

Florida Designated Paddling Trails

Sopchoppy River



Sopchoppy River Paddling Trail Map 1



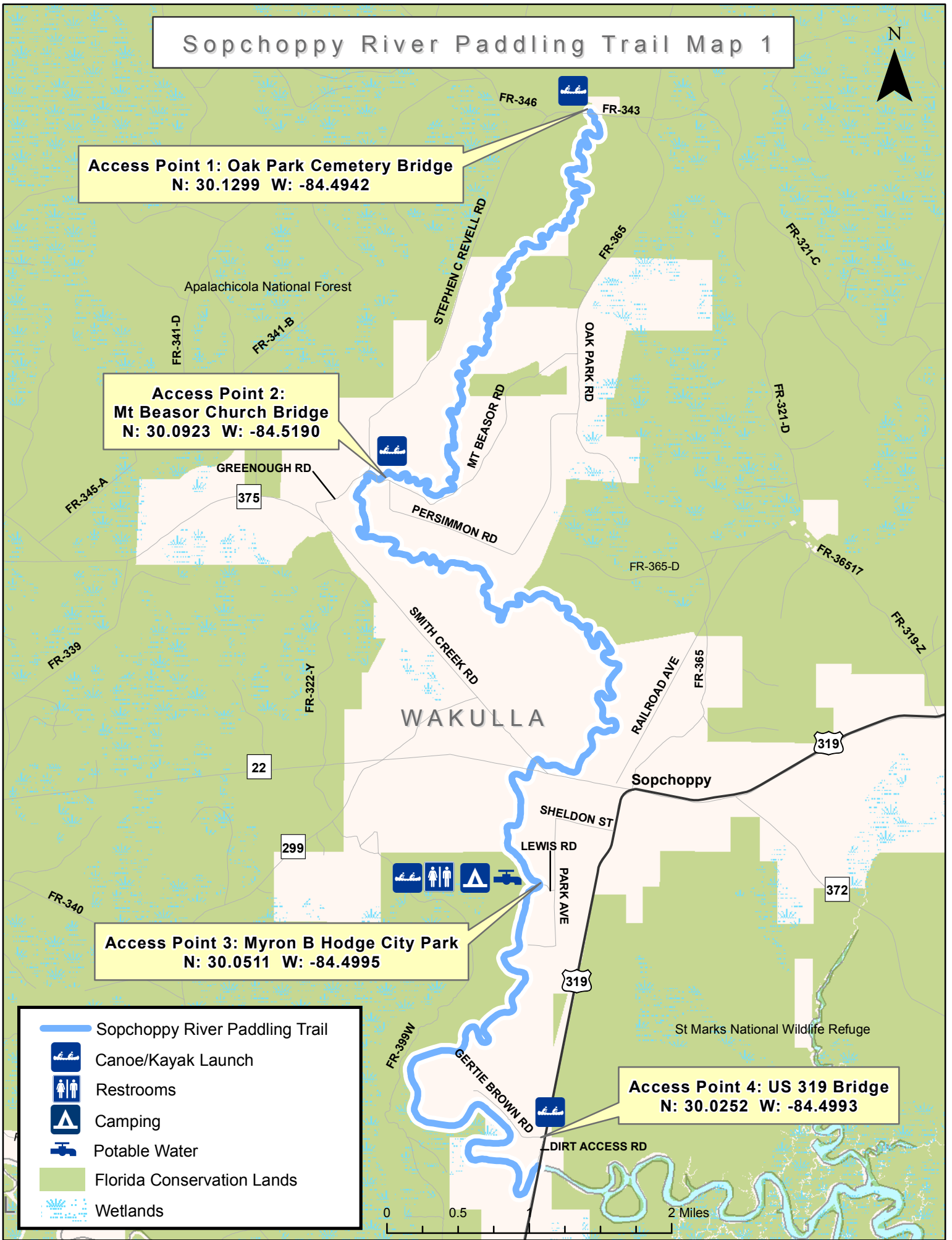
Access Point 1: Oak Park Cemetery Bridge
N: 30.1299 W: -84.4942

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 Guide

The Waterway

Some 50 miles in length, the Sopchoppy is a beautiful river with high, narrow limestone banks and unique cypress tree formations flowing through the Apalachicola National Forest and beyond. Numerous white sandbars make for enticing rest stops. Deer can often be seen along the shore or swimming across the tea-colored river. In spring, wild azalea and other flowering plants add color along the banks where the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#) follows portions of the river.

The Paddling Experience

The originally designated portion of the Sopchoppy is 15 miles in length although it is possible to add more distance on either end of trail endpoints. This gorgeous river is not suitable for beginners as sharp turns, log jams, and difficult access on steep banks at some access points can be very challenging. Be sure to visit the USGS website to check [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. The Sopchoppy experiences rapid fluctuations in water level following a storm and quickly drops in dry spells. During low water levels, some pullovers and wading may be required. With adequate water levels, it is possible for experienced paddlers to launch at the Forest Road 329 bridge and paddle 5 miles down to Oak Park Bridge.

Access Points

#1, Start of the Trail, Oak Park Bridge

Access is southwest of the bridge with a steep climb down the bank to the river. *Parking area is northwest of the bridge. Take FR 365 (River Rd.) north from Sopchoppy 5.6 miles to FR 343. Turn left (west) to bridge.*

#2, Mile 5.0 Mount Beasor Church Road Bridge

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

#3, Mile 10.0, Myron B. Hodge City Park, town of Sopchoppy

This quiet city park offers RV hookups and tent camping, picnic pavilions and a horseshoe pit. Call (850) 962-3873 for hours and fees. *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.*

#4, Mile 15, End of the Trail, US 319 Bridge (not recommended)

The US 319 Bridge was made the designated take-out point when the trail was established in the 1980s. However, it is not a good site - there is not a ramp and parking is limited to pulling off the road where getting stuck is a possibility. A better option is to end your journey at the City Park or continue to Ochlockonee River State Park. *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.*



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#5, Mile 20.5, Optional takeout, Ochlockonee River State Park.

From Sopchoppy, drive south on SR 319 about 4 miles and enter Ochlockonee River State Park. Follow signs to the universally accessible boat launch.

Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Harry Smith Outdoors](#) – 850-559-3400

Base Camp

Make [Ochlockonee River State Park](#) your base camp to explore the outstanding recreation opportunities in the area. Keep an eye out for the park's famous white squirrels and enjoy star gazing in dark night skies. A universally accessible boat ramp provides easy access to the river. Ochlockonee River is a mix of brackish, tidal surge, and fresh water, emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. Both freshwater and saltwater fish inhabit the waters around the park, a favorite fishing destination. The secluded primitive group camp bordering the river is a tremendous base camp for an adventure-seeking group.

