

## Withlacoochee State Trail

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**Planning Region:** Trail System

**County:** Citrus, Hernando, and Pasco

**Lease/Management Agreement Number:** 3876

### Overview

Designated as a National Recreation Trail, the Withlacoochee State Trail provides a 47-mile pedestrian corridor and access to numerous other conservation lands. The trail preserves the rail corridor and other historic railroad features like whistle markers, the Lake Henderson Trestle, a restored 1925 caboose, and the 1982 Inverness Depot.

**Total Acreage:** 761.58

<b>Natural Communities</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Mesic Hammock	6.39

  

<b>Altered Landcovers</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Developed	751.17
Successional Hardwood Forest	4.01

**Acquisition:** On September 26, 1989, the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees) approved the purchase of 739.30 acres of rail corridor comprised of two abandoned CSX Transportation, Inc. segments known as the Gulf Junction-Inverness and the Inverness-Owensboro abandonments. Purchased through the Rails to Trails Program utilizing State Infrastructure funds, the Trustees acquired fee simple title on December 21, 1989.

**Sublease:** On April 1, 2005, Rudi J. Mauthner subleased a 28.04-acre parcel, the Withlacoochee State Trail Trilby Residence to the State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, under a one-year lease which expired March 31, 2006.

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### **Resource Management Component Objectives**

#### **Hydrology**

- Conduct/ obtain an assessment of the trail's hydrological restoration needs.

#### **Imperiled Species**

- Update baseline imperiled species occurrence inventory lists.
- Monitor and document 1 selected imperiled animal species (gopher tortoise).
- Monitor and document 1 selected imperiled plant species (sand butterfly pea).

#### **Invasive and Nuisance Species**

- Annually treat 4 acres of exotic plant species.
- Develop and implement measures to prevent the accidental introduction or further spread of invasive exotic plants.
- Implement control measures on exotic animal species.

#### **Cultural Resources**

- Assess and evaluate 6 of 24 recorded cultural resources.
- Compile reliable documentation for all recorded historic and archaeological resources.
- Bring recorded cultural resources into good condition.

### **Land Use Component Objectives**

#### **Conceptual Land Use**

##### Trail-Wide

- Resurface the trail.
- Comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- Install a 9-1-1 emergency system.
- Provide sewer connections for all restrooms along the trail.
- Provide more interpretation.
- Work with the Florida Audubon Society to implement a birdwatching tour.

##### Gulf Junction Trailhead

- Remove sidewalk to picnic pavilion.
- Install a ramp compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Restore inaccessible parking area.

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### South Citrus Trailhead

- Relocate parking spaces and install picnic pavilion and tables.
- Permeably pave parking spaces.

### Inverness Trailhead

- Construct a visitor center and gift shop.
- Remove the restroom and restore footprint.
- Pave parking areas.
- Replace shed and carports.
- Install a security gate to the overflow parking area.

### Ridge Manor Trailhead

- Pave and organize parking area.
- Relocate the restroom.
- Install an ADA-compliant ramp where restroom is relocated.
- Consider replacing wooden fencing south of the bridge.

### Trilby Trailhead

- Remove and discontinue use.
- Revegetate road loop.
- Secure from public access.
- Install a permanent fence.
- Remove from informational resources.

### Owensboro Junction Trailhead

- Install a picnic pavilion and two tables.
- Permeably pave and organize parking spaces.

### Road Crossings

- Install pedestrian hybrid beacons where the trail crosses County Road 476 and County Road 486.
- Consult with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to improve visitor safety.

### Trail-Wide

- Prevent unauthorized entry points.

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### **Optimum Boundary**

To the south of the Withlacoochee State Trail, the Land Trail Priority project, the Bi-County Trail Corridor and Suncoast Trail Corridor, would provide a connection to the Florida Department of Transportation's Suncoast Trail. In the town of Croom, there is another Land Trail Priority project that would provide an uninterrupted corridor from the Withlacoochee State Trail to the General James A. Van Fleet State Trail via the South Sumter Connector. These two trail connectors would provide for an unbroken recreation corridor to the Gulf Coast and Central Florida. Acquiring these trail segments will also support the Office of Greenways and Trails Land Trail Priority mission of regional trail networks.