



# Florida's Paddling Trails System

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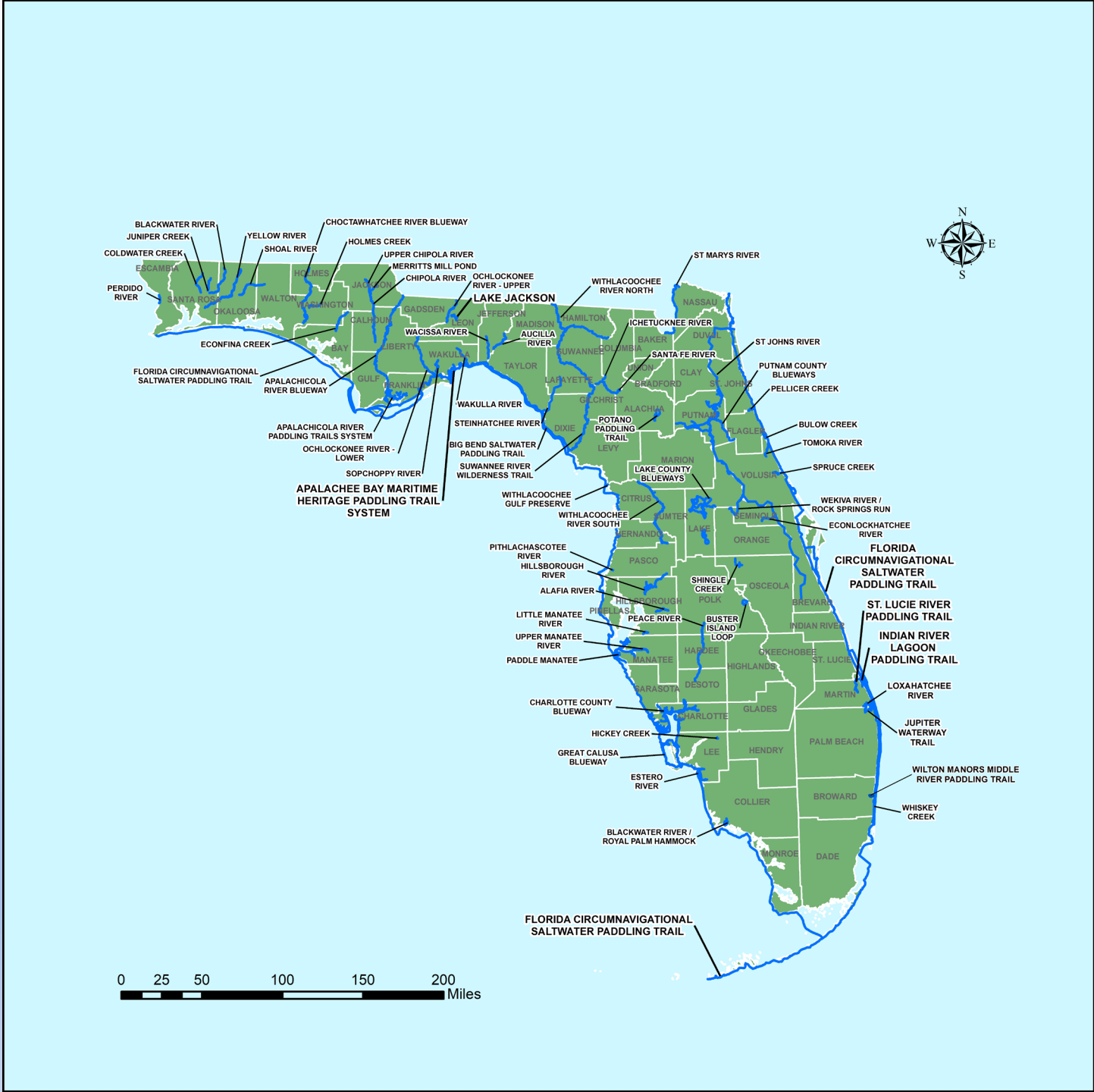
Office of Greenways and Trails

Florida Department of Environmental  
Protection





OGT  
coordinates  
more than 60  
state-  
designated  
paddling trails,  
covering over  
4,000 miles.





Padding trails include coastline, tidal creeks, rivers and lakes





# Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail

Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail Guide (Text Only)

FL Office of Greenways & Trails

~A sea kayaker's version of the Appalachian Trail, the 1,515-mile Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail takes adventurers from Pensacola to Key West to the Georgia border. Every Florida coastal habitat type is featured, from barrier island dune systems to salt marsh to mangroves, as well as the Sunshine State's colorful history. This is the seventh printed guide for the trail, useful for short and long-distance paddlers alike. It includes information on launches, campsites, campgrounds, motels, points-of-interest, and the many public lands along the route. A trail data book, equipment list and trip tips and planning instructions are also included. Complementary color maps can be downloaded for free from [www.floridagreenwaysandtrails.com](http://www.floridagreenwaysandtrails.com). Included in this edition is information about alternate routes in the Panhandle and Keys.

Cover photo by Doug Alderson

The Florida Office of Greenways and Trails, part of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, provides statewide leadership and coordination to establish, expand and promote non-motorized trails across Florida.

**Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail Guide (text only)**

**Seventh Edition**

**FL Office of Greenways & Trails**





# Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail



Journey of a lifetime...



# OGT Teams with the Florida Paddling Trails Association (FPTA) to Coordinate Annual Florida Circumnavigational Trail Gatherings



“Differences melt away as we share our love for paddling in Florida.” Jill Lingard, FPTA President



# OGT helps to coordinate bi-annual 3-day Florida paddlesports trainings



Participants complete requirements to be an American Canoe Association certified Florida Coastal Kayak Trip Leader.

Goals: safer and more enjoyable paddling trips for the public; more trained State Park trip leaders.



# Why Paddling Trails?

- Tourism Destinations
- Physical Fitness Opportunities
- Environmental Awareness
- Conservation Stewardship







Outdoor  
Recreation  
in Florida

# The Big Picture

**\$33.2 Billion in Annual Consumer Spending**

- 384,000 Direct Jobs
- \$3.5 Billion in State and Local Taxes
  - \$17.8 Billion in Wages



# 2017 Economic Study of Florida Recreational Pursuits

Bicycling on paved roads and trails

**\$6 Billion**

Bicycling on unpaved trails

**\$2 Billion**

Fitness walking and jogging

**\$13.5 Billion**

**Paddling**

**\$3 Billion**





# Overwhelming Support



88% of Florida residents say outdoor recreation is very important to their health and quality of life



Source: DEP/SCORP 2023



# Overwhelming Support



Paddlesports is the number one freshwater activity among Florida residents

Source: DEP/SCORP 2023



The Green Exercise Effect: The color green makes exercise feel easier and people are more likely to exercise more often.

Source: University of Essex, Environ Sci Technol. August, 2012





# Many researchers believe the outdoors simply makes us feel happier





# Challenges

Currently, only 36% of Floridians are at a healthy weight, but enhanced access combined with informational outreach can increase frequency of physical activity. One study showed a 48% increase in physical activity!



Source: DEP/SCORP 2017



# Lots of calories to burn on Florida's abundant waterways!

<b>Activity, Exercise or Sport (1 hour)</b>	<b>130 lb</b>	<b>155 lb</b>	<b>180 lb</b>	<b>205 lb</b>
Canoeing, camping trip	236	281	327	372
Canoeing, rowing, light	177	211	245	279
Canoeing, rowing, moderate	413	493	572	651
Canoeing, rowing, vigorous	708	844	981	1117
Crew, sculling, rowing, competition	708	844	981	1117
Kayaking	295	352	409	465

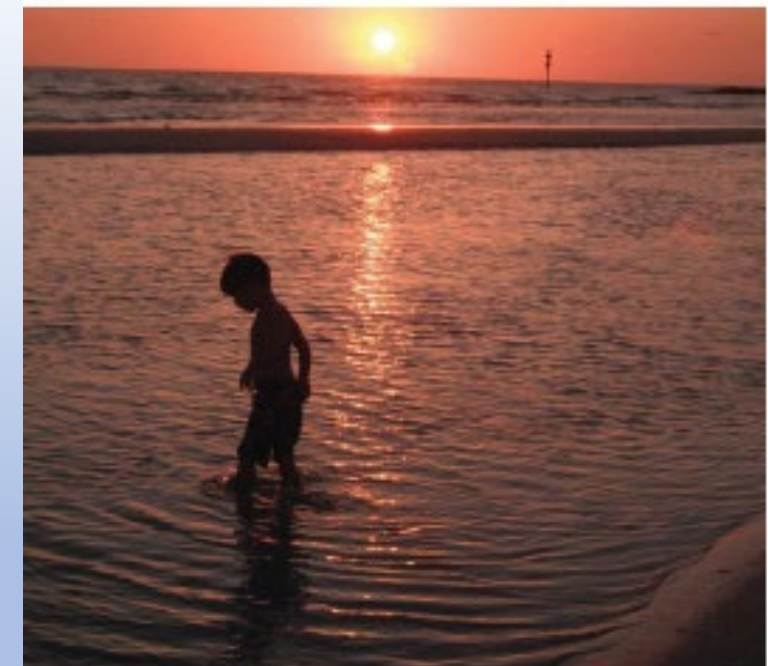
*Calculations based on research data from Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, the official journal of the American College of Sports Medicine*

<https://www.nutristrategy.com/caloriesburned.htm>

*Quick Fact*

Florida has 1,350 miles of coastline, 12,650 miles of rivers and streams, and 7,700 lakes within its boundaries.

- Florida Department of Environmental Protection



Joneymoon Island State Park, credit Kristin Crawford





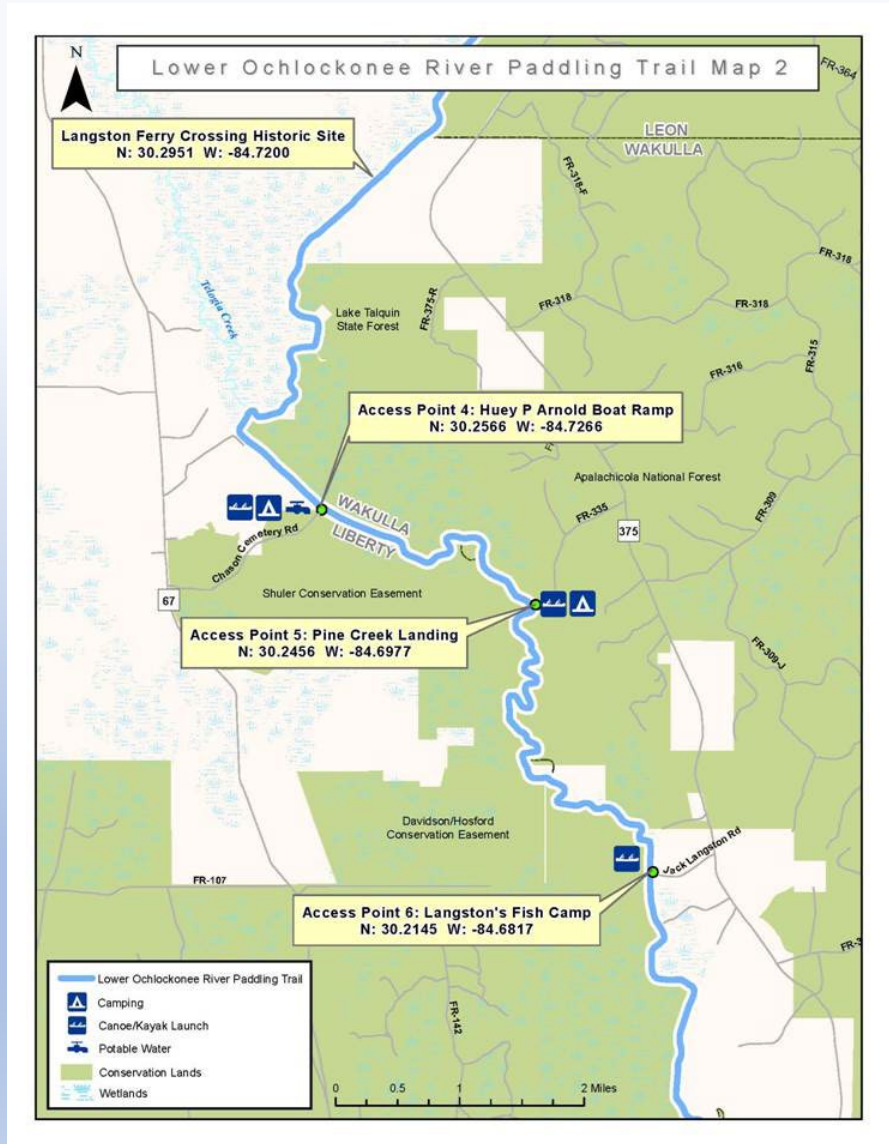
# Trail System History



Begun in the 1970s by the Florida Governor and Cabinet, the “Florida Canoe Trail System” was managed by the Florida Park System. In 1998, pursuant to Chapter 260, the "Florida Greenways and Trails Act," the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) was given the responsibility for oversight of state designated paddling trails. In 2011, OGT was merged with Florida state parks, but still coordinates the state’s paddling trails.



# Maps cover 10-15 mile segments





# A Brief Look at the Trails...



The Perdido along the Alabama border



# Juniper Creek, Blackwater River





# Holmes Creek, Choctawhatchee River





# Econfina Creek





# Apalachicola Blueway





# Apalachicola River Paddling Trails System





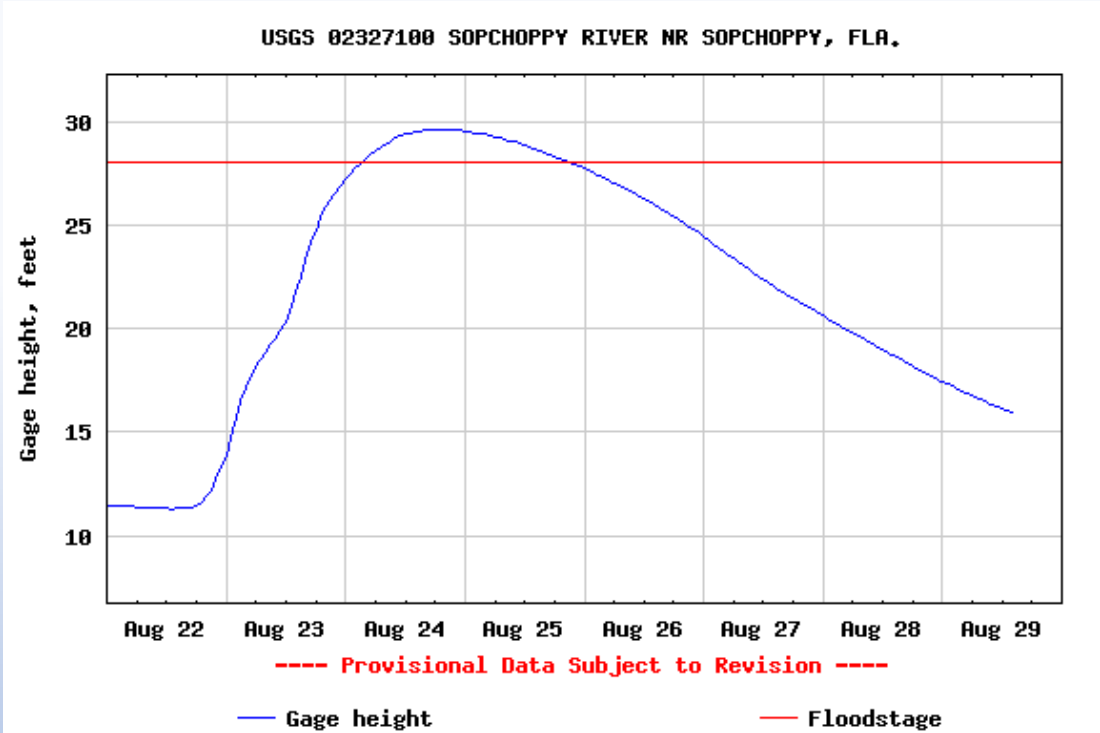


# Ochlockonee & Sopchoppy Rivers

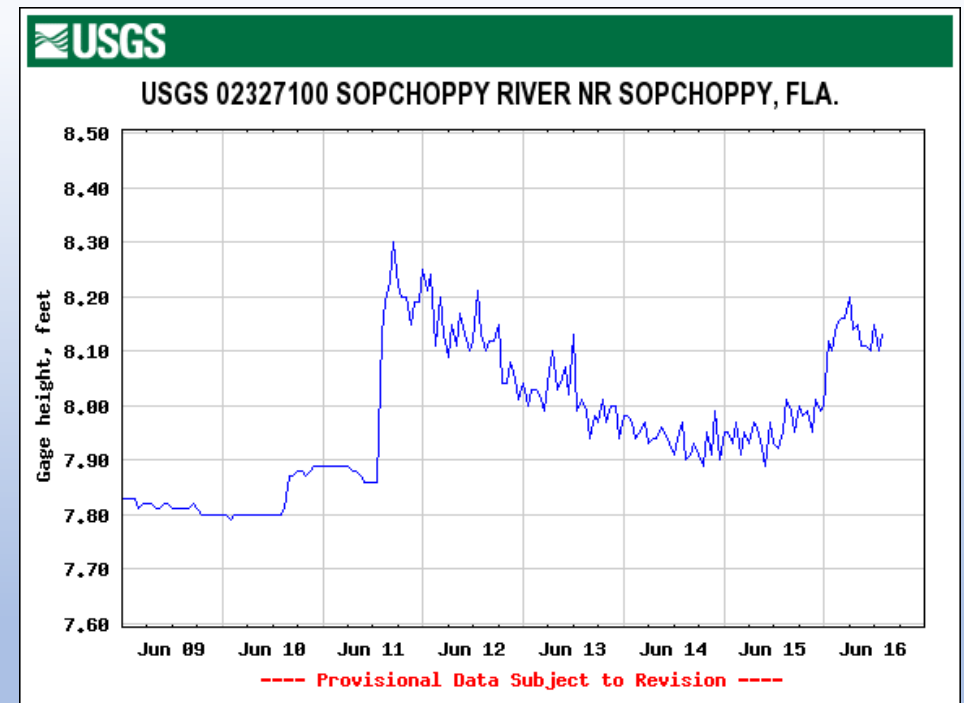




# The guides include water level information where applicable



Flood stage not safe for paddling



Upper section too low for ideal paddling

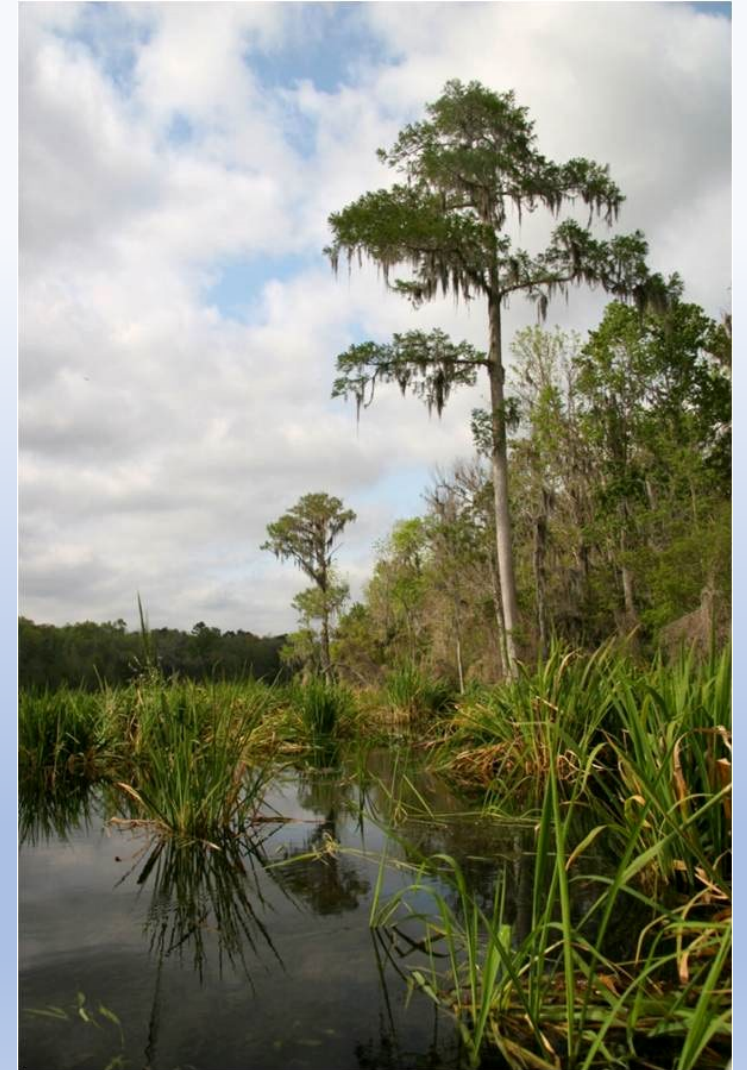


# Wakulla River



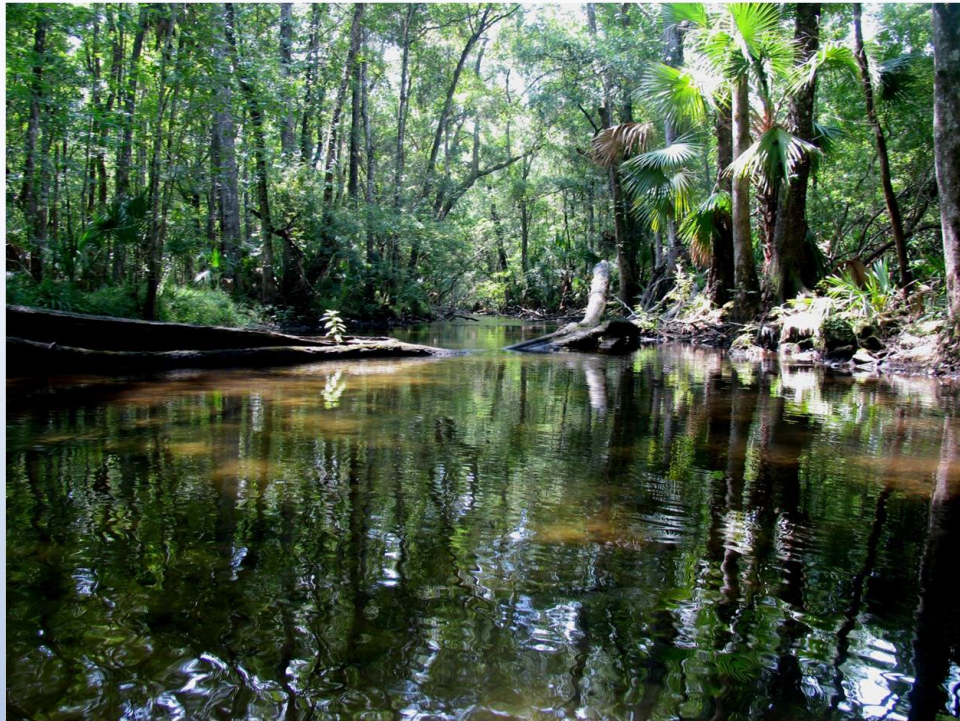


# Wacissa River





# Wacissa Slave Canal



Read the guides carefully. Some trails or portions of trails require portaging over snags.





# Aucilla River



Rivers such as the Aucilla have small shoals at certain water levels.





# Withlacoochee River North





# The Suwannee



6 river camps, 8 state parks, and the largest concentration of springs in the world.





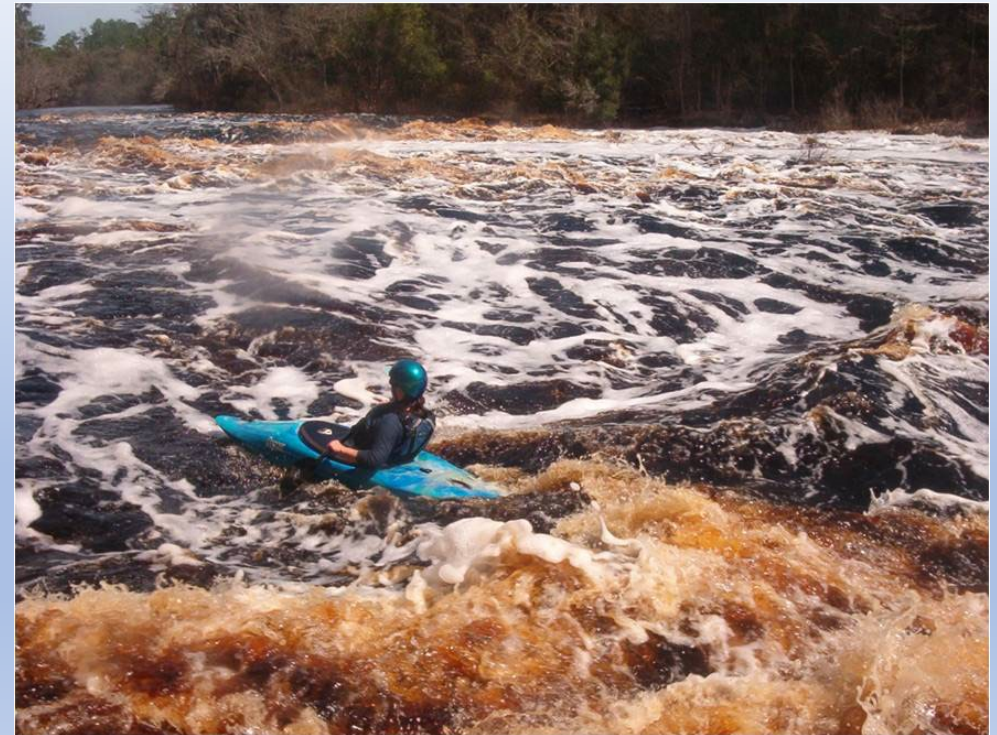


# The Suwannee-Big Shoals



Class 3 rapids at certain levels,  
largest in Florida

Photos by Don Kelly





# Santa Fe & Ichetucknee Rivers





# Putnam County Blueways





# St. Johns River



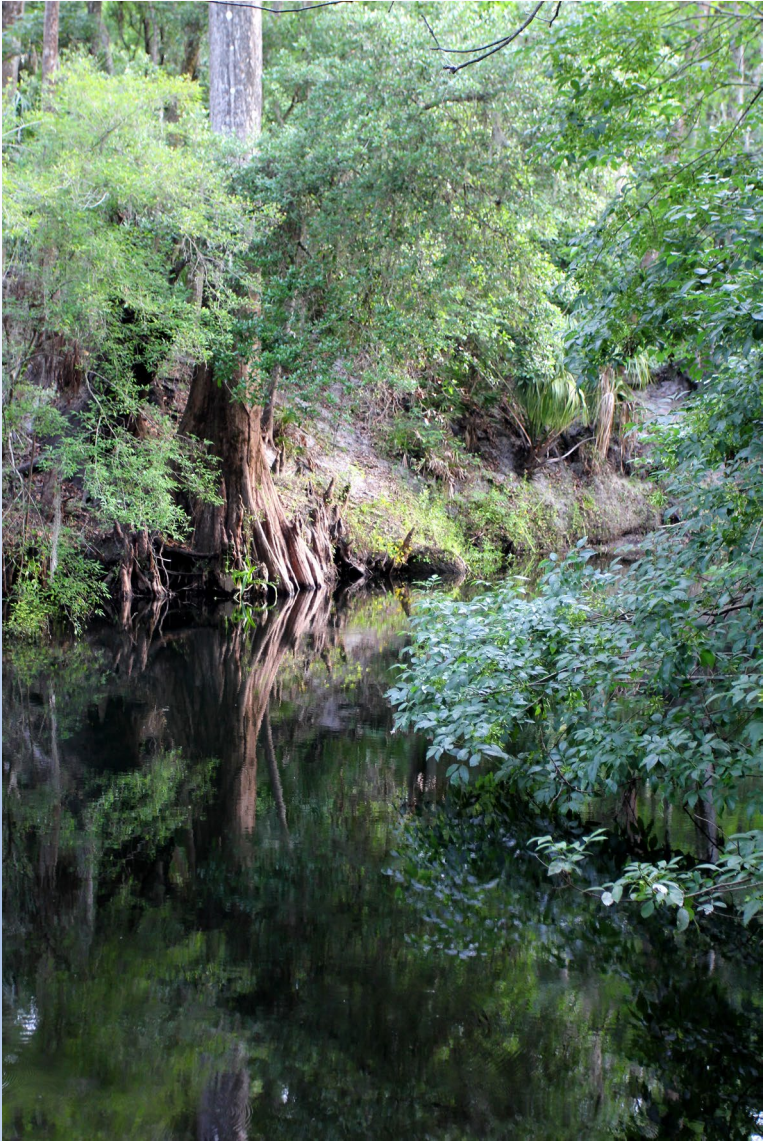


# Rock Springs Run/Wekiva River



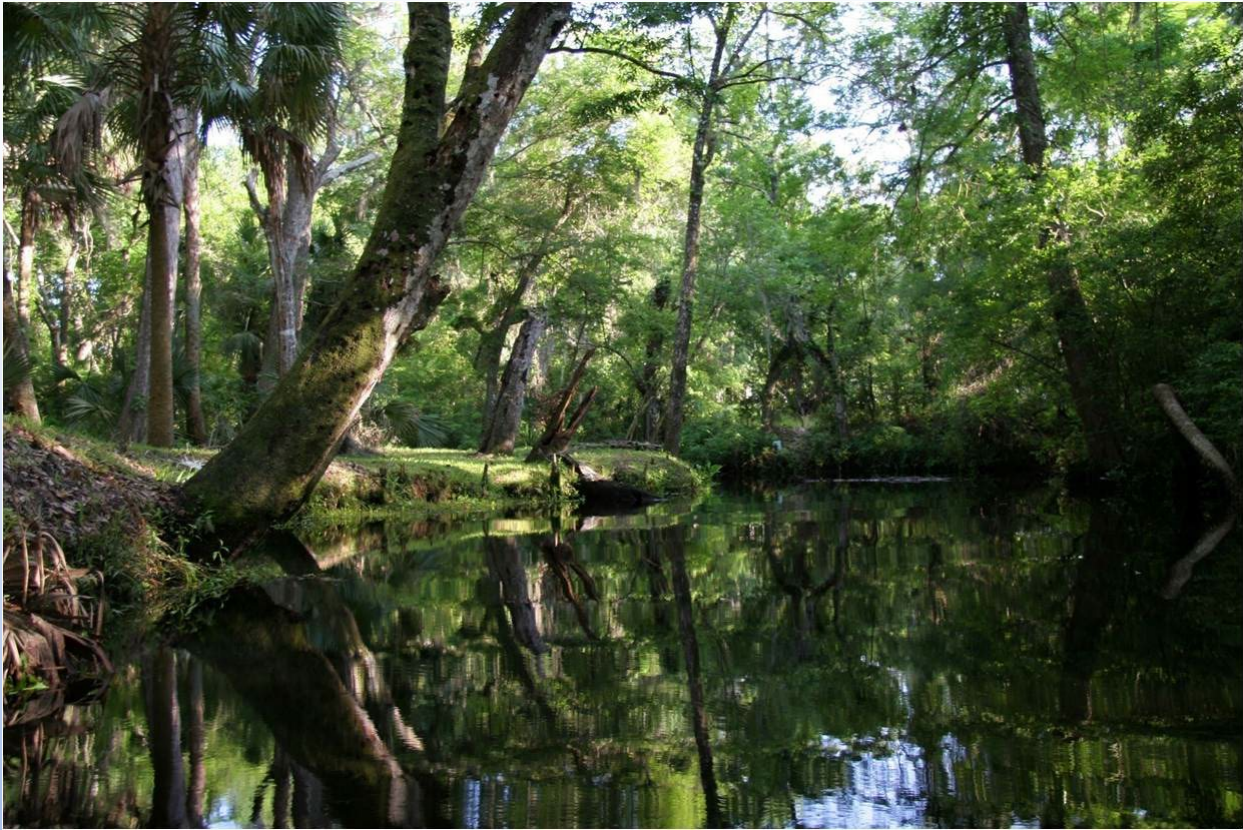


# Hillsborough River





# Pithlachascotee River





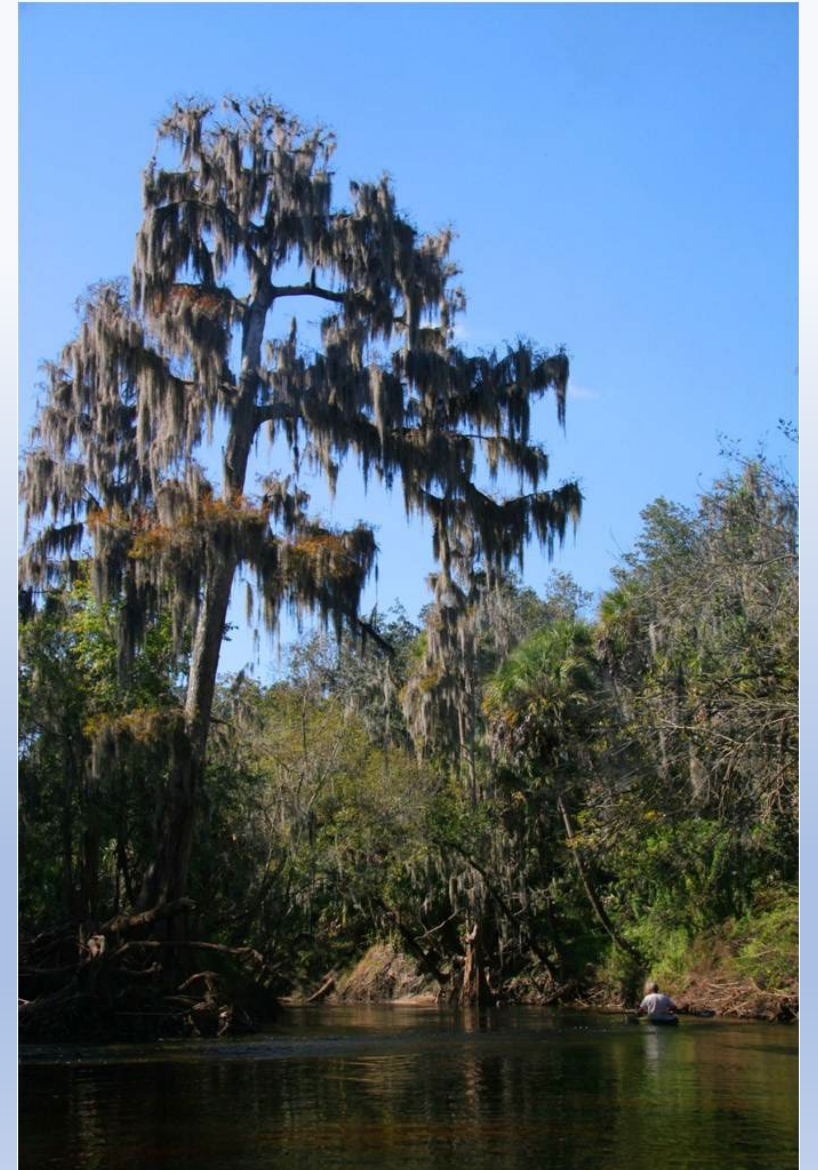
# Little Manatee and Paddle Manatee







# Alafia River





# Estero River and Calusa Blueway





# Peace River





# Loxahatchee River





# Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail





# Practice Good Stewardship

## LOW IMPACT PRINCIPLES

- Plan ahead
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave only what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife – keep distance and use binoculars or zoom lens
- Be considerate of other visitors





# Volunteer to help Florida's Paddling Trails

The screenshot shows the website header for the Florida Paddling Trails Association. In the top left corner, there is a logo with the text "Florida Paddling Trails Association" overlaid on a map of Florida. In the top right corner, the text reads "Florida Paddling Trails Association" and "501(c)(3) Non-Profit". Below this is a navigation menu with the following items: Home, Paddling, Environment, Volunteers, Groups & Services, Join/Support FPTA, Calendar, Store, About, and Contact. The main content area features a large photograph of several people kayaking on a body of water at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange and yellow, and the water reflects the light. In the foreground, a person is seen from the back, sitting in a red kayak. In the middle ground, another person is standing in a kayak, and a dog is sitting in the same kayak. In the background, another person is visible in a kayak. Below the photograph, the text "Connecting Paddlers to Florida's Water Trails" is displayed in white.

Florida Paddling Trails Association  
501(c)(3) Non-Profit

Home Paddling Environment Volunteers Groups & Services Join/Support FPTA Calendar Store About Contact

Connecting Paddlers to Florida's Water Trails

Join the Florida Paddling Trails Association  
and your local paddling club



For Trail Guides and Maps, log onto:  
[www.FloridaGreenwaysandTrails.com](http://www.FloridaGreenwaysandTrails.com)

