

# Office of Greenways & Trails



Withlacoochee Bay Trail

John Moran

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Greenways & Trails works to establish a connected network of greenways and trails throughout Florida. Florida received American Trails' inaugural award as "Best Trails State in America," recognizing the efforts of DEP's Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) and its many partners for their coordinated efforts to establish Florida's statewide system of trails. Properties managed include:

## 1. Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway



Land Bridge over I-75

Photo by Sky Storms (352) 361-3608

The Cross Florida Greenway stretches from the St. Johns River to the Gulf of Mexico. This 110-mile corridor encompasses a variety of natural habitats and offers an array of trails and recreation areas. (Cross Florida Region: Putnam, Marion, Citrus, Levy counties)

Hiking, biking and equestrian trails, visitor centers, boat ramps, campgrounds, picnic shelters and Florida's natural beauty make the Cross Florida Greenway an excellent playground for all ages.

On the east end of the greenway, in Palatka, Rodman Recreation Area and the Senator George Kirkpatrick Dam offer places to camp, fish, watch wildlife and picnic.

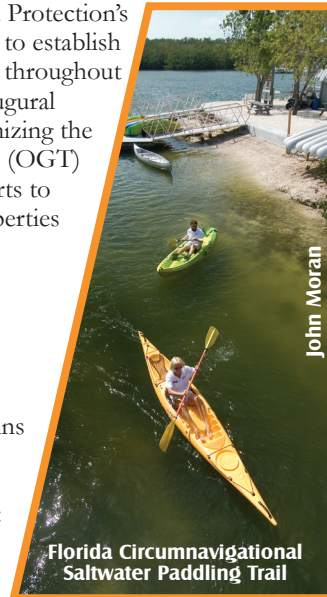
In Central Florida, near Ocala, the Land Bridge over I-75 is a favorite destination for hikers, bikers and equestrians.

Landscaped with native vegetation, the Land Bridge connects trails on the east and west sides of the interstate. The Santos area includes an equestrian-friendly campground and a mountain biking trail system that has been designated an "Epic Ride" by the International Mountain Biking Association. A barrier-free Boundless Playground® enables all children—including those with physical, developmental, cognitive and sensory disabilities—to actively and safely play with their peers without disabilities.

On the west end of the greenway, near Inglis, the Withlacoochee Bay Trail extends five miles west from the Felburn Park Trailhead to the Gulf of Mexico. The paved trail provides numerous opportunities to observe wildlife, picnic or fish along the route.

The Office of Greenways & Trails is also responsible for coordinating the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail, Florida's longest and most ambitious sea kayaking trail. Beginning at Big Lagoon State Park near Pensacola, the paddling trail extends 1,500 miles around the Florida peninsula and Keys to Fort Clinch State Park near the Georgia border.

Multiple trailheads along each state trail provide access points. For trail maps, directions and descriptions, visit the Office of Greenways & Trails' website.



Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail

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Boundless Playground®

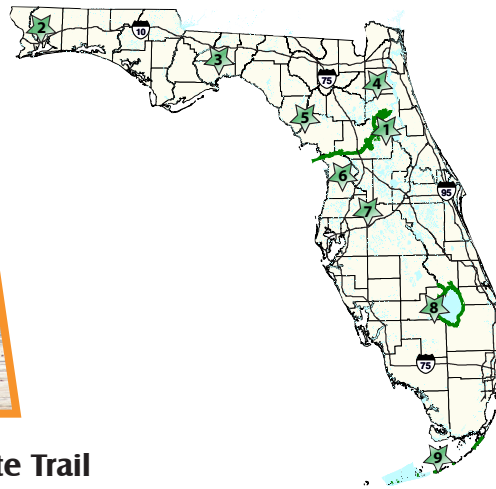


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FLORIDA  
BEST TRAILS STATE  
IN AMERICA  
INAUGURAL WINNER





## 2. Blackwater Heritage State Trail

The Blackwater Heritage State Trail, the westernmost rail-trail in the state, extends eight miles from Milton to Whiting Field Naval Air Station. The trail passes through pine woods, a cypress/bay swamp and an area of white-topped pitcher plants. Several wooden bridges cross quiet creeks along the trail. An equestrian trail parallels a segment of the paved trail. (West Panhandle Region: Santa Rosa County)

## 3. Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail

The Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail runs 16 miles from Florida's capital city to the coastal town of St. Marks. The paved trail provides an excellent workout for bicyclists, walkers and skaters and features a barrier-free Boundless Playground®. The trail also offers opportunities for horseback riding on the adjacent unpaved trail and access to the Munson Hills Off-Road Trail in the Apalachicola National Forest. (East Panhandle Region: Leon, Wakulla counties)



## 4. Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail—In Development

The 47-mile Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail is being constructed in phases along the former Norfolk-Southern Railroad right-of-way. When completed, this 12'-wide, paved, multi-use recreational trail will traverse Putnam, Union, Clay and Bradford counties. The 5.2-mile Clay County segment of the trail opened in 2008 and the trailhead is located at Twin Lake Park in Keystone Heights. (Cross Florida Region: Putnam, Union, Clay, Bradford counties)

## 5. Nature Coast State Trail

The 32-mile long Nature Coast State Trail connects Cross City, Trenton, Fanning Springs and Chiefland. Among the trail's highlights is an historic train trestle crossing the Suwannee River. Trail users can take advantage of the cooling springs at nearby Fanning Springs State Park or watch for wildlife at Andrews Wildlife Management Area. (Cross Florida Region: Dixie, Levy, Gilchrist counties)



## 6. Withlacoochee State Trail

The Withlacoochee State Trail, 46-miles long, runs through small towns, ranches and the Withlacoochee State Forest. Concrete mileage and whistle markers, the Lake Henderson Trestle and the Inverness Depot serve as reminders of Florida's railroad history. Springtime brings an abundance of wildflowers. An equestrian trail parallels portions of the paved trail. (Cross Florida and West Central Regions: Citrus, Hernando, Pasco counties)



## 7. General James A. Van Fleet State Trail

The General James A. Van Fleet State Trail runs through the Green Swamp, headwaters for some of Florida's most frequently canoed rivers—the Withlacoochee, Hillsborough and Peace. Landscapes include former citrus lands and cattle ranches. With only one curve in its 29.2 miles, distance bicyclists find the paved trail an excellent place to train. (West Central Region: Sumter, Lake, Polk counties)



## 8. Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail

Managed in partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail, a segment of the Florida National Scenic Trail, circles the second largest freshwater lake in the contiguous United States. Located atop the Herbert Hoover Dike, the trail provides views ranging from scenic lakeside to agricultural landscapes. The area affords opportunities for viewing wildlife, particularly in fall and winter, when birds such as herons, egrets and a variety of wintering waterfowl are abundant. And of course, fishing opportunities are endless. (South Region: Okeechobee, Martin, Palm Beach, Hendry, Glades counties)

## 9. Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail

The Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail links Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge, Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge, Crocodile Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and ten state parks. The 106-mile trail parallels U.S. 1 from Key Largo to Key West. (South Region: Monroe County)

