98 and travel 6 miles, turning left onto the first

graded road after the Aucilla River Bridge. In less than a quarter mile, the landing will be on the left.

**Driving distance from put-in to take-out:** About 22 miles

**Topo maps (USGS quads):** Wacissa, Nutall Rise

**Gazeteer page:** 51

**Outfitters within 20 miles of trail:**

The Wilderness Way (850) 877-7200 (Wakulla Station)  
<http://www.thewildernessway.net/>.

**Shuttle service offered:** Call outfitters

**USGS link (water level info):** <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?02326550>

**Break / Lunch areas:** Goose Pasture, Calico Landing, Welaunee Landing (see Notes)

**Camping options:** Camping is free at Goose Pasture on a first-come, first-serve basis and there is also a gated group campsite just south of Goose Pasture which may be used free of charge for groups. Call the Suwannee River Water Management District at (386)-362-1001 or 1-800-226-1066 (Florida only) to get the gate combination and permission to use the group facility. Both camps are closed during the general gun hunting season from mid-November through mid-January.

**Area Lodging:**

Tallahassee:  
<http://www.visittallahassee.com/places-to-stay/accomodations-hotels/>.

Monticello/Jefferson County (bed and breakfasts)  
<http://www.visitjeffersoncountyflorida.com/>

Perry/Taylor County:  
[http://www.taylorcountychamber.com/index.php?option=com\\_mtree&task=listcats&cat\\_id=77&Itemid=130](http://www.taylorcountychamber.com/index.php?option=com_mtree&task=listcats&cat_id=77&Itemid=130).

Wakulla County:  
<http://wakullacountychamber.com/visiting-wakulla/>

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** None

**What to Expect on the river:**

**Tidal influence:** None

**Pull-overs:** Can be numerous on the Slave Canal

**Low branches:** Possible on the Slave Canal

**Narrow water:** Possible on the Slave Canal with low water

**Shallow water:** Possible on the Slave Canal with low water levels

**Strong currents:** Possible strong currents if the water level is high when paddling upstream on the Aucilla River to the take-out at Nutall Rise

**Rocks:** Yes

**Houses:** Very few at the start of the river, and at the take-out at Nutall Rise

**Shoals:** One small 'spillway' sill to cross at old dam site on the Wacissa about five miles below the headsprings.

**Tight turns:** No

**Open water:** No

**Springs:** There are numerous springs on the Wacissa but many can be choked with vegetation during the warm months.

**Potable water sources:** No

**Wildlife:** Abundant birds and wildlife: limpkin, various heron species, ibis, moorhen, anhinga, alligators, turtles, snakes.

**Natural communities:** Outstanding scenery with floodplain forest, river marsh, springs.

**Portages:** Variable number of pull-overs on the Slave Canal.

**Swimming:** The Wacissa spring head is a popular swimming spot. Big Blue Spring, a mile south on the river on the east side (river left) is also a popular swimming spot.

**Motorboats:** There can be heavy motorboat use on weekends and holidays. Airboats also use the river, mostly on the upper stretch of the Wacissa

#### **Expect at parking Wacissa Springs:**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Portable toilets
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** Not gated
- **Camping:** No
- **Camping fees:** No
- **Crowds:** Can be crowded weekends and holidays
- **Boat Ramp:** Yes
- **Potable water source:** No
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** Use boat launch

### **Expect at parking at Goose Pasture:**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Portable toilets
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** Not gated
- **Camping:** Primitive camping is allowed all year, except during the general gun hunting season at Goose Pasture. For more information contact the District at (386)-362-1001 or 1- 800-226-1066 (Florida only).
- **Camping fees:** None
- **Crowds:** Can be busy holidays and weekends
- **Boat Ramp:** Concrete
- **Potable water source:** None
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** Use boat ramp

### **Expect at parking at Goose Pasture group camp:**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** None, walk to Goose Pasture camp nearby for portable toilets
- **Hours of operation (gates always locked):** Call the Suwannee River Water Management District at (386)-362-1001 or 1-800-226-1066 (Florida only). for gate combination and permission to camp
- **Camping:** Primitive camping with covered picnic shelter and large grill
- **Camping fees:** None, but you must call the SRWMD to get gate combination and permission
- **Crowds:** No
- **Boat Ramp:** None
- **Potable water source:**
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** Launch from bank

### **Expect at parking at Nutall Rise:**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Portable toilet
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** Not gated
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** N/A
- **Crowds:** No
- **Boat Ramp:** Concrete
- **Potable water source:** No
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** Use boat ramp

### **Cultural and historical features along the trail:**

Wacissa is a Timucuan Indian name and its meaning has been lost.

For several miles below Goose Pasture, the Wacissa diffuses into several braids. It re-forms again just before flowing into a long sinkhole known as Half Mile Rise, part of the Aucilla River chain of sinks. The Wacissa Slave Canal was constructed in the 1850s using slave labor in an attempt to connect the Wacissa to the lower Aucilla River so cotton barges could be floated to the Gulf. It largely followed a small natural stream. The canal scheme didn't work well as the canal was too shallow, and after the Civil War it was abandoned for more efficient railroads. The hard edges are gone, and somehow the decades of rain, wind and water did not fill in the canal. Except for

some boulders along the banks you'd never suspect it was not a completely natural waterway.

### **Notes:**

The Wacissa River is one of Florida's wildest and diverse rivers, with numerous springs and abundant wading birds. The upper river can become crowded with boats and paddlecraft on weekends; the lower river tends to be quieter.

Two remote public landings are found along the Wacissa River between the headsprings and Goose Pasture, but access roads may require an all terrain vehicle. Nevertheless, they can be good rest stops. The first is Calico Landing on river right about 2.5 miles below the headsprings (GPS point: N30.3060 W83.9822). The second landing is Welaunee Landing along a side channel on river left almost eight miles below the headsprings (GPS point: N30.2343 W83.9754).

The Wacissa River ends in a confusing braided marsh area and paddlers must take care to find the entrance to the Slave Canal to be able to continue to the take-out at Nutall Rise on the Aucilla River. When leaving Goose Pasture, head straight across the river to the opposite bank and look for an opening on the right bank that looks clogged with aquatic plants. There may or may not be a sign posted there depending on if vandals remove it (GPS point: N30.2018 W83.9713). Continue to bear right. The waterway will open up after a short distance and paddling will become easy in a wider channel. Continue to watch for the Slave Canal opening on the right bank, about 1.5 miles downstream from Goose Pasture. You will know you are in the correct waterway if you see limestone rocks piled along the banks within the first 0.25 miles. Again, a sign may or may not be present at the entrance but there is red blazing on several trees at the entrance. (GPS point: N30.1816 W83.9682) If you paddle more than .25 miles on what you think is the Slave Canal and do not see limestone rocks piled along the edges – turn around! The waterways in this area can be extremely confusing and many paddlers have become lost in the swamp.

Several snags that require pull-overs are likely on the Slave Canal, depending on water levels. Severe storm events often result in many more trees blocking the channel. Consult with local outfitters about current conditions.

At the trip's end the Slave Canal merges with the Aucilla River just north of the US 98 bridge and one must paddle upstream (north) on the Aucilla for a short segment to reach the take-out. The total distance between Goose Pasture and the take out at Nutall Rise is about 5 miles. A high or rising tide will make the last stretch of the canal easier to paddle. For best paddling conditions in the canal and lower Wacissa River, median water levels should be around 7.5 feet at the USGS gauge at Nutall Rise: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?02326550>.

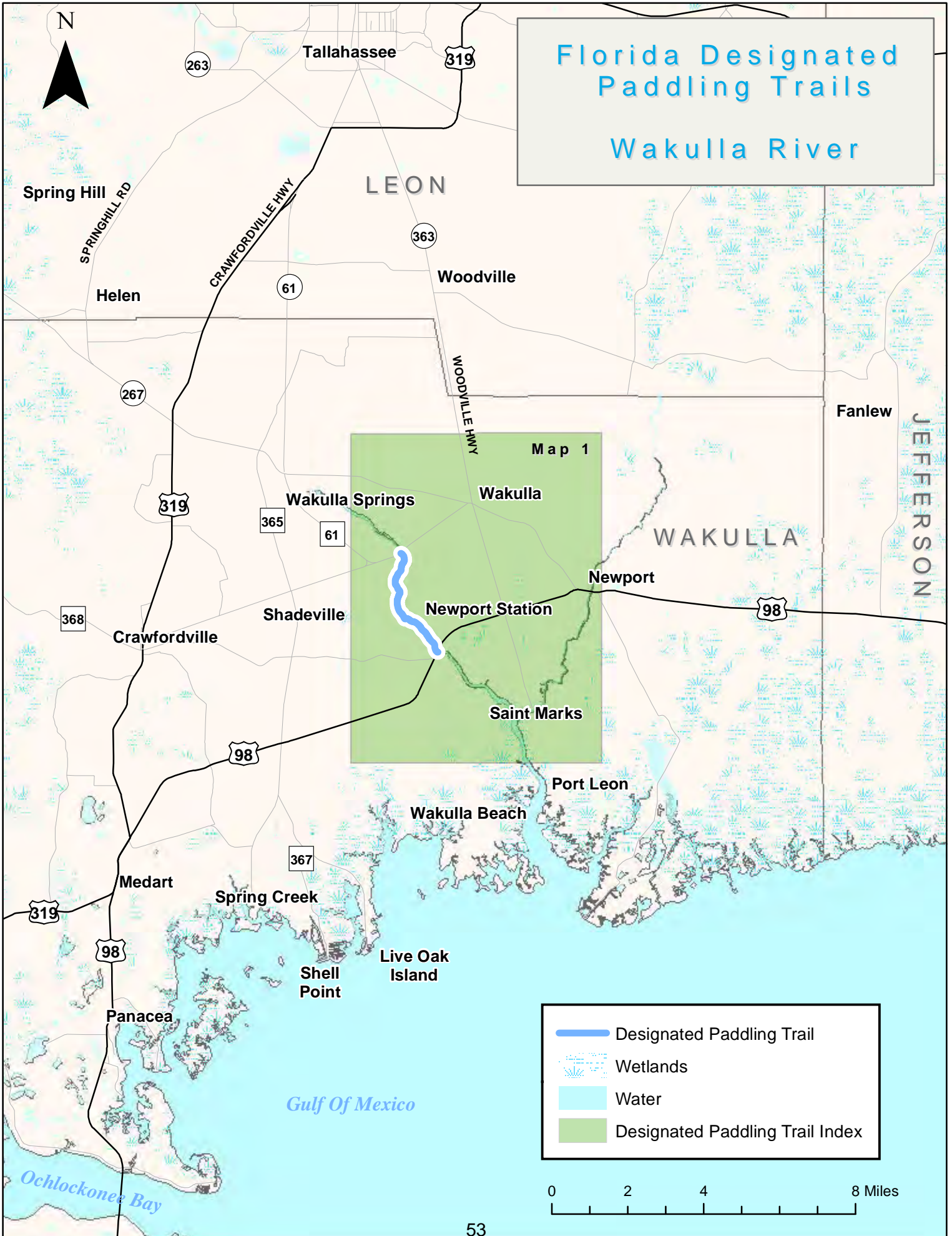
The Florida Trail passes through this area with a popular segment of the trail running along the beautiful Aucilla River and sinks with its unusual geological formations.

You can order a more detailed guide to the Aucilla, Wacissa and Econfinia rivers through the Wildlife Foundation of Florida website: <http://wildlifeoundationofflorida.com/catalog/16>





[http://shop.wildlifeflorida.org/default.tpl?pageID=1&page=full&cart=1307990394206368&--eqskudatarq=AWE\\_BOOK\\_GUIDE.](http://shop.wildlifeflorida.org/default.tpl?pageID=1&page=full&cart=1307990394206368&--eqskudatarq=AWE_BOOK_GUIDE)





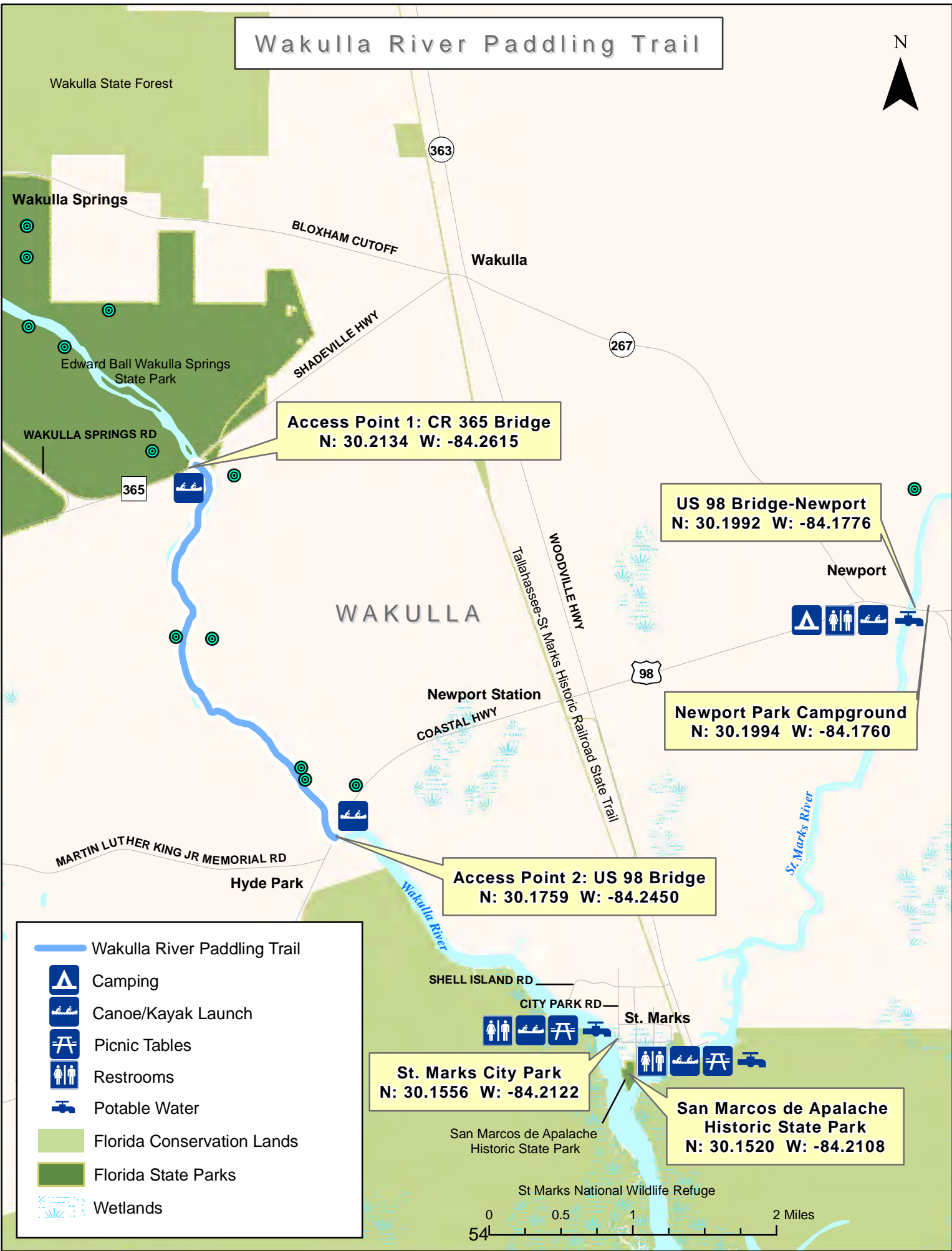


Florida Designated Paddling Trails  
Wakulla River

-  Designated Paddling Trail
-  Wetlands
-  Water
-  Designated Paddling Trail Index



# Wakulla River Paddling Trail



- Wakulla River Paddling Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Picnic Tables
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Florida State Parks
- Wetlands



# Wakulla River Paddling Trail Trip Planning

**Overview:** Wildlife is abundant along this clear, spring-fed river. Manatees, once seen only in summer, are now spotted year-round. Paddlers can choose between a four- or six-mile trip below Wakulla Springs State Park. The current is usually gentle enough to paddle up and back for any distance desired.

**County:** Wakulla

**Nearest towns:** Crawfordville, St. Marks

**Trip length:** 4 miles

**Mileage:** Mile 0—CR 365 Bridge  
Mile 4—US 98 Bridge

\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mile).

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Skill level:** Beginner

Note: The current is generally mild enough to be able to paddle from either bridge going upstream or downstream. The total round trip is 7.6 miles. You may also extend your trip by paddling to the St. Marks City Park, (2.6 miles from the US 98 Bridge) or further downstream to the Fort San Marcos de Apalache Historic State Park (3.2 miles from the US 98 Bridge). It is possible to continue further upstream from the fort on the St. Marks River to the US 98 Bridge at Newport (about 5 miles from the launch at Fort San Marcos de Apalachee Historic State Park).

## Access Points

**Access Point 1 Put-in:** CR 365 Bridge (“Upper Bridge”)

**Nearest town to put-in:** Crawfordville

**Miles from put-in:** 7 miles

**Directions to put-in:** From Crawfordville, turn east on CR 61. When 61 turns sharply north after about 6 miles, continue straight on CR 267 to the bridge. The unpaved launch is on the southwest side of the bridge.

**Access Point 2 Directions to take-out:** US 98 Bridge (“Lower Bridge”)

**Nearest town to take-out:** St. Marks

**Miles from take-out:** 4.5 miles

**Directions to take-out:** From St. Marks, drive north on Highway 363 for 2.5 miles and turn left onto US 98. Drive 2 miles to bridge. Launch is on the southeast side of the bridge.

From the Upper Bridge, drive east on CR 267 2.3 miles and turn right onto Highway 363. Head south 3 miles and turn right onto US 98. Drive 2 miles to bridge.

**Driving distance from Upper Bridge to Lower Bridge:** 7.3 miles

**Directions to St. Marks City Park (optional take-out):** Travel west on US 98, turn south on CR 363, turn right (west) in the town of St. Marks on Shell Island Rd, then left (south) on City Park Rd. Look for the park on the right side of the road.

**Directions to San Marcos de Apalache Historic State Park (optional take-out):** Travel west on US 98, turn south on CR 363, turn right (west) into the town of St. Marks and continue until the road ends in a 'T', turn right and follow the round around to a four-way stop. Turn left (south) at the stop sign and follow to the park.

**Topo maps:** Crawfordville East Quad

**Gazetteer page:** 50

**Outfitters within 20 miles of trail:**

TNT Hideaway (850-925-6412) Located next to the public launch at the Lower Bridge, US 98. <http://tnthideaway.com/>.

The Wilderness Way (850) 877-7200 (Wakulla Station)  
<http://www.thewildernessway.net/>.

St. Marks Outfitters (850) 510-7919 (St. Marks)  
<http://stmarksoutfitters.com/>. Offers small group guided trips and shuttle service.

Ray's Kayaks & Excursions LLC (850) 508-7593 Wakulla, Jefferson, Franklin Counties  
<http://rayskayaks.com>

**Shuttle Service Offered:** Check with outfitters

**USGS link for water level info:**  
<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?02327000>

**Break / Lunch areas:** The City of St Marks Wakulla River Park has a dock, canoe launch, parking, restrooms, a picnic shelter and water fountains. The boat launch at San Marcos de Apalache State Park has a museum, parking, dock, picnic areas and restrooms.

**Camping options:** Full service county campground at Newport Park along Highway 98 and the St. Marks River: (850) 925-4530.

**Other lodging:** A bed and breakfast and fish camp are located in St. Marks. Lodging is available at the Wakulla Springs State Park and along Highway 98 near Medart. For information about local accommodations, log onto:  
<http://wakullacountychamber.com/visiting-wakulla/accommodations/>.

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** None

**Expect on River:**

**Pull-overs:** None

**Low branches:** None

**Narrow water:** None

**Shallow water:** None

**Strong currents:** None

**Rocks:** None

**Houses:** Some

**Shoals:** None

**Springs (GPS):** One unnamed sulfur spring located just north of the Highway 98 Bridge on the east side of the river (N30.1816 W84.2486).

**Tight turns:** None

**Open water:** The river widens considerably as it nears the confluence with the St. Marks; expect winds and tidal influence.

**Wildlife:** Alligator, yellow-bellied slider, white ibis, anhinga, kingfisher, pileated woodpecker, osprey, and manatee are common in the warmer months. Look carefully for manatee at the US 98 Bridge and around an island mid-way on the river, just before the power lines.

**Manatees:** The West Indian manatee is an endangered species and is protected by state and federal law. Please avoid harassing or disturbing manatees. Harassment is defined as any activity which alters the animal's natural behavior. By altering the manatee's natural behavior, you may create the likelihood of danger that is bad for the animal and against the law.

#### BEING NEAR MANATEES

- Look, but don't touch manatees. Also, don't feed manatees or give them water. If manatees become accustomed to being around people, they can alter their behavior in the wild, perhaps causing them to lose their natural fear of boats and humans, and this may make them more susceptible to harm.
- *Passive observation* is the best way to interact with manatees and all wildlife.
- Do not pursue or chase a manatee while you are swimming, snorkeling, diving or operating a boat.
- Never poke, prod or stab a manatee with your hands, feet or any object.
- If a manatee avoids you, you should avoid it.
- Don't isolate or single out an individual manatee from its group, and don't separate a cow and her calf.
- Don't attempt to snag, hook, hold, grab, pinch or ride a manatee.
- Do not swim while manatees present
- For more information visit this website: <http://myfwc.com/manatee>.

**Natural communities:** Spring-run streams, floodplain swamps, freshwater tidal marshes

**Portages:** None

**Swimming:** Be aware there are alligators in this river and take proper precautions. It is illegal to swim with the manatee.

**Motorboats:** This is a popular river year-round with lots of canoes and motorboats. The motorboats are required to observe a no-wake speed for most of the upper river during the warmer months due to the likely presence of manatees.

**Expect at parking:** (Upper Bridge Launch CR 365)

- Parking fee: None
- Bathrooms: None
- Camping: None
- Camping fees: N/A
- Crowds: Weekends and holidays
- Boat Ramp: Small, narrow and dirt
- Canoe/kayak launch: Easy

**Expect at parking:** (Lower Bridge Launch US 98)

- Parking fee: None
- Bathrooms: None
- Camping: None
- Camping fees: N/A
- Crowds: Weekends and holidays
- Boat Ramp: Paved
- Canoe/kayak launch: Easy

**Expect at parking:** (Optional take-out at City of St. Marks Wakulla River Park)

- Parking fee: None
- Bathrooms: Yes, also has water fountains
- Camping: None
- Camping Fees: N/A
- Crowds: No
- Boat Ramp: Canoe launch and dock
- Canoe/kayak launch: Easy
- Note: The dock for launching can be inaccessible during an extreme low tide.

**Expect at parking:** (Optional take-out at San Marco de Apalache State Park)

- Parking fee: None
- Bathrooms: Yes, also has water fountains
- Camping: None
- Camping Fees: N/A
- Crowds: Weekends and holidays
- Boat Ramp: Canoe launch and dock
- Canoe/kayak launch: Easy

**Expect at parking:** (Optional take-out at Newport on the St. Marks River)

- Parking fee: None
- Bathrooms: Yes

- Camping: Yes
- Camping Fees: Yes
- Crowds: Weekends and holidays
- Boat Ramp: Canoe launch and dock
- Canoe/kayak launch: Easy

**Cultural and historical features along the trail:**

- Wakulla Springs State Park and Lodge is located upriver of the designated trail and is home of one of the largest and deepest freshwater springs in the world. This park plays host to an abundance of wildlife, including alligators, turtles, deer, and birds. Daily guided riverboat tours provide a closer view of wildlife, and glass bottom boat tours are offered when the water is clear. Swimming is a popular activity during the hot summer months. A nature trail offers a leisurely walk along the upland wooded areas of the park. The Wakulla Springs Lodge was built in 1937 by financier Edward Ball and is open year-round. A full-service dining room overlooks the spring; lodge meeting facilities offer an excellent place for retreats. Wakulla Springs State Park and Lodge is listed on the Natural Register of Historic Places and is designated as a National Natural Landmark, <http://www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings/default.cfm>.
- San Marcos de Apalache Historic State Park has a museum and several interpretive trails. The many different flags welcoming visitors to the park demonstrate the colorful history of this site, from the first Spanish explorers to the present day. The history of this National Landmark began in 1528 when Panfilo de Narvaez arrived in the area with 300 men; however, the first fort was not built until 1679. Andrew Jackson occupied the fort for a brief time in the early 1800s. The museum at the park displays pottery and tools unearthed near the original fort and explains the history of the San Marcos site, <http://www.floridastateparks.org/sanmarcos/>.
- Big Bend Scenic Byway includes cruising the bridge over the beautiful Wakulla River on US 98. From the website: Come and take a drive on the "Wild Side" along Florida's Big Bend Scenic Byway where theme parks and bright lights give way to horizons of towering pines and blue-green Gulf waters. The "Bend" is where Florida's Gulf Coast curves westward, sheltering vast seagrass beds, marshes, winding rivers, sugar-sand beaches, deep forests, and crystal-clear springs. The unparalleled natural bounty and beauty of the Bend have attracted visitors since 15,000 BC. While traveling on the Byway, visitors can explore the natural resources which have supported and sustained the lives and the livelihoods of generations past and present





# Florida Designated Paddling Trails

## Withlacoochee River North



Withlacoochee River Paddling Trail Map 1

FLORIDA/GEORGIA LINE

Jennings

Pinetta

41

75

Hanson

Withlacoochee River Paddling Trail Map 2

HAMILTON

Madison

MADISON

90

Withlacoochee River Paddling Trail Map 3

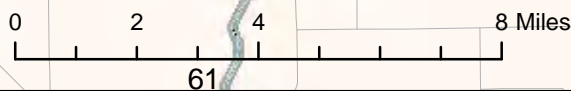
Lee

Ellaville

SUWANNEE

Falmouth

-  Designated Paddling Trail
-  Wetlands
-  Water
-  Designated Paddling Trail Index



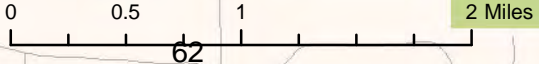
# Withlacoochee North Paddling Trail Map 1



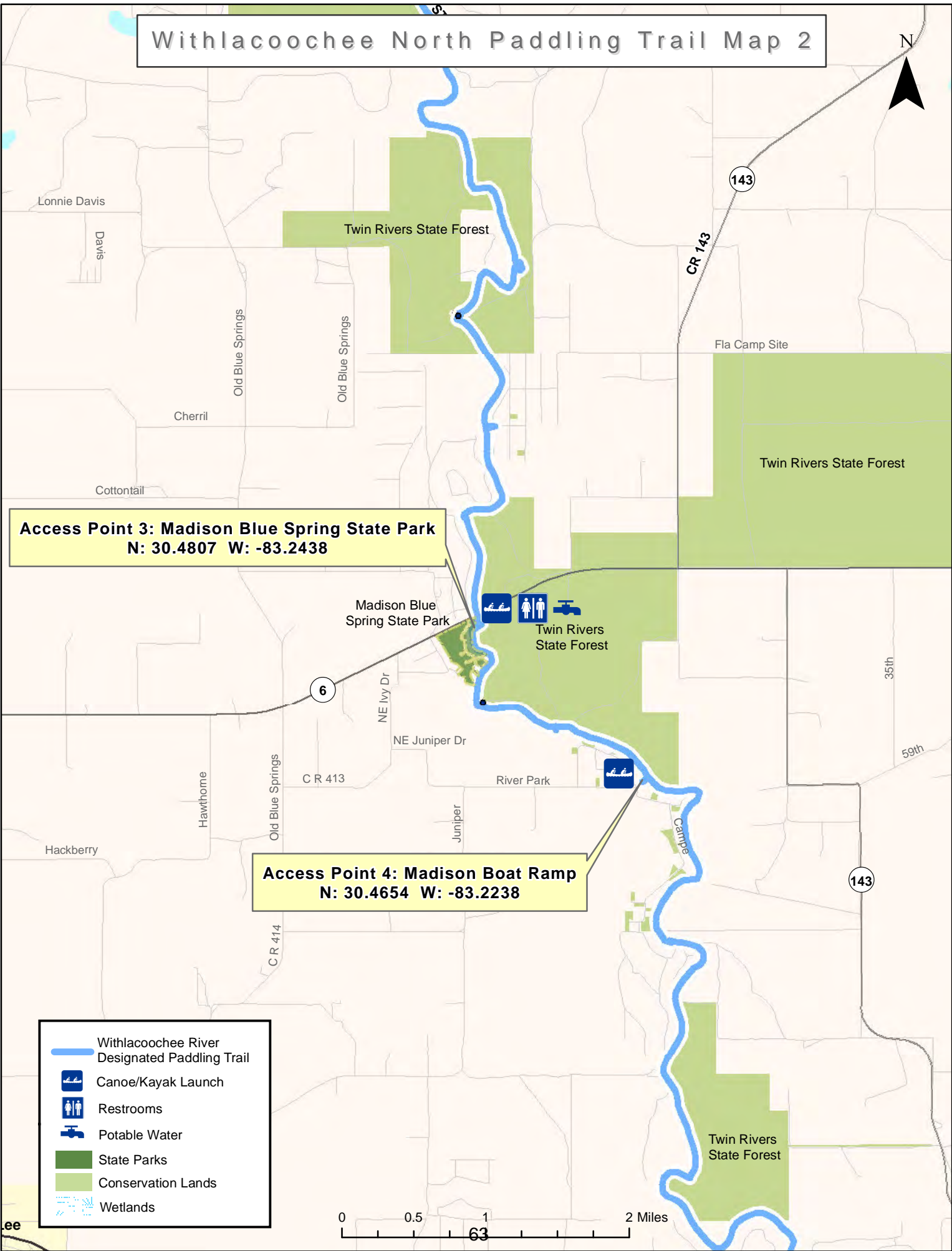
**Access Point 1: CR 145 Bridge Launch**  
N: 30.6357 W: -83.3112

**Access Point 2: CR 150 Bridge Launch**  
N: 30.5957 W: -83.2597

-  Withlacoochee River
-  Designated Paddling Trail
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Florida Conservation Lands
-  Wetlands



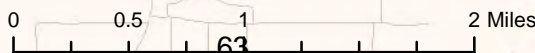
# Withlacoochee North Paddling Trail Map 2



**Access Point 3: Madison Blue Spring State Park**  
N: 30.4807 W: -83.2438

**Access Point 4: Madison Boat Ramp**  
N: 30.4654 W: -83.2238









- Withlacoochee River Designated Paddling Trail
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- State Parks
- Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

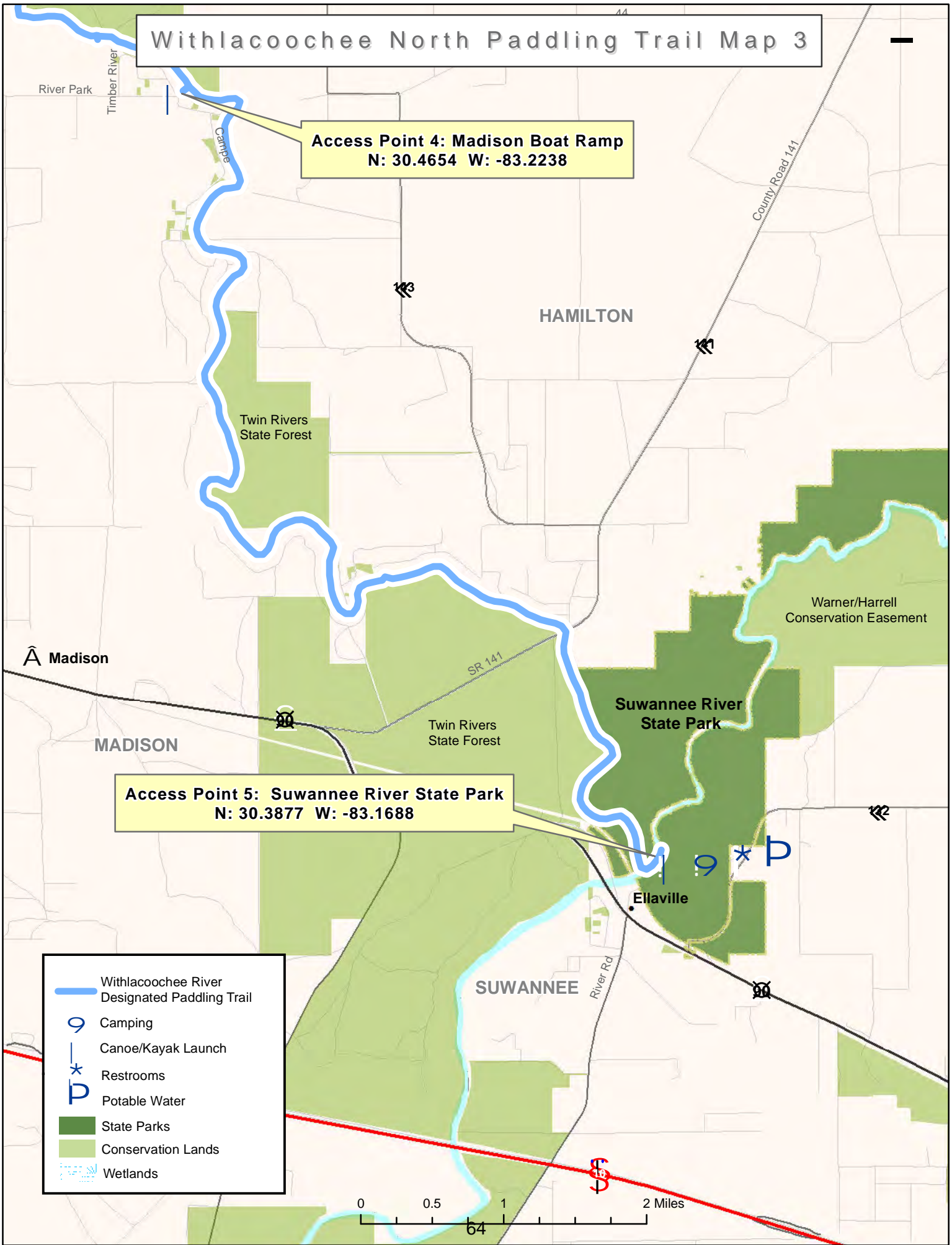
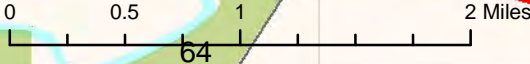


# Withlacoochee North Paddling Trail Map 3

**Access Point 4: Madison Boat Ramp**  
N: 30.4654 W: -83.2238

**Access Point 5: Suwannee River State Park**  
N: 30.3877 W: -83.1688

-  Withlacoochee River Designated Paddling Trail
-  Camping
-  Canoe/Kayak Launch
-  Restrooms
-  Potable Water
-  State Parks
-  Conservation Lands
-  Wetlands



## Withlacoochee (North) River Paddling Trail Trip Planning

**Overview:** This river gently curves through Twin Rivers State Forest past hardwood forests, crystal-clear springs, and sandbars along the bends. Primitive camping is allowed along the way. There are some small shoals, but portaging is generally not necessary. The Withlacoochee contributes a significant amount of water to the Suwannee River and joins it at Suwannee River State Park. The trail ends at the boat ramp in the state park, about a quarter-mile upstream on the Suwannee River.

**Counties:** Hamilton, Madison

**Nearest towns:** Madison, Pinetta, Live Oak

**Trip length:** Approx. 28 Miles

**Mileage:**

1. Mile 0—SR 145 Bridge
2. Mile 5—CR 150 Bridge
3. Mile 16—Madison Blue Spring State Park
4. Mile 18—Madison Boat Ramp
5. Mile 28—Suwannee River State Park

\*\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mi)

**Difficulty:** Easy to Moderate (depending on water levels)

**Skill level:** Beginner to Intermediate (depending on water levels)

### **Access Points:**

**Access Point 1 Put-in:** CR 145 Bridge at Georgia State Line

**Nearest town to put-in:** Pinetta

**Miles from put-in:** Approx. 4 miles

**Directions to put-in:** From Madison, take CR 145 north through Pinetta to the bridge at the Withlacoochee River. Boat ramp is on the Georgia side (northeast) of the river.

**Access Point 2 Put-in:** CR 150 Bridge

**Nearest town to put-in:** Pinetta

**Miles from put-in:** 5.6 miles

**Directions to put-in:** From Pinetta, take CR 150 5.6 miles to river. Launch is off unpaved road on southwest side of bridge.

From Access Point 1, follow CR 145 about 4 miles back to Pinetta and follow directions above.

**Access Point 3 Put-in:** Madison Blue Spring State Park

**Nearest town to put-in:** Madison

**Miles from put-in:** 10 miles

**Directions to put-in:** From Madison, take US 90 east about two miles and keep going straight another 8 miles to state park entrance on right.

From Access Point 3, drive east on CR 150 3.4 miles and turn south onto CR 255. Follow 8.9 miles and turn left onto SR 6. Follow 3.4 miles to state park entrance on right.

**Access Point 4 Put-in:** Madison boat ramp

**Directions to put-in:** From state park, take SR 6 west about .5 mile and turn south onto NE Ivy. Follow .7 miles through stop sign at water bottling plant and turn left onto Juniper Road. Follow .7 mile through curves and keep heading straight on River Park Road until it ends at park and boat ramp after 1.2 miles.

Note: Most of these roads are unpaved and can be confusing since there are no directional signs for ramp.

**Access Point 5 Take-out:** Suwannee River State Park

**Directions to take-out:** From Madison, drive east on US 90 about 16 miles to Suwannee River State Park. Follow signs to the boat ramp located on the Suwannee River. From Live Oak, the state park entrance is about 12 miles west on US 90.

From Madison Blue Spring State Park, head west 3.5 miles on SR 6 and turn south onto CR 255. Follow 3.5 miles to US 90 at the town of Lee. Turn left onto US 90 and follow about 9 miles to state park entrance on left.

**Driving distance from put-in to take-out:** Approximately 25 miles

**Topo maps (USGS quads):** Pinetta, Lee, Ellaville

**Gazeteer page:** 37, 53

**Nearest local outfitters:**

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/wilderness/Outfitters.cfm>.

**Shuttle service offered:** Contact above

**Water level info:** Suwannee River Water Management District gauge at Pinetta:

<http://www.mysuwanneeriver.org/realtime/river-levels.php>. Note: The Pinetta gauge should read above 54 feet for optimal paddling conditions. If below 54 feet, many of the shoals may be too low to paddle through.

**Break / Lunch areas:** Sandbars along the river are pleasant for picnics, Madison Blue Springs State Park and other county parks along the river have picnic tables and shelters

**Camping options:** Camping is allowed on Twin Rivers State Forest lands along the river; no permit is required. Primitive campsites can be found at 3 sites along the river with yellow blazes on trees visible from the river. See map for locations. Camping is also available at Suwannee River State Park; <http://floridastateparks.org/suwanneeriver/default.cfm>.

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** No alcohol allowed at Madison Blue Springs State Park

**What to expect on the river:**

**Tidal influence:** none

**Pull-overs:** Not likely

**Low branches:** none

**Narrow water:** none

**Shallow water:** none

**Strong currents:** possible with high water levels

**Rocks:** large rocks and shoals are present at intervals throughout the river

**Houses:** Few residences are located between CR 145 and SR 6; houses become more frequent on the lower stretch of the river

**Shoals:** numerous,

**Tight turns:** none

**Open water:** none

**Springs:** <http://www.floridasprings.org/visit/map/>.

**Potable water sources:** Madison Blue Spring State Park

**Wildlife:** Abundant birds and ducks, deer, raccoon, otter, beaver, wild turkey, bobcat, alligators

**Natural communities:** pine flatwoods, mixed hardwoods, river floodplain, springs

**Portages:** Possible depending on water levels at shoals. Portaging is not likely during normal or high water levels.

**Swimming:** Popular at spring sites along the river

**Motorboats:** Small fishing boats present but limited due to shoals in the river

**Expect at parking CR 145:**

- **Parking fee:** none
- **Bathrooms:** none
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** n/a
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** n/a
- **Crowds:** none
- **Boat Ramp:** concrete boat ramp
- **Potable water source:** none
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** none

**Expect at parking CR 150:**

- **Parking fee:** none
- **Bathrooms:** none
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** n/a
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** n/a
- **Crowds:** none
- **Boat Ramp:** none
- **Potable water source:** none
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** yes. Launch is paved sidewalk followed by mesh and gravel.

**Expect at parking at Madison Blue Spring State Park:**

<http://www.floridastateparks.org/madisonbluespring/>.

- **Parking fee:** yes (**no overnight parking**)
- **Bathrooms:** yes
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** 8 a.m. to sunset

- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** n/a
- **Crowds:** May be crowded on weekends and holidays
- **Boat Ramp:** none
- **Potable water source:** yes
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** yes. Launch is just south of main springs near picnic area at mouth of spring run along river. Be careful of rocks and cypress knees near water. Launch is about 175 yards to parking area.

**Expect at parking Madison Boat Ramp:**

- **Parking fee:** none
- **Bathrooms:** none
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** n/a
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** n/a
- **Crowds:** none
- **Boat Ramp:** concrete boat ramp
- **Potable water source:** none
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** none

**Expect at parking at Suwannee River State Park:**

<http://floridastateparks.org/suwanneeriver/default.cfm>.

- **Parking fee:** entrance fees apply
- **Bathrooms:** yes
- **Hours of operation (gates close):** 8 a.m. to sunset
- **Camping:** yes. Cabins also available
- **Camping fees:** see website
- **Crowds:** none
- **Boat Ramp:** concrete boat ramp
- **Potable water source:** yes
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** no
- **Note:** This park is on the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail  
<http://www.floridastateparks.org/wilderness/>.

**Cultural and historical features along the trail:**

Historically, the junction of the Withlacoochee and Suwannee Rivers was an important point of commerce. In the 1800's, both rivers were used as major commercial routes. Steamboats were a common sight as they carried passengers, freight and mail on the rivers.

**Notes:** Rocky shoals are numerous along the river but may not be noticeable during high water levels. The Withlacoochee can be challenging when water levels are low and shoals are more exposed. Take time to scout the shoals prior to paddling if in doubt. View the water level/river gauge info provided in this guide.

The put-in points at the CR 145 and CR 150 bridges are located in remote, unpopulated locations and vehicles are left overnight at your own risk. There is no overnight parking allowed at Madison Blue Spring State Park.

At the confluence of the Suwannee River, paddle upstream to the boat ramp at the Suwannee River State Park on the east side of the river to end your trip. Shuttle vehicles may be left here overnight at the park. The Suwannee River State Park is a stop on the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail and camping and cabins are available.



The old spring house that surrounds the Suwanacoochee Spring on the right just before the confluence of the Suwannee River is worth a look. The limestone rocks can be sharp, so use caution.