



Kellogg Property Nature Center Bay Access

 Parcels
 Subject Parcels

0 170 340 680
Feet

Walton County Public Works
This GIS data is not a legal representation of the features depicted; any assumption of the legal status of this data is hereby disclaimed. Features are approximate, and are not necessarily accurate to mapping, surveying, or engineering standards.
BeachAccesses\Basic_Map.mxd, twg, 20121101





Kellogg Property

0 65 130 260 Feet

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Kellogg Nature Trail: Conceptual Design

by Sarah Kalinoski, sarahzoan@gmail.com

Highlights:

- **Few built structures** (i.e., gazebos, covered areas, etc.)
This park should introduce kids (and others) to nature's mystery, drawing them away from their electronics and into the natural world. This is accomplished by altering the landscape just enough to create a safe, accessible hiking experience.
- **ADA accessible boardwalk** on over half the trail
- **Artistic metal archway** that incorporates shapes of native plants and animals
This feature should inspire wonder and fantasy. People entering the trail should feel welcomed and intrigued by the world on the other side of the archway rather than intimidated by bugs, dirt, or the unknown.
- **Two-story "treehouse"**
Allows visitors to see the forest from a new perspective. When they climb to the second story of the tree house, the forest canopy will be directly in their line of sight, and they can look down upon the understory and shrubs.
- **Central gathering area**
This is a place where a group can convene for discussion, art activities, or just listening and observing nature. Just as visitors have had the opportunity to see the forest from the second story (in the "tree house"), this area allows them to be comfortable sitting on the forest floor. Since this area is at the center of the wooded property, it will have the least traffic noise. This location also makes it an ideal spot for bird-watching.
- **Stationary binoculars** fastened to the platform of the central gathering area
One for adults and tall children, and one for small children and those in wheelchairs.
- **Signage**
Enough signage to enhance visitors' experience in nature, but not so much as to overwhelm with information or detract from the outdoor experience. Topics include:
 - Natural community type, forest stratification
 - Which animals live or visit here?
 - Which birds might I see here?
 - Plant identification signs
- **Benches**
Placed strategically along the trail for rest and reflection.

Recommendations: Kellogg Nature Trail

Revised April 2010

Overview:

The Beaches of South Walton Tourist Development Council (TDC) has been tasked with the development of a County park on land donated by the late Mrs. Kellogg. My goal is to conceptualize an outstanding nature-based experience along the trail that has already been blazed through the majority of the property. The completed hiking trail will be appropriate for local schoolchildren and citizens as well as visitors.

Narrative:

My intention in the design of this trail is to honor the legacy of Mrs. Kellogg and uphold her vision for the land she generously donated to Walton County. I have spoken with local residents who remember Mrs. Kellogg, and I am told that she wanted children to spend less time in front of the television and more time outside.

I have purposely designed the trail with few built structures (i.e., gazebos, covered areas, etc.). This park should introduce kids to nature's mystery, drawing them away from their electronics and into the natural world. I believe this should be accomplished by altering the landscape just enough to create a safe, accessible hiking experience. I have also recommended a couple tools for exploration and some designated places for gathering, rest and reflection.

First, at the entrance of the trail, I envision an artistic metal archway that incorporates shapes of native plants and animals. (See Attachment A.) This feature should inspire wonder and fantasy. People entering the trail should feel welcomed and intrigued by the world on the other side of the archway rather than intimidated by bugs, dirt, or the unknown. The original drawing provided by Welch & Ward Architects, Inc. suggested gazebos at the trail entrance and at the first node. To me, this is an unnecessary extension of the built, indoor environment into the trail experience. I recommend instead that this *outdoor* experience begin and remain outdoors.

The only enclosed space that I do recommend as part of this plan is a two-story "tree house" that allows children to see the forest from a new perspective. When they climb to the second story of the tree house, the forest canopy will be directly in their line of sight, and they can look down upon the understory and shrubs. This will help children to better understand the concept of forest stratification and to see things (like bird nests, tree shapes, etc.) that are more difficult to distinguish from the trail.

I suggest that the first loop of the trail be ADA accessible and the second loop be maintained as a more natural surface. My design (Attachment B) includes benches for rest and reflection at three points along the trail, approximately equidistant from one another. The first one is located before the first bend in the trail and between two very large trees—a magnolia and a pine. The second and third benches are both along the second loop at the far "corners" of the trail.

In the center of the property, I recommend a clear area large enough for a whole class of children to gather. This is a place where a group can convene for discussion, art activities, or just listening and observing nature. Since this area is at the center of the wooded property, it will have the least traffic noise. This location also makes it an ideal spot for bird-watching. I recommend two secure binoculars for this platform, one for adults and tall children, and one for small children and those in wheelchairs. (See

Attachment C.) Just as visitors have had the opportunity to see the forest from the second story, I would like them to feel comfortable sitting on the forest floor. This central gathering area should have a surface that people can sit on without being ambushed by ants or chiggers.

I think signage should be in place to help people interpret what they see along the trail. However, I don't want anyone to be overwhelmed by information or to feel like they're in a museum rather than walking outside. All signs should be on the ADA accessible portion of the trail. I propose one sign by the tree house which focuses on the community type and illustrates the concept of forest stratification; a second picturing the animals that live in or visit the area; a third in the central gathering area that shows the different types of birds that one might expect to see on or near the trail; and several smaller signs throughout that identify and describe trees and shrubs (i.e., sweetgum, fetterbush, pond cypress, red bay, gallberry, magnolia, slash pine, blackgum, sweet bay, rusty lyonia).

I have also included some suggestions for a webpage dedicated to the Kellogg Nature Trail (see below); one of these suggestions is for a guide that people could print and bring with them to the trail to help them identify and record the things they see. This provides a supplement to the trail signage for those who are interested. I think this type of activity should be secondary to the immediate sensory experience of nature along the Kellogg Trail, which is why I recommend it as a web accessory rather than increased signage. More detailed or in-depth ecological information can also be provided online.

Before the entrance of the trail, there should be additional signage with a map, park rules and hours, and Leave No Trace principles. Other features that I recommend for installation in the area outside of the trail include picnic tables, a garbage receptacle, and a designated wildflower area with related signage.

I experience nature as a liberating force, and I hope that others of all ages will feel free and enlightened at the Kellogg Nature Center.

Summary of Suggested Features:

Along the trail:

- Archway constructed by local artist for the trail entry incorporating representations of native birds and plants
- ADA accessible boardwalk on over half the trail
- 2-story wooden “tree house” for play interest and for optimal viewing of forest canopy
- 3 benches placed strategically along the trail for resting and observation
- Platform in the middle of the property providing a gathering place big enough for an entire class of students
- Stationary binoculars fastened to the platform:
 - one ADA accessible and easy for kids to reach
 - one at average height for adults and tall kids
- Signage placed tactically along the trail, covering the following topics:
 - Natural community type, forest stratification
 - Which animals live or visit here?
 - Which birds might I see here?
 - Plant identification signs

In the open area outside of the trail:

- Picnic tables
- Garbage container for pick-up by TDC
- Designated wildflower area, seeded and not mowed; related signage
- Signage near the trail entrance including:
 - a map of the trail, which also indicates the length
 - indication of open hours (dawn to dusk)
 - Leave No Trace principles

Website recommendations:

- Map of the trail
- Directions to the site
- Indication of open hours (dawn to dusk)
- Leave No Trace principles
- Plant list with photos of each in all four seasons
- Photos of birds in situ (vetted by Audubon)
- Visitors’ flyer/trail guide for plant ID and potential bird sightings
- Suggested activities for teachers, trail leaders, or families

Ecological Description of the Property:

Natural Community:

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) publishes a *Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida* known as an authoritative document in the field. The Kellogg Trail property cannot be definitively classified according to this guide. I am working with other environmental professionals to determine the proper classification. Possibilities include:

Baygall = bayhead, bay swamp (FNAI, p. 31)

Basin Swamp = bayhead (FNAI, p. 39)

Bottomland Forest (FNAI, p. 33)

Plant List:

- Water oak (*Quercus nigra*)
- Slash pine (*Pinus elliotti*)
- Fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*)
- Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandifolia*)
- Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- Red bay (*Persea borbonia*)
- Muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*)
- Catbriar aka Wait-A-Minute vine (*Smilax* sp)
- Gallberry aka Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*)
- Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)
- Blackgum aka Black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)—or Swamp tupelo (*Nyssa biflora*)???
- Laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*) or Myrtle oak (*Quercus myrtifolia*)
- Sweet bay (*Magnolia virginiana*)
- Pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*)
- Sweetspire (*Itea virginica*)
- Rusty lyonia (*Lyonia ferruginea*)
- Various ferns

General Bird List:

Songbirds

Hawks

Eagles**

Turkeys

Owls

Woodpeckers

**Observed (2) on my last visit to the site!

Critter List:

Gray squirrel

Opossum

Various skinks

Cricket frog

Cottontail rabbit

Raccoon

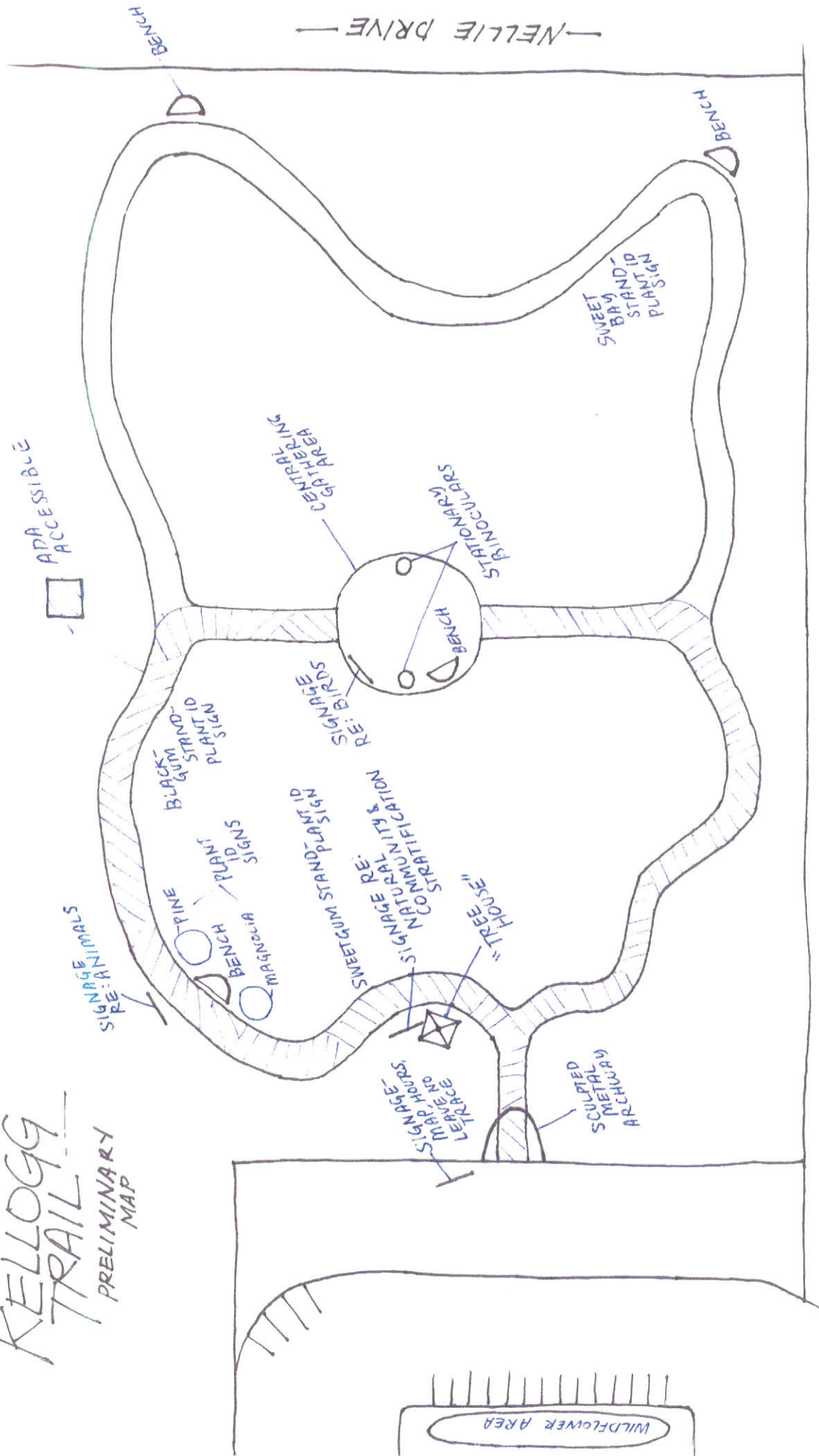
Rat snake, possibly others

White-tailed deer

The pictures below were taken on 30A just east of 393. I imagine the archway at the beginning of the Kellogg Trail sculpted in a similar fashion incorporating place-appropriate animals and plants.



KELLOGG
TRAIL



—NURSERY ROAD—

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