Florida National Scenic Trail Visitor Assessment
2005-2006 Annual Report

Presented to:
National Forests in Florida, U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Florida Trail Association

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Executive Summary

The University of Florida's School of Forest Resources and Conservation (SFRC) began a collaborative visitor assessment project for the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Florida Trail Association (FTA) in June of 2003. The purpose of the study is twofold. First, researchers are striving to determine reliable use estimates of annual trail visits to 28 segments of the FNST. These 28 segments of trail are to be studied over a five year period, beginning in the summer of 2003. Specifically, this report discusses the results of sites studied from June 1, 2005 – May 31 2006. Second, researchers are striving to gather visitor information to better understand FNST hiker characteristics and motivations.

Study Methods

Four methods are used to collect data at annual survey sites:

- Personal Observations
- Mechanical Counters
  - Infrared Eyes
  - Pressure Pads
- Supplemental Materials
- Visitor Questionnaires

2005-2006 Results

Estimation of Trail Visits

The FNST is primarily meant to be a footpath covering the length of Florida. Since the FNST intersects with other trails, there are multiple types of user that utilize this resource. As a result, two annual estimates are reported. The first estimate is *pedestrian* visits only, which includes hikers, walkers, joggers, and runners. The second estimate includes *other users* such as bikers, roller blade users, horseback riders, etc.

- **Total estimation of annual visits: 329,756**
- Total pedestrians: 163,261
- Total other users: 166,496
- Total estimated summer use (June- September) 29,220
- Total estimated fall/spring use (October-May) is 300,536

The highest use site on the FNST is the Lake Okeechobee section, with an estimated 203,970 visitors (45% were hikers). The next highest use can be found at Gulf Islands National Seashore with an estimated 22,673 users (47% were hikers) and Little Big Econ State Forest with an estimated 22,060 users (64% were hikers). The lowest use sites found during the 2003-2006 study period are Etoniah State Forest with 124 users (100% hikers) and Rice Creek with 127 users (100% hikers).

All three of Florida's National Forests are studied every year (other FNST access points are studied for one year only): The Ocala National Forest and Apalachicola National Forest both had higher counts in 2005-2006 (4,725 and 1,120 hikers respectively) than in 2004-2005 (3,392 and 906 hikers respectively). The Osceola National Forest had fewer hikers in 2005-2006 (1,311) than in 2004-2005 (1,522).

Annual Use of the FNST

The FNST Visitor Study has collected data since 2003 on visits to the Florida National Scenic Trail. Results have shown that the FNST receives between 225,000 and 342,000 visits per year (Figure 1); however, surveying methodology was modified over the course of the project to improve accuracy.

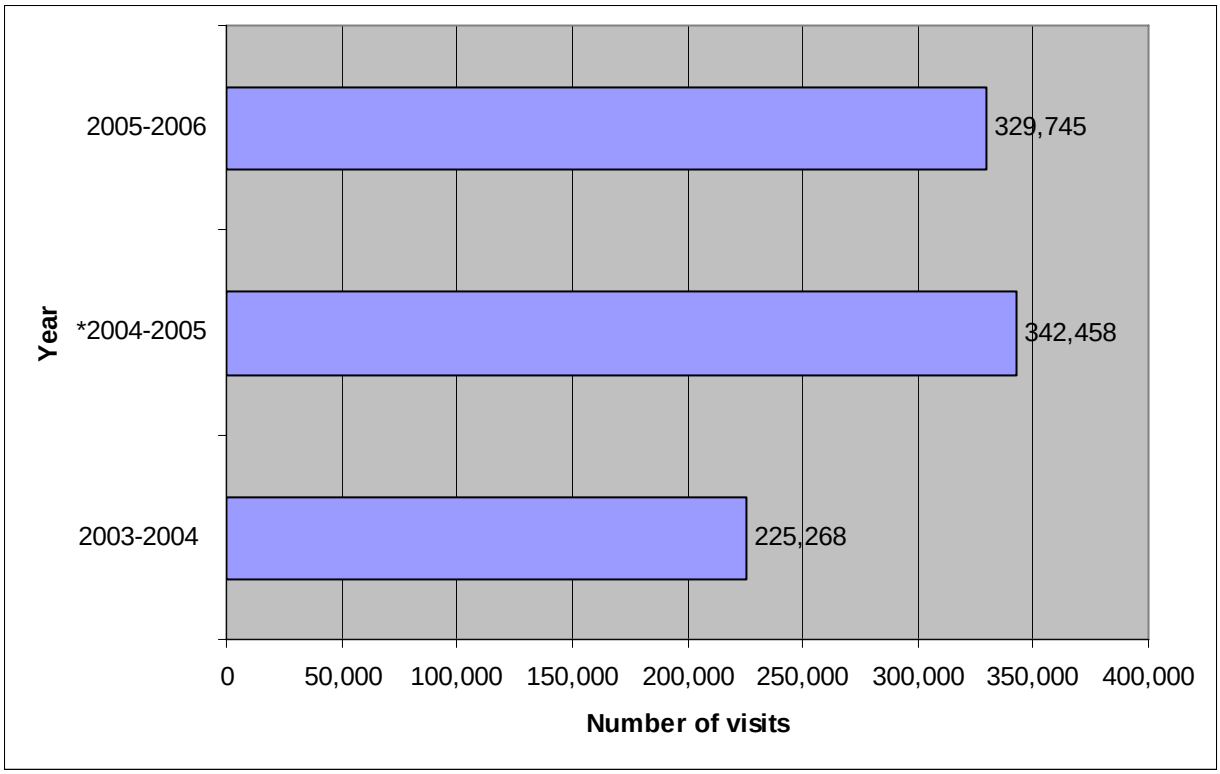

Figure 1. Annual visits to the Florida National Scenic Trail 2003-2006

Visitor Questionnaires

In order to learn more about pedestrians in terms of their socio-demographic and trip characteristics as well their level of satisfaction with their visit, researchers conducted on-site exit interviews and distributed mail-back surveys at various locations along the FNST throughout the year. These results are as follows:

Participant Trip Characteristics

56 % have hiked the FNST before
29 % of participants have hiked the FNST more then 12 times in the past year
77 % of participants spend a few hours or less on the FNST
90% or more of participants visit the trail to enjoy nature, promote physical fitness, and/or reduce stress.
50% or more of respondents participate in activities such as hiking, or viewing scenery.

Participant FNST Experience & Knowledge

78 % of participants rate their FNST experience as a 7 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being perfect
68 % of participants know they are hiking on the FNST.

Visitor Demographics

39% of participants travel with family or a mix of family and friend
41% of participants are 50 years of age or older
65 % of participants are employed outside the home of which 87 % are employed full-time.
94 % of participants are Caucasian.

Introduction

The 1,400 mile Florida National Scenic Trail traverses through both urban and rural areas creating a footpath that stretches almost the entire length of Florida. As a result, the FNST is no more then 120 miles from all Florida residents, with the exception of the Florida Keys. The Trails dynamic location attracts thousands of visitors annually, and provides various passive recreation opportunities beyond hiking such as nature study, photography, and bird watching.

A nationwide survey of state and federal trail managers indicated collecting trail use data is of high importance, and that the collection of this data would be crucial to future management success for trail planning and other related projects (Lynch, J. et al, 2002). Visitor monitoring is a key component to effectively managing recreation on a regional scale. This process, which is often limited by resources (i.e. money, staff, etc), centers around two main procedures: 1) obtaining the number of visitors to an area, and 2) administering visitor questionnaires (Cope, Doxford, and Miller, 1999). The necessity for collecting visitor counts is slowly emerging within recreation and land use agencies. This data helps in justifying budget requests, and it can provide a direction for appropriate resource distribution (Loomis, 2000). The most common method for collecting visitor counts has been through the use of mechanical counters. However, records on visitor counts are also kept through visitor sign in sheets, registration cards, and personal observations. In addition to obtaining information on the number of visitors to an area, gathering specific information on visitors themselves such as visitor motivations, visitor preferences, visitor knowledge of the area, and visitor socio-demographics can help managers and planners create a balance between the conservation of the surrounding habitat and providing quality recreation experiences.

Current monitoring efforts on the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) were undertaken by the U.S. Forest Service with the help of the University of Florida, School of Forest Resources and Conservation in order to gather baseline information on current trail use. The potential continuation of this research will provide long-term data in order to monitor trends in use and trail user characteristics. As the monitoring of visitor use along the FNST continues over the next several years, management will be provided with reinforcement of previous observational notions of the number of annual visits to the FNST, trail user characteristics, and trail user motivations. This baseline data will further allow managers to evaluate trends of trail visitation and the above mentioned characteristics over an extended period of time therefore aiding programmers, managers, and volunteers with the ability to enhance user experience and acquire appropriate funding (Loomis, 2000).

This report presents the information collected from June 1, 2005 through May 31, 2006 at seven identified survey sites through which the Florida National Scenic Trail traverses. In addition to these seven survey sites, additional trail counters where maintained in three of Florida's National Forests. Data collected from these counters are reported within as well.

Study Objectives

The purpose of the Florida National Scenic Trail Visitor Assessment study is to generate reliable use estimates of annual visits to the FNST. A visit is defined as an individual entering and exiting the FNST. Although all visitors are reported, both pedestrian and "other" visitors, the primary focus of this assessment is foot traffic (i.e. hiking, walking, backpacking, running, etc.). Specifically, study objectives aim to:

1. generate reliable use estimates of each survey site, which can be inferred to all FNST survey sections of similar categorized use which then can be combined to create a trail-wide visitation estimate, and
2. to describe pedestrians in terms of their socio-demographic and trip characteristics, as well their level of satisfaction.

Methodology

Survey Sections

The Florida National Scenic Trail is composed of 42 sections. Using these 42 sections as a foundation for survey efforts, UF researchers identified 28 survey sites within each section that would likely serve as exit and/or entrance points for hikers. These areas tended to correspond closely to public lands with established trailheads, which attract more hikers and serve as efficient survey sites. Preliminary research then categorized these sites as receiving high, medium, or low use (Table 1). Third, survey sites were geographically divided into groups, and each group was scheduled to be sampled for one year during the five year visitor assessment (Appendix I). Fourth,, each survey site was further divided into potential FNST access points (Table 2). Although survey or counter data might not be collected at every access point within a site, every access point is classified by use type. This classification allows data collected at similar access points to be inferred to access points without data (Appendix II). Finally, visitor use estimates are generated for high, medium, and low use sites surveyed each year were used to help generate an estimate of overall FNST visits each year.

Table 1. Site use classification

Site Use Type	Annual Number of Visits
High	1000 or more
Medium	366-999
Low	0-365

Table 2. Access Point Classification

Access Point Type	Monthly Number of Visits
A	500 or more
B	100-499
C	50-99
D	15-49
E	15 or less

Counting Visitors on the FNST

When

Study years are divided into two seasons:

1. Summer season, June 1st to September 31st
2. Fall/Spring Season, October 1st to May 31st

Beginning the study year during summer, allows researchers ample time to contact recreation and land managers at new study sites, install trail counters and work out any kinks that may arise with equipment or the sampling framework over the summer months without sacrificing the loss of visitor use data. In addition, the use of two survey seasons allows researchers to account for seasonal differences in use.

Where

Researchers collected visitor use data from 10 study sites from June 1, 2005-May 31, 2006 from:

1. Tosohatchee State Park
2. Withlacoochee State Forest (includes Withlacoochee Rail Trail)
3. Ellaville/Twin River State Forest
4. Green Swamp East WMA
5. Green Swamp West WMA
6. Blackwater River State Forest
7. Econfinia WMA
8. Ocala National Forest
9. Osceola National Forest
10. Apalachicola National Forest

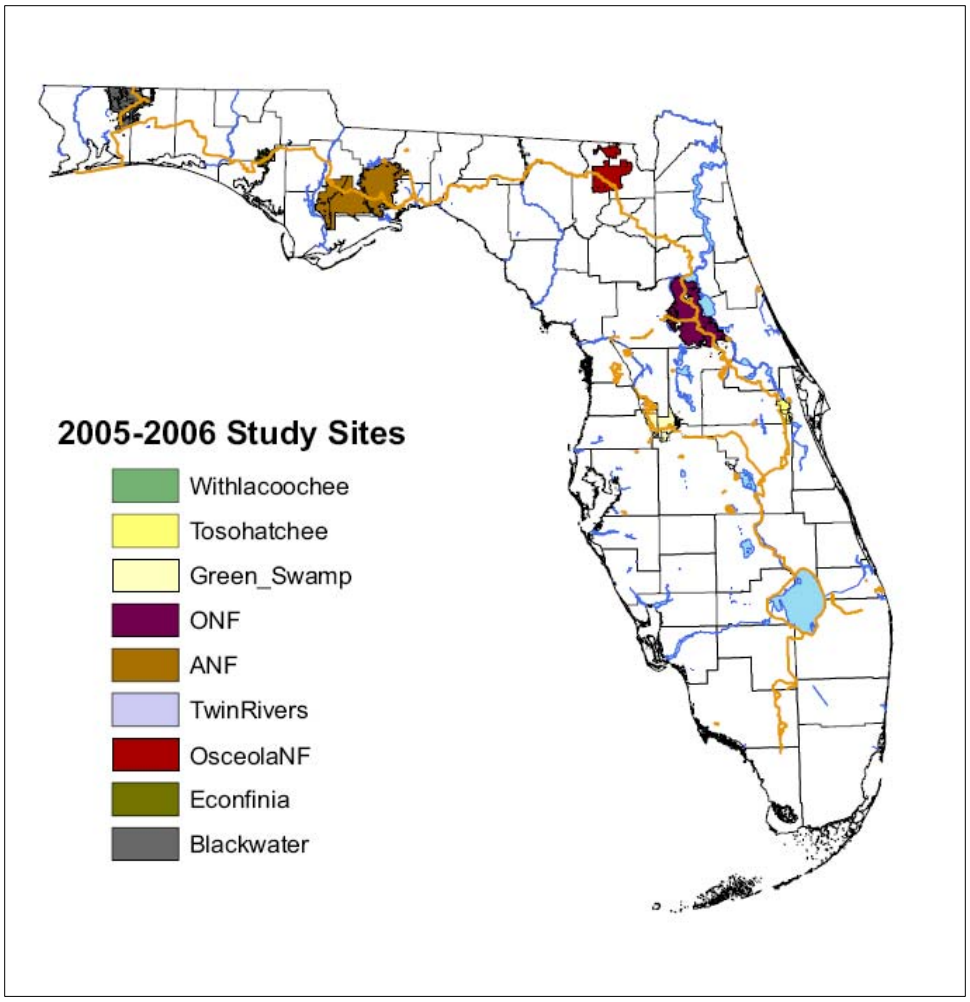

Figure 2. 2005 – 2006 Study Sites

Information on individual sites can be viewed in Appendix XIII. These ten survey sites contained a total of 33 access points (Appendix III) that where monitored throughout the study year.

How

To obtain a reliable used estimate of pedestrians of the FNST, researchers combined four different methods:

1. personal observations,
2. mechanical counters,
3. supplemental materials, and
4. visitor questionnaires.

The following sections describe each technique.

Personal Observations

A stratified random sampling approach was used to assign personal observation times in conjunction with survey periods. The sampling framework consists of three strata:

1. Use level
    a. High – 1000 visits or more/year
    b. Medium – 366 – 999 visits/year
    c. Low – 365 visits or less/year
2. Day type
    a. Weekdays (Monday - Thursday)
    b. Weekends (Friday - Sunday)
3. Time of day
    a. Morning
    b. Afternoon

Following this framework, personal observation times were assigned to all study sites where high use sites were allocated more

survey periods then lower use sites (Table 3). However, the allocation of survey periods differed slightly for sites where counters were unable to be installed (i.e. rail-trails, or any multiple use section of trail) (Table 4). This is because sites that do not have counters to collect data must have estimates derived from personal observations. Therefore, survey times need to be randomly scheduled to also include weekdays, allocating more personal observation times on weekends then weekdays.

During these personal observation times, surveyors kept a tally of individuals entering/exiting the FNST, as well as group size, the number of males, the number of females, activity, and direction of travel. These observation logs were used to generate an estimate of trail use at sites that are observation only (Appendix IV).

During the 2005 summer season, every survey day contained two possible survey periods: a 5 hour morning period or a 5 hour afternoon period. The summer season was comprised of 70 weekdays, making a total of 140 possible weekday survey days, and 52 weekend survey days, making a total of 104 possible weekend survey periods. First, every survey period was assigned a number. Using an Excel spreadsheet, researchers randomly selected numbers without replacement and correlated the random number to the assigned survey period. This process was used to determine survey periods for each survey site (Appendix V).

For the fall/spring season, the sampling framework was slightly modified. Every survey day contained four possible survey periods: (2) 3-hour survey shifts in the morning and (2) 3-hour shifts in the afternoon. There are 244 days in the fall/spring season, 139 weekdays and 105 weekend days. While all survey sites had personal observation sessions, the Withlacoochee Rail Trail was the only site in which user estimates where entirely derived using the personal observation method.

Mechanical Pedestrian Counters

UF researchers used two types of counters to generate visitor use estimates: infrared eyes and pressure pads. While the installation of the two pieces of equipment differs, the data collection methods are the same. Researchers used the numbers collected from the counters to provide a reliable estimate of hikers on the FNST. Sixteen counters where installed for the 2005-2006 survey season (Appendix VI).

Pressure Pads

TrafX pressure pads are designed to be buried approximately one inch below the trails surface. By being buried, TrafX manufactures are hoping to reduce the number of defaced counters as a result of vandals in some back country areas. The pad is "tripped" when pressure is exerted from the top by hikers, wildlife, bicyclists, etc. however the pad can not distinguish between trail users. This data is recorded onto a small computer memory card which is stored in a weather proof box and placed strategically among brush and covered with surrounding vegetation to help conceal its existence. The pad and the memory card are interconnected by a cable which is buried beneath the ground as well.

Active Infrared Eyes

The Diamond Traffics TCC-4420 infrared eye trail counter was originally designed by the U.S. Forest Service equipment center to aid in trail monitoring in remote areas. The counter is cased within water-proof aluminum, and operates on 4-D batteries that usually last 12-15 months. The counter is installed on a tree or wooden post and is aligned with a reflector 20-75 feet across the trail creating an invisible beam. When this beam is broken a hiker, wildlife, or other user is recorded. Like the pressure pads, these counters can not differentiate between user types. The counter has an ability to provide researchers with hourly counts for up to 420 days equating to approximately 25,000 counts.

The Trailmaster 1550 active infrared eye was also purchased and installed at several research sites over the course of the study year. This counter gathers data in the same fashion as

the Diamond Traffics eye, however the way in which is stores data is slightly different. The counter is cased with water proof hard plastic, and operates on 4-C batteries that usually last 8-10 months. The counter is installed on a tree or wooden post and is aligned with a transmitter 20 to 145 feet across. Unlike the diamond traffics counter that indicates the exact percentage of alignment, this counter only indicates to the field technician if the counter is aligned or not, and does not indicate the strength of the alignment. Like the pressure pads and the Diamond Traffics Eyes, these counters can not differentiate between user types. Information gathered from the counter allows researchers to evaluate trail use visits in one minute intervals, and the counter can store a maximum of 4,000 counts.

All three types of trail counters were calibrated on a monthly bases. Calibration of counters was essential in obtaining and maintaining counters accuracy. Researchers walked on or across the counter a ten times and compared this number to the number of registered counts on the counter. The number of actual counts was then divided by the number of registered counts to develop a monthly correction factor (Appendix XII). At the end of the survey season these monthly correction factors were averaged together, omitting outliers, to develop one correction factor for an entire season. This correction factor was then applied to each month of data for that survey site to compensate for a counter over or under counting.

Supplemental Materials

For many areas, additional information regarding visitor numbers is available. This type of information ranges from formal registration cards to informal visitor logs kept in a mailbox on a nearby kiosk. The information found in these materials helps supplement the counters and observational counts.

Registration cards can be used to obtain supplemental counts of visitors to the FNST. Visitor compliance is often an issue when depending on registration cards for visitor counts. There is currently no standardized system for registration cards on the FNST, so the reliability of this data is site dependent.

For 2003-2004, researchers only used registration cards from Eglin Air Force Base for supplemental data. Registration is mandatory at this site, and there is consistency in the card's dispersal and collection. Numbers obtained from this site was also used in the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 estimation of trail visits. However, there were no additional survey sites in 2005-2006 that contained supplemental material.

Defining Visitor Characteristics

In order to meet the studies second objective, to describe pedestrians in terms of their socio-demographic and trip characteristics as well their level of satisfaction, researchers conducted on-site exit interviews and distributed mail-back surveys during personal observation periods.

Visitor Questionnaires

In order to aid researchers in gathering the most information available on current FNST visitors, on-site interviews where conducted at two previous study sites, all 2005-2006 study sites, and one future study site as well as within all three National Forests. As a result of expanding the range of survey locations, researchers were able to obtain a total of 249 on-site surveys from October 2005 through May of 2006. In addition, 217 mail back surveys where distributed, of which 103 where returned equaling a 47.5% response rate.

The on-site exit survey (Appendix VII) was given to one consenting participant 18 years of age or older within every group exiting the FNST. For groups that were larger then six people, one person for every seventh person in the group was asked to complete and on-site survey. The questionnaire took approximately 3-5 minutes of the participant's time to complete, containing 15 questions pertaining to frequency of trail use, primary activities, group size, trip length, trip satisfaction, and desired trail improvements. At the end of the on-site interview a mail back survey was distributed to the participant (Appendix VIII). While similar questions are asked in both surveys, the mail-

back survey provided more in-depth information about the participants hiking experience and behavior. The mail-back survey contains four sections pertaining to trip characteristics, hiking experience, Florida National Scenic Trail knowledge and association, and participant demographics.

Data Analysis

Personal Observations

The observation logs completed by researchers during sampling blocks were used to develop seasonal estimates of visitors to the FNST. For each access point within every survey site, the following counts were recorded:

- TFC = Total Foot Count. Total number of visitors that are considered foot traffic (hikers, walkers, backpackers, runners) who were observed entering or exiting the FNST.
- TOC = Total Other Count. Total number of bikers, horseback riders, roller-bladers, who were observed entering or exiting the FNST.
- TWC = Total Work Count. Total number of service workers, volunteer or agency related, who were observed entering or exiting the FNST.
- TVC = Total Visitor Count. Total number of visitors, including all activities, who were observed entering or exiting the FNST.

Average seasonal counts of TFC, TOC, and TVC were calculated for each survey site using a four-step process. While, the TWC was recorded, the data were not analyzed using this process.

1. For each variable (i.e. TFC, TOC, and TVC), researchers calculated the **average sampling period count** (am and pm) for each day type (weekend or weekday) for each access point of each survey site.

$$X_{ijkl} = 1/N_{ijk} \sum_{l=1}^{Nijk} X_{ijkl}$$

Where:
i = access point
j = survey site (1,…,8)
k = weekday (1) and weekend (2)
l = the sampling periods for each day (am or pm)
m = number of counts for sampling period on day type k at access point i of site j
N_{ijkl} = number of times counted during shift l on day type k at access point i of site j
X_{ijklm} = the count on mth repetition for sampling period l on day type k at access point i of site j
X_{ijkl}= average count during sampling period l on day type k at access point i of site j

2. Second, researchers calculated the **average daily count** for each access point of each site by summing the two sampling periods (calculated above) for both weekend days and weekdays.

$$X_{ijk} = \sum_{k=1}^{3} X_{ijkl}$$

Where:
i = access point
j = survey site (1,…,8)
k = weekday (1) and weekend (2)
l = the sampling periods for each day (am or pm)
X_{ijk} = average daily count on day type k at access point i of site j

3. Next, the average daily counts of all access points within a site were summed to calculate the average daily count for a site for both weekdays and weekends.

$$X_{jk} = \sum_{k=1}^{3} X_{ijk}$$

Where:
i=access point
j=survey site (1,…,8)
k=weekday (1) and weekend (2)
X_{jk}=average daily count on day type k at site j

4. Researchers calculated the **average seasonal count** for each site, for variables TFC, TOC, TVC. Researchers multiplied the average daily count for weekends by the number of weekend days in that season. Then, they multiplied the average daily count for weekdays by the number of weekday days in that season. Researchers then added the two numbers to find the average seasonal count.

   Seasonal Average for each site =

$$M_1(\sum_{i=1}^{8} X_{i1}) + M_2(\sum_{i=1}^{8} X_{i2})$$

   Where:
   M_1 = number of weekend days in the season
   M_2 = number of weekday days in the season
   X_{i1} = average daily count for site *i* for weekend days.
   X_{i1} = average daily count for site *i* for weekdays
   i = site (1,…, 8)

5. Next, the survey site estimates, for variable TFC, were grouped by use type (high, medium, and low). The average of the estimates for the high use sites medium use sites, and low use sites was determined. Finally, for variable TFC, an estimate for all 27 survey sites was generated. The following equation was used:

$$E = \Sigma S + X_H(N_H) + X_M(N_M) + X_L(N_L)$$

   Where:
   E = TFC Estimate for all 27 survey sites
   S = Estimates from completed survey sites
   X_H = Average TFC for high use sites
   X_M = Average TFC for medium use sites
   X_L = Average TFC for low use sites
   N_H = Number of high use survey sites not yet surveyed
   N_M = Number of medium use survey sites not yet surveyed
   N_L = Number of low use survey sites not yet surveyed

Mechanical Pedestrian Counters

Data collected from mechanical counters provide continuous counts for selected survey sites. Analyzing counter data is the same regardless of the type of counter being used. A seven-step protocol was developed to transform raw counter data to final seasonal counts for each installed counter.

Step 1: Adjust Raw Data
Delete data:

1. One hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, unless there were scheduled night hikes that researchers were made aware of. This information was obtained at the study sites website, from the study sites land/recreation manager, from the FTA website, or from the FTA publication *Footprints*.

2. Pressure pads only: Any counts occurring within the same second.

3. Infrared eyes-only: Unusually high counts, with no explanation from FTA or other group, and unusual patterns of high numbers. Unusually high counts are site specific. Counts that may be considered "high counts" should were not deleted until reasonable knowledge about the trail section had been obtained.

4. Any data that was our researchers calibrating or working on trail.

Step 2: Adjust Data by Month & Compensating for Missing Data

Counter data was then analyzed by the month, so each month within a season had a total number of counts. This number was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. If data was missing within the month, data was estimated by:

[(Total # of hits for *x* days before missing data + Total # of hits for *x* days after missing data) / 2

If days were missing between two months (not the whole month) then researchers followed the procedure above. After dividing by 2, the

answer was then divided by the number of missing days. This gave the number of hits per day. This number was multiplied by the number of missing days within the month. If data was missing for an entire month an access point average was applied to that particular month for that particular site.

Step 3: Corrected Monthly Count

In order to better estimate the actual number of users, each access point with a counter had an average correction factor that was multiplied by the access point's monthly total. This was done at the end of a season when all the correction factors were averaged together. Every counter is calibrated regularly, and correction factors were produced by dividing the actual number of counts by the registered number of counts. The average correction factor accounts for every time the access point was calibrated since installation. If a counter had to be replaced, correction factors were averaged as normal unless there are known differences between the counters or conditions. Outlying correction factors were omitted if the cause of the unusually high/low factor was known.

Step 4: Final Monthly Data

To account for the same entry and exit by pedestrians at a site, an access point's corrected monthly count was divided by two.

Step 5: Apply Access Point Averages

Once final monthly counts were formed, all like access points were grouped together from all study years – irregardless of location. Next, an average for that type access point was formulated. This average was then applied to current access points where data was not collected.

Step 6: Final Seasonal Data

All final monthly data was summed up within the season.

Step 7: Trail-Wide Estimate

1. Summation of the actual estimates for sites already surveyed, plus
2. The number of high sites not yet surveyed multiplied by the high use average , plus
3. The number of medium sites not yet surveyed multiplied by the medium use average, plus
4. The number of low sites not yet surveyed multiplied by the low use average = Estimate of use for 28 survey sites.

Results and Discussion

Visitor Use Estimates

This section describes the data collected from mechanical counters and on site observations during both the summer and fall/spring study seasons. The current study years trail visitor estimations were developed through the use of two methods, personal observations and mechanical counters. Seasonal results were derived by totaling:

- Data from previous years' research
- Estimated use at unstudied sites
- Results from this year's research

There is a large difference in estimated counts between 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. This difference has less to do with number of users and more to do with the way the calculations were completed. In 2004-2005, Lake Okeechobee was included in the high use site estimates. In order to estimate the number of hikers that might be visiting sites that have yet to be studied, an average of sites already researched in that use level (high, medium, low) is calculated and multiplied times the number of unstudied sites remaining. Including Lake Okeechobee in with other high use sites changes the FNST trail use estimates dramatically. For example, when Okeechobee is included in the high use group, the average number of visits at high use sites in 2005-2006 is 21,652. When Okeechobee is not included in this group and is kept apart as an outlier, the average for high use sites becomes 7,628. Therefore, project directors determined that Okeechobee was best kept as an outlier and not used as part of the data to determine potential visits at un-researched high use sites.

Data were collected as consistently as possible, however the 2005-2006 research

season had many gaps in information due to equipment failure, damage, and replacement. Of the eight pressure pads that were installed, all ceased to work within the first six months of the research season. These were the same pads that had been used in previous study years. The reason for failure was not always known, however none of the pads functioned at a level that satisfactorily and reliably collected information. In addition, three of the ten installed Diamond infrared eyes stopped working to researchers' satisfaction.

Project managers determined that new equipment should be purchased. Trailmaster 1550 model infrared counters were acquired in December 2005, and were installed to replace all pressure pads and unreliable Diamond Traffics eyes. Of the 16 sites with counters, only six, Tosohatchee, Twin Rivers, Econfina, Withlacoochie, and the Battlefield location of the Osceola National Forest were without counter issues. Therefore, the trail use estimates for the 2005-2006 season are done to the best of the research team's ability using collected data, access point averages, and data from past research years. See Table 3 for more information on the status of the trail counters throughout the research season.

Except for one damaged counter and one stolen counter, the equipment did not need to be replaced again. Some of the data gaps occurred because it took some time to obtain the new Trailmaster 1550 infrared eyes needed to replace failed equipment. Trailmaster 1550 counters were selected due to reported reliability, cost efficiency (as compared to Diamond Traffics infrared counters), and improved data interface.

Estimate of Summer Visits

Total estimated summer use for the entire Florida Trail is 29,220. This number is 1,475 less than last year's estimate of 30,695. The lower count occurs because Lake Okeechobee was reclassified in its own category as a "Highest Use" site, removing it from being used to estimate Florida Trail visitation at high use sites not studied. Had Okeechobee been included again as a high use site, the estimated FNST use for summer 2005 would have been 31,978. All of the National Forests had higher counts in 2005 than 2004. Apalachicola National Forest had 212 hikers in the summer of 2004 and 509 hikers in 2005, the Osceola National Forest had 92 hikers in the summer of 2004 and 192 in 2005, and the Ocala National Forest had 446 hikers in the summer of 2004 and 1119 in the summer of 2005.

The estimate for all nine sites studied during the summer of 2005 is 7,027 (Table 4). The sites studied consisted of seven high use and two medium use sites. Green Swamp and Econfina WMA were originally classified as low use sites, but were reclassified following the season's study to medium use sites. Likewise, Apalachicola National Forest and Twin Rivers were originally classified as medium use sites and were upgraded to high use sites when visitor numbers were finalized at the end of the study year.

The highest use occurred at Withlacoochee, with 3,825 visits. The Withlacoochee section of the Florida Trail includes a rail trail segment, which contributed to the high numbers. Withlacoochee was the only site in the study that had alternative types of use- mostly bikes that totaled an estimated 2,519 summer visitors. The Ocala National Forest received the second highest number of summer visitors, 1,121, which is an increase from the 446 counted last year.

The lowest use occurred at Econfina Creek Wildlife Management Area, with 131 total visitors during the months of June- September. Tosohatchee was close behind with only 177 summer visits. Tosohatchee's section of the Florida Trail was flooded for part of the summer, which may have contributed to the low counts.

The 2005 summer results were added to 2003 and 2004 summer visitation estimates. Visitor use at sites not studied was calculated using averages from similar sites. The total estimated visitor use to the FNST during the summer of 2005 was 29,220 (Table 6).

Table 3. Status of counters at research sites for the Florida National Scenic Trail during 2005-2006 study year.

Location	Counter Type	Status	Solution
Blackwater River State Forest			
Red Rock	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Tosohatchee Preserve State Park			
Tosohatchee	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Ocala National Forest			
Juniper Rec. Area	Pressure Pad	Failed	Replace with Diamond Traffics Eye
Clearwater	Pressure Pad	Failed	Replaced with a Trailmaster Eye. Display broken so replace with another Trailmaster.
SR 19	Pressure Pad	Failes	Replaced with a Trailmaster Eye. Counter stolen. Replace for 06-07 study.
Lake Delancy	Pressure Pad	Failed	Replaced with Trailmaster Eye. Some battery problems in the beginning, but working now.
Grassy Pond	Pressure Pad	Failed	Did not replace
Twin Rivers State Forest			
Ellaville	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Osceola National Forest			
Battlefield	Pressure Pad	No Problems	
Turkey Run	Diamond Traffics Eye	Questionable Performance	Replace with Trailmaster Eye. Had some alignment problems that are now fixed.
Apalachicola National Forest			
Camel Lake	Diamond Traffics Eye	Questionable Performance	Replaced with another Diamond Traffics Eye
Sopchoppy	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Econfinia WMA			
SR 20	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Green Swamp WMA			
River Road	Pressure Pad	Failed	Replace with Trailmaster Eye
SR 471	Pressure Pad	Failed	Replace with Trailmaster Eye
Rock Ridge Road	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Withlacoochee State Forest			
Hog Island	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	
Richloam	Diamond Traffics Eye	No Problems	

Table 4. Estimate of Summer FNST Visits for the 2005-2006 Study Sites

Use Type	Site	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Visitor Use
High	Blackwater River SF	732	0	732
	Withlacoochee	1,306	2,519	3,825
	Ocala NF	1,121	0	1,121
	Green Swamp WMA	366	0	366
	Twin Rivers	282	0	282
	Osceola NF	192	0	192
	Apalachicola NF	509	0	509
Medium	Econfinia WMA	131	0	131
	Tosohatchee SP	177	0	177
Total Estimate for Summer 2005 Study Sites				**7,027**

The highest use site was estimated to be Little Big Econ State Forest, with 6,105 estimated visits. The lowest use sites were estimated to be the Suwannee and Osceola National Forest, each with less then 200 visits.

Estimation of Fall/Spring Visits

The estimate use for all nine sites studied during the fall/spring of 2005-2006 was 25,453 (Table 5). Withlacoochee received the highest number of visitors (13,578). The foot traffic at Withlacoochie was estimated to be less than the Ocala National Forest, however with the addition of the non hiking users such as bikers (total 8,997), the number of users surpasses the Ocala National Forest. The lowest use area during the fall/spring was Tosohatchee with 428 hikers. Twin Rivers (752 hikers) and Econfina (755 hikers) were the next lowest use areas studied.

Total estimated fall/spring use for the entire Florida Trail is 300,536 (Table 7). This number is 156,508 less than last year's estimate of 457,044. One of the reasons for this difference is because Lake Okeechobee was moved from "High Use" classification to its own "Highest Use" classification. Had Okeechobee been left as a "High Use" site, the count for fall/ spring would have been 543,821.

The Ocala National Forest and Apalachicola National Forest both had higher counts in 2005-2006 (4,725 and 1,120 hikers respectively) than in 2004-2005 (3,392 and 906 hikers respectively). The Osceola National Forest had fewer hikers in 2005-2006 (1,311) than in 2004-2005 (1,522). The highest use site during the fall/spring season was Lake Okeechobee, with an estimated 201,412 Florida Trail visits. Lake Okeechobee's visitors make up 67% of all fall/spring Trail visitors.

Table 5. Estimate of Fall/Spring FNST Visits for the 2005-2006 Study Sites

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Visitors
High	Blackwater River SF	1,974	0	1,974
	Withlacoochee SF	4,581	8,997	13,578
	Ocala NF	4,725	0	4,725
	Green Swamp WMA	810	0	810
	Twin Rivers SF	752	0	752
	Osceola NF	1,311	0	1,311
	Apalachicola NF	1,120	0	1,120
Medium	Econfinia WMA	755	0	755
	Tosohatchee SP	428	0	428
Total Estimate for Fall/Spring 2005 – 2006 Study Sites				**25,453**

Table 6. Estimated FNST trail-wide visits Summer 2005

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Use
Highest	Lake Okeechobee	1,329	1,229	2,558
	Total Highest Use Estimate	***1,329***	***1,229***	***2,558***
High	Gulf Islands National Seahore	2,430	3,380	5,810
	Little Big Econ State Forest	3,420	2,685	6,105
	Goldhead Branch St. Park	148	78	226
	Suwannee Section	199	0	199
	St. Marks NWR & Rail Trail	290	1,229	1,519
	Seminole St. Forest	212	0	212
	Green Swamp WMA (E&W)	366	0	366
	Appalachicola NF	509	0	509
	Twin Rivers SF	282	0	282
	Blackwater River SF	732	0	732
	Withlacoochee SF	1,306	2,519	3,825
	Ocala NF	1,119	0	1,119
	Osceola NF	192	0	192
	2003 & 2004 summer use estimates	6,699	7,372	14,071
	2003 & 2004 summer use averages	1,117	1,229	2,345
	2005 summer use estimates	4,506	2,519	7,025
	2005 summer use averages	644	360	1,004
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	2,586	2,283	4,868
	Total high use summer estimate	***13,791***	***12,174***	***25,965***
Medium	Eglin AFB	54	0	54
	Aucilla WMA	221	0	221
	Pine Log SF	72	0	72
	Tosohatchee SP	177	0	177
	Econfinia WMA	131	0	131
	2003 & 2004 summer use estimates	347	0	347
	2003 & 2004 summer use averages	116	0	116
	2005 summer use estimates	154	0	154
	Average *(0) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total medium use estimates	***655***	***0***	***655***
Low	Etoniah SF	0	0	0
	Rice Creek WMA	43	0	43
	2003 & 2004 summer use estimates	43	0	43
	2003 & 2004 summer use averages	22	0	22
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total low use estimate	***43***	***0***	***43***
TOTAL FLORIDA TRAIL SUMMER USE ESTIMATE				**29,220**

Table 7. Estimated trail-wide visits, Fall/Spring 2005-2006

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Use
Highest	Lake Okeechobee	89,930	111,482	201,412
	Total Highest Use Estimate	***89,930***	***111,482***	***201,412***
High	Gulf Islands National Seahore	8,220	8,643	16,863
	Little Big Econ State Forest	10.797	5,158	15,955
	Goldhead Branch St. Park	4,826	0	4,826
	Suwannee Section	1,147	0	1,147
	St. Marks NWR & Rail Trail	2,515	10,562	13,077
	Seminole St. Forest	653	449	1,102
	Green Swamp WMA (E&W)	810	0	810
	Appalachicola NF	1,949	0	1,949
	Twin Rivers SF	752	0	752
	Blackwater River SF	1,974	0	1,974
	Withlacoochee SF	4,481	8,997	13,578
	Ocala NF	4,725	0	4,725
	Osceola NF	1,311	0	1,311
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	28,258	24,812	52,970
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	4,693	4,135	8,828
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	16,102	8,997	25,099
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	2,300	1,285	3,586
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	10,214	7,802	18,016
	Total high use fall/spring estimate	***54,474***	***41,611***	***96,085***
Medium	Eglin AFB	610	0	610
	Aucilla WMA	376	0	376
	Pine Log SF	662	0	662
	Tosohatchee SP	428	0	428
	Econfinia WMA	755	0	755
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	1,648	0	1,648
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	549	0	549
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	1,183	0	1,183
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	592	0	592
	Average *(0) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total medium use estimates	***2,831***	***0***	***2,831***
Low	Etoniah SF	124	0	124
	Rice Creek WMA	84	0	84
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	208	0	208
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	104	0	104
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	0	0	0
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	0	0	0
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total low use estimate	***208***	***0***	***208***
TOTAL FALL/SPRING USE ESTIMATE				**300,536**

Estimation Annual Visits

Trail-wide estimates for the summer season and the fall/spring season were added together to form an annual estimate of FNST visits. Overall, it is estimated that the FNST hosted 329,756 total visits in 2005-2006 (Table 8). This number is much lower than the estimated 487,818 visits in 2004-2005 due to different calculations that resulted from moving Lake Okeechobee to its own "Highest Use" category. Fifty percent of these visits were foot traffic and fifty percent were other use types.

Comparison of Site Use on the FNST

Examining the data collected over the past three years of research (Figure 3) , the site with the highest use on the Florida Trail is Lake Okeechobee with an estimated 203,970 users (45% were hikers). The next highest use can be found at Gulf Islands National Seashore with an estimated 22,673 users (47% were hikers) and Little Big Econ State Forest with an estimated 22,060 users (64% were hikers). The lowest use sites found during the study period are Etoniah with 124 users (100% hikers) and Rice Creek with 127 users (100% hikers).

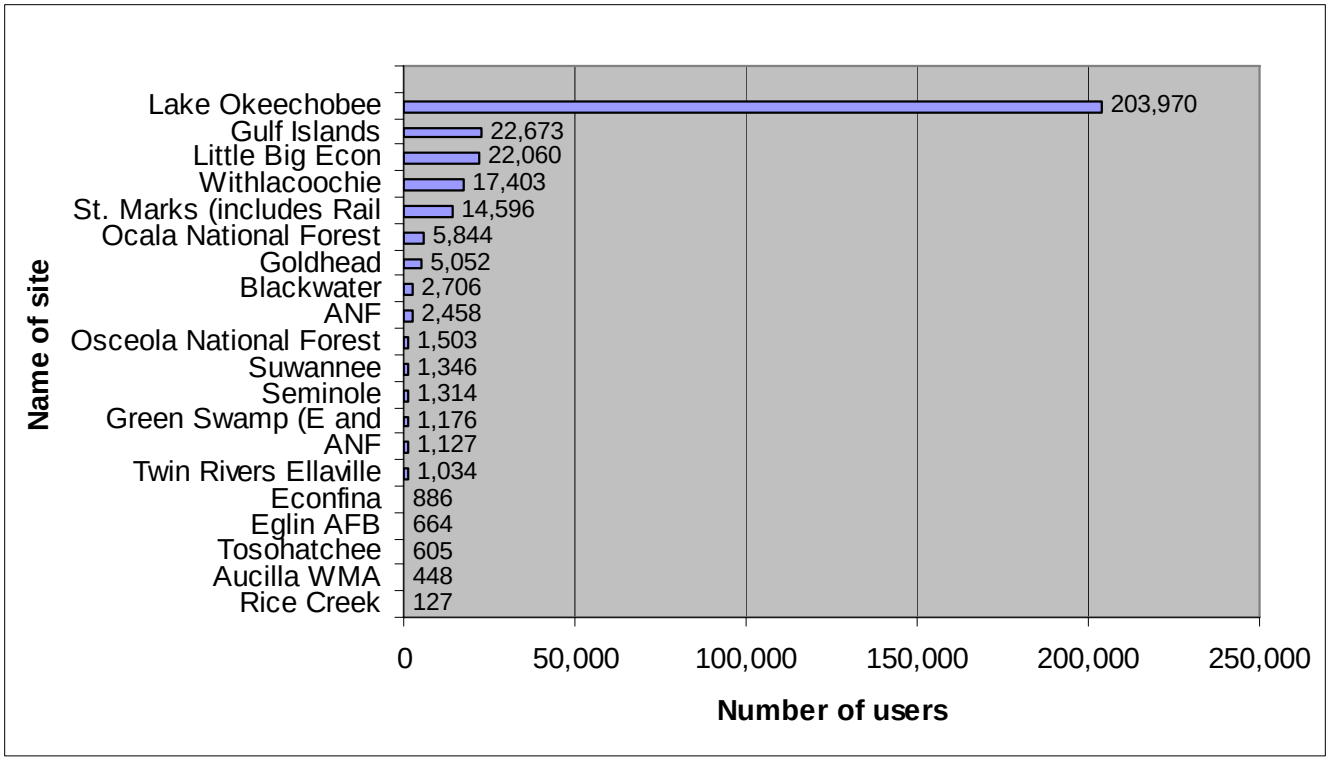

Figure 3. Estimated visitor use on the Florida National Scenic Trail 2005-2006 research sites

Table 8. Estimated annual trail-wide visits to the FNST 2005-2006

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Use
Highest	Lake Okeechobee	91,259	112,711	203,970
	Total Highest Use Estimate	91,259	112,711	203,970
High	Gulf Islands National Seashore	10,650	12,023	22,673
	Little Big Econ State Forest	14,217	7,843	22,060
	Goldhead Branch St. Park	4,974	78	5,052
	Suwannee Section	1,346	0	1,346
	St. Marks NWR & Rail Trail	2,805	11,791	14,596
	Seminole St. Forest	865	448	1,314
	Green Swamp WMA (E&W)	1,176	0	1,176
	Appalachicola NF	2,458	0	2,458
	Twin Rivers SF	1,034	0	1,034
	Blackwater River SF	2,706	0	2,706
	Withlacoochee SF	5,887	11,516	17,403
	Ocala NF	5,844	0	5,844
	Osceola NF	1,503	0	1,503
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	34,857	32,184	67,041
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	5,810	5,364	11,174
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	20,608	11,516	32,124
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	2,944	1,645	4,589
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	22,884	12,800	10,085
	Total high use fall/spring estimate	***68,265***	***53,785***	***122,049***
Medium	Eglin AFB	664	0	664
	Aucilla WMA	597	0	597
	Pine Log SF	734	0	734
	Tosohatchee SP	605	0	605
	Econfinia WMA	886	0	886
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	1,995	0	1,995
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	665	0	665
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	1,491	0	1,491
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	746	0	746
	Average *(0) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total medium use estimates	***3,486***	***0***	***3,486***
Low	Etoniah SF	124	0	124
	Rice Creek WMA	127	0	127
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use estimates	251	0	251
	2003 - 2005 fall/spring use averages	126	0	126
	2005 - 2006 fall/spring use estimates	0	0	0
	2005 -2006 fall/spring use averages	0	0	0
	Average*(3) unstudied sites	0	0	0
	Total low use estimate	***251***	***0***	***251***
	SUB-TOTAL	***163,261***	***166,496***	***329,756***
TOTAL FALL/SPRING USE ESTIMATE				**329,756**

On-Site Survey

Exit interviews were conducted at each of the study sites in addition to two past survey locations and one future study location. Results reported within this section were interviews completed by pedestrians only. During the summer season, eight exit interviews were completed and 241 interviews were completed during the fall/spring season for a total of 249 on-site interviews. Goldhead Branch State Park (24.5%), Little Big Econ State Forest (22%), and Ocala National Forest (15.8%) accounted for the majority of on-site surveys (Figure 4).

Table 9: On-site demographics

Variable	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Age	216	80 years or older	0.5
		70-79 years old	7.4
		60-69 years old	13.9
		50-59 years old	19
		40-49 years old	26.9
		30-39 years old	15.3
		18-29 years old	17.1
Gender	225	Male	64
		Female	36

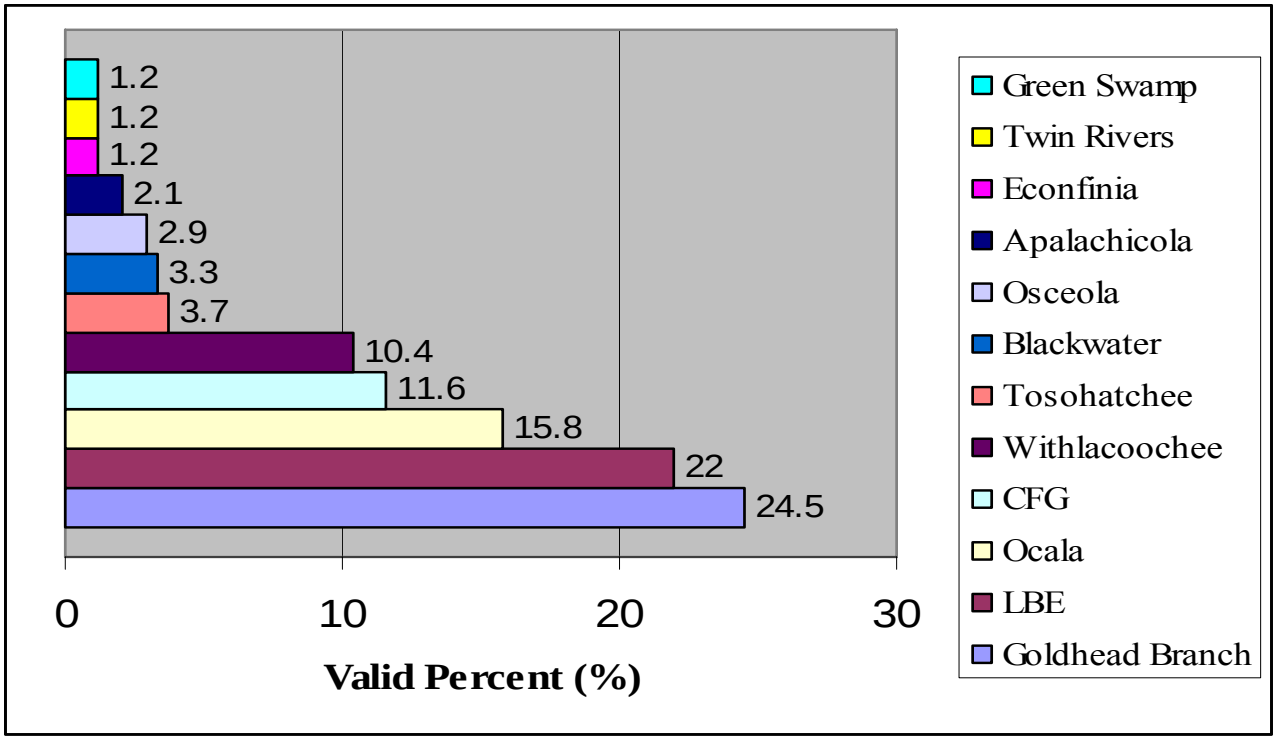

Figure 4. Distribution of on-site surveys

Visitor Demographics

Visitors were asked to provide the year in which they born. Individuals 40-49 years of age made up the largest age group (26.9%), followed by individuals 60-69 years of age (13.9%). The researcher also noted the gender of the participant. Males made up the majority of respondents (64%), while females accounted for fewer than 40% (36%) (Table 9).

Use History & Knowledge

In order to determine if participants knew they were on the Florida National Scenic Trail, surveyors began by asking participants if they had participated in any activities along the FNST that day. Almost 70% (68.3%) stated "yes," indicating that they knew they were on the trail while almost 20% (19.1%) stated "no." Next, visitors were asked if they had visited that particular segment of the Trail before. Over half (55.8%) had visited the trail before, however

most participants (42.2%) had not visited the trail within the past year. Of those who had visited the trail within the past year, almost a quarter (21.3%) returned to the trail 2-6 times. Also, in order to verify methodology for trail use estimation, participants were asked whether they entered and exited the trail from the same location. The majority (77.1%) indicated that they did access and exit the trail from the same trailhead, validating procedures for dividing counter information in half (Table 10).

category are reported. Participants stated that the primary reason for visiting the trail was for hiking/walking (63.3%). Respondent's second reason cited for visiting the FNST was to view the scenery (33.7%). The third most stated reason for visiting the trail that day was to bird watch (12.4%) (Table 12).

[

Table 10. On site survey: Use history and knowledge

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Did the participant know they were on the FNST?	249	Yes No Don't know	68.3 19.3 4.8
Was this the first time visiting this section of The Florida Trail?	249	Yes No	36.1 55.8
Visits to the FNST over the past year	249	None 2-6 7-12 13-20 21-30 More than 30	42.2 21.3 4.0 6.8 2.4 15.3
If more then 12 visits in the past year	35	31 -50 51-70 71-100 101-200 200 - 299 300 or more	17.2 22.9 5.8 30.0 8.6 11.4
Did the visitor enter and exit from the same trailhead?	249	Yes No	77.1 14.9

Trip Characteristics

Next, participants were asked a series of questions about their current trip. Nearly 40% (39.6%) had spent a few hours on the trail, while 37% spent one hour or less. Of those who spent more then a day along the FNST, over half spent one (28.3%) or two (33.9%) days. Participants tended to travel alone (29.3%) or in pairs (33.9%), typically with a family member (36%) or friend (11.7%) (Table 11).

Participants were asked to determine what three activities best describe the reason that they visited the trail that day. Although a multitude of activities were cited as reasons for visiting the trail that day, only the top five within each

Participant Experience

Participants were asked to rate their experience on the trail on a scale of one to ten, with ten indicating a perfect experience. The majority of participants (78.2%) rated their experiences as a seven or higher. Less then 10% (6%) rated their experience a four or five, and no participants rated their experience below a four. If the respondent indicated that their experience was not a ten, researchers inquired as to if there were any specific contributing factors that inhibited their recreation experience along the trail. Almost half (49.6%) indicated that there was no particular reason, just that there experience was not a ten. The need for more trail maintenance (7.2%) due to down trees,

Table 11. On-site survey: trip & group characteristics

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Time Spent on the FNST	230	1 hour or less	37.0
		A few hours	39.6
		Half a day	8.7
		One whole day	3.0
		More then a day	11.7
Group size	230	1	29.3
		2	33.9
		3	13.5
		4	6.5
		5-10	8.2
		More then 10	3.8
Number of males per group	212	0	4.7
		1	60.8
		2	16.5
		3	6.6
		4	2.8
		5	1.4
		6 or more	7.1
Number of females per group	153	1	55.6
		2	22.9
		3	11.1
		4	5.2
		5	2.0
		6 or more	3.4
Group type	222	Family	36.0
		Alone	29.3
		Friends	11.7
		Significant other	9.9
		Organized group	9.5
		Friends and family	2.7
		other	0.9

Table 12. On-site survey: activities

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Activity 1	237	Hiking/walking	63.3
		Camping	9.3
		Viewing scenery	3.8
		Jogging/Running	3.4
		Trail Maintenance	3.4
Activity 2	208	Viewing scenery	33.7
		Hiking/walking	15.4
		Nature Study	9.6
		Camping	6.7
		Picnicking	5.3
Activity 3	175	Viewing Scenery	23.4
		Bird Watching	12.4
		Nature Study	11.4
		Photography	9.1
		Hiking/walking	8.6

overgrown pathways, and litter was the most often sited manageable reason for a non-perfect experience, as well as a lack of through information (2.4%) such a detailed maps, interpretive information, or visible blazes along the trail (2.0%). Other frequently sited reasons where attributed to environmental conditions such as the weather (5.6%) or a lack of wildlife or vegetation (5.0%). Miscellaneous reasons included more infrequent and personal responses such as being tired, hiked in wet shoes, a previous injury made the hike more difficult, or their children made the hike more difficult (Table 13).

Socio-Demographics

The long survey provided more extensive socio-demographic information (i.e., race, education) than the short survey. Over sixty-one percent (61.2%) of those who completed the mail back were male, and they tended to be 40-59 years old (46.9%). Participants also tended to be married (70.7%) with no children living at home (63.5%). Almost all (93.8%) of the respondents were white, however, African Americans (2.1%), Hispanic or Latino (1.0%), Asian American (2.1%) and Alaskan Native or American Indian (1.0%) were also represented. Participants were highly educated, receiving a college degree or higher (74.8%). In regards to occupation, individuals tended to be employed outside the home (64.6%), mostly on a full time basis (86.9%), and nearly a quarter of respondents (24.2%) were retired. Household income varied within individuals earning $100,000 or more annually making up just over 27% (27.1%) of respondents (Table 14).

Table 13. On-site survey: participant experience

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Participants FNST Rating	229	10	33.2
		9	17.9
		8	1.3
		7	25.8
		6	3.0
		5	4.8
		4 or below	1.2
Reasons why visit was not a 10	179	No particular reason	49.6
		Miscellaneous	20.4
		Trail needed maintenance	7.4
		Lack of wildlife or vegetation	5.8
		Weather	5.6
		Not preferred scenery/terrain	5.0
		Lack of facilities	3.2
		Lack of information (i.e. kiosks and maps)	2.4
		Lack of visible blazes	2.0
Suggested Improvements	249	No suggested improvements	52.2
		Inclusion or improvement of facilities	17.2
		Better trail maintenance and trash pickup	14.2
		Other	8.8
		Better information (i.e. maps, kiosks)	7.2

Mail Back Survey Results

Of the 249 on-site surveys conducted, 228 participants agreed to take a mail back survey with them. A total of 103 mail backs were returned for a 45.2% response rate. Follow-up methods as suggested by Dilman (2000) used.

Table 14. Mail back survey: socio-demographic information

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Gender	98	Male	61.2
		Female	38.8
Age	98	80 years or older	1.0
		70 – 79 years old	10.2
		60 – 69 years old	15.3
		50 – 59 years old	20.4
		40 – 49 years old	26.5
		30 – 39 years old	14.3
		18 - 29 years old	12.2
Marital Status	99	Married	70.7
		Single	13.1
		Divorced	14.1
		Widowed	2.0
Children in household	96	0	63.5
		1	12.5
		2	18.8
		3	4.2
		4	1.0
Highest level of education	99	Eighth grade or less	1.0
		Some high school	2.0
		High school graduate or GED	9.1
		Some college	13.1
		College graduate	30.3
		Some graduate school	9.1
		Graduate degree or beyond	35.4
Employment	99	Employed outside the home	64.6
		Unemployed	2.0
		Full-time homemaker	7.1
		Retired	24.2
		Student	2.0
Employed outside home	61	Full-time	86.9
		Part-time	13.1
Race or ethnic group	97	African American	2.1
		Hispanic or Latino	1.0
		American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.0
		Asian American	2.1
		White	93.8
Household income	85	Less than $10,000	4.7
		$10,000-$19,999	5.9
		$20,000-$29,999	8.2
		$30,000-$39,999	10.6
		$40,000-$49,999	4.7
		$50,000-$59,999	9.4
		$60,000-$69,999	7.1
		$70,000-$79,999	10.6
		$80,000-$89,999	7.1
		$90,000-$99,999	4.7
		$100,000 or More	27.1

Trip Characteristics

Participants were once again asked how long they spent on the trail during their visit. More then half of the respondents (62.1%) indicated that they spent less then half a day along the trail, and almost 20% (19.4) indicated that they spent more then more then a day along the trail. Of those that spent more then a day, 39% stayed three to four days. When spending multiple days along the trail, just over 42% (42.9%) camped in an established camp ground along the trail. In addition just over 42% hiked between three to five miles on the trail during their visit (Table 15).

Table 15. Mail back survey: trip characteristics

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Length of time on the FNST	103	Less than half a day	62.1
		Half or a whole day	18.4
		More than 1 day	19.4
More than 1 day	21	2	27.8
		3 -4	39.0
		5 -7	5.6
		8 - 10	11.2
		15 or more	16.8
Where stayed over night	21	At a nearby hotel/condo	4.8
		At a campground off of the trail	28.6
		In a tent along the trail	14.3
		In an established campground along the trail	42.9
		In a nearby residence of friends/family	9.5
Miles hiked	50	Less than a mile	2.0
		1-2 miles	14.0
		3-5 miles	42.0
		5-10 miles	22.0
		More than 10 miles	20.0

Hiking Experience

Participants were asked several questions regarding their hiking experience. Most participants (93.1%) have participated in some form of hiking for at least a year with nearly 30% (27.5%) for 21 years or more. To further examine the diversity of where participants like to engage in hiking they were asked how many sites they engaged in hiking both within and outside of Florida. Over sixty percent (60.8%) hike at 2-6 sites within Florida and 42% stated that they do not hike outside of Florida. Of those who so engage in hiking outside of Florida, over a third (32%) stated that they visit 2-6 sites to hike. Participants were then asked to rate their skill level on a scale of one to five with a 1 representing a beginner and a 5 representing an expert. The majority (75.7%) rated themselves as intermediate (36.9%) or advanced (38.8%).

Participants were also asked if they belonged to any hiking clubs or organizations or subscribed to any outdoor or hiking magazines. Over 76% (76.7%) said they were not a member of an outdoor or hiking club, and 71.2% said that they did not subscribe to a hiking or outdoor magazine (Table 16).

Motivations

Participants were given a list of 16 possible motivations and were asked to rate the importance of each motivation on a scale of one to five as a reason for visiting the trail that day. This five point scale was then collapsed into a three point scale with one indicating not at all important and three indicating most important. Over 95% (95.1%) of respondents stated that to "enjoy nature" was important to them (mean = 2.93), along with promoting physical fitness (86.4%, mean = 2.64), "escaping noise/crowds" (88.1%, mean = 2.82), and "explore the area and the natural environment" (82.4%, mean = 2.75). Reversely, "take risks" was viewed as the least

Table 16 . Mail back survey: recreational experience

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Years participating	51	Less than a year 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 10-15 years 16-20 years 21 years or more	5.9 15.7 13.7 17.6 9.8 9.8 27.5
Number of sites participant hikes at within Florida	51	None 2-6 sites 7-12 sites 13-20 sites 21-30 sites More than 30 sites	7.8 60.8 19.6 5.9 3.9 2.0
Number of sites participant hikes at outside of Florida	50	None 2-6 sites 7-12 sites 13-20 sites 21-30 sites More than 30 sites	42.0 32.0 12.0 4.0 8.0 2.0
Rate level of hiking experience	103	1 - Beginner 2 - Novice 3 - Intermediate 4 - Advanced 5 - Expert	5.8 7.8 36.9 38.8 10.7
Hiking/outdoor clubs	103	Yes No	23.3 76.7
Subscribe hiking magazines	102	Yes No	28.4 71.6
Does Florida have a FNST?	45	Yes No	97.8 2.2

important reason for visiting the trail that day by 58% of respondents (mean = 1.55).

Motivations relating to "meet new people" (46.5%, mean = 1.71) and "learn about the history and the culture of the area" (28.7%, mean = 2.04) were also perceived as less important to Trail visitors (Table 17).

Desired Hiking Conditions

A series of twelve questions were presented to the respondents inquiring about the importance of environmental, social, and trail conditions. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each characteristic on a scale of one to five with one indicating not at all important and a five indicating most important. These were then condensed into three statements, not important, neither, or important.

Participants were first asked about the importance of the setting as it related to the presence of development. Sixty-percent of the respondents believed that traveling in areas untouched by man was important and over 50% (54.9%) also believed that traveling in areas that were modified but appeared natural were important. The majority (92%) felt that traveling in areas dominated by roads and power lines was not important (Table 18).

Next, respondents were asked about the importance of preferred social conditions while hiking along the FNST. Respondent's opinions regarding contact with others were spread fairly evenly between the importance in having little contact and the importance in having moderate contact. Nearly half (48.9%) believed that having moderate contact with other groups was

Table 17. Motivations

Motivation	n	Not Important (%)	Neutral (%)	Important (%)	Mean[1]	Standard Deviation
Enjoy nature	103	1.9	2.9	95.1	2.93	.321
Promote physical fitness	103	1.9	11.7	86.4	2.84	.414
Escape noise/crowds	101	5.9	5.9	88.1	2.82	.518
Explore the area and the natural environment	102	6.9	10.8	82.4	2.75	.570
Reduce Tensions and Stress from everyday life	102	5.9	12.7	81.4	2.75	.553
Learn about the natural environment of the area	98	7.1	27.6	65.3	2.58	.625
Be with friends and family	101	17.8	17.8	64.4	2.47	.781
Engage in personal/spiritual reflection	99	15.2	29.3	55.6	2.40	.741
Be in an area where I feel safe and secure	100	20.0	21.0	59.0	2.39	.803
Feel a sense of independence	100	19.0	30.0	51.0	2.32	.778
Challenge myself and achieve personal goals	101	17.8	32.7	49.5	2.31	.761
Depend on my skills and abilities	101	18.8	33.7	47.5	2.28	.766
Strengthen family kinship	100	25.0	28.0	47.0	2.22	.824
Learn about the history and culture of the area	101	28.7	38.6	32.7	2.04	.787
Meet new people	101	46.5	35.6	17.8	1.71	.753
Take risks	100	58.0	29.0	13.0	1.55	.721

[1] 1 = not important 2 = neutral 3 = important

important, and over forty percent (42.8%) felt that having little contact with other groups was important. The majority (88.0%) of respondents felt that constant contact with others while hiking was not important (Table 18).

Lastly, participants were asked to rate the importance of trail settings and characteristics. Traveling on dirt or grass was believed to be the most important among the majority of respondents (69.4%), while traveling on paved trails was believed to be not important by nearly half of the participants (44.8%). Loop trails were also believed to be important by half (49.9%) of the respondents, while hiking on linear trail were believed to be not important to nearly 60% (57.5%) or respondents (Table 18).

Table 18. Desired setting, trail & social characteristics along the Florida Trail

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Traveling in an area untouched by man	50	Not important Neither Important	18.0 22.0 60.0
Traveling in an area that has been modified but appears natural	51	Not important Neither Important	15.7 29.4 54.9
Traveling in an area that is both man-made and natural	49	Not important Neither Important	63.2 20.4 16.3
Traveling in an area that is dominated by roads and power lines	50	Not important Neither Important	92.0 6.0 2.0
Desire to have little contact: 6 or less	49	Not important Neither Important	24.5 32.7 42.8
Desire to have moderate contact: 6-15 groups	49	Not important Neither Important	22.4 28.6 48.9
Desire to have a lot of contact: 30 plus groups	48	Not important Neither Important	56.2 35.4 8.4
Desire to have constant contact	50	Not important Neither Important	88.0 10.0 2.0
Travel on dirt or grass	49	Not important Neither Important	22.4 8.2 69.4
Travel on paved	49	Not important Neither Important	44.8 28.6 26.6
Prefer linear trails	47	Not important Neither Important	57.5 29.8 12.8
Prefer loop trails	49	Not Important Neither Important	34.7 20.4 44.9

Florida Trail Knowledge and Association

In order to investigate hiker's awareness about the FNST, they were asked if Florida had a national scenic trail, and they were also once again asked if they participated in any recreation activities along the FNST on the day they were contacted.

The majority of respondents (97.8%) stated that Florida did have a National Scenic Trail, however just over half (55.8%) of respondents stated that they participated in some form of recreation along the trail the day they were surveyed. Next, participants were asked if they were familiar with the Florida Trail Association (FTA). Almost 60% (56.9%) stated that they were not familiar with the FTA. Of those who were aware of the FTA, they were asked to indicate all the sources from which they learned about the Associations existence. Friends and family was the number one source of information (50%), followed by the internet (29.4%). Participants were then asked if they were members of the FTA. Just over 11%

(11.8%) indicated that they were members. Of those respondents who indicated that they were members, almost 40% (36.4%) indicated that they had been a member for one year or less, and just over 18% (18.2%) indicated that they had been a member for 10 years or more (Table 19).

Table 19. Mail back survey: FNST knowledge and association

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Does Florida have a National Scenic Trail?	45	Yes No	97.8 2.2
Hike FNST when contacted?	77	Yes No I don't know	55.8 33.8 10.4
Familiar with FTA	102	Yes No	43.1 56.9
How the participant learned about FTA: Source 1	42	Friends/family Website Travel Agent Magazine Road signs Newspaper article Brochure Don't remember/not sure Other	50.0 14.3 2.4 2.4 4.8 2.4 4.8 9.5 9.5
How the participant learned about FTA: Source 2	17	Website Magazine Road signs Newspaper article Guidebook Brochure	29.4 11.8 17.6 11.8 17.6 11.8
How the participant learned about FTA: Source 3	9	Travel agent Road signs Newspaper article Guidebook Brochure Other	22.2 11.1 22.2 11.1 22.2 11.1
Member of FTA	98	Yes No	11.2 88.8
How long the participant has been a member	11	1 year or less 2-5 years 6-10 years More than 10 years	36.4 18.2 27.3 18.2

Conclusion and Trail Management Implications

The results presented in this report are meant to help the USFS, the FTA, and the corresponding research sites' land and recreation managers better understand the number of visitors recreating on the FNST and to better understand who these visitors are and what benefits they are seeking. This information can be used to continue to provide quality recreation experiences in a variety of natural settings along the Trail.

Visitor Counts

Researchers collected visitor counts on the FNST using observations, infrared eyes, and pressure pads. The failure of the pressure pads in 2005 makes them an undesirable method for reliable data collection over a long period of time. The continued success, accuracy, ease of use, and limited repair requirements of the infrared eyes make them the preferred method for collecting data on FNST visitors when observers cannot be present. The Diamond Traffics infrared eyes have been relatively reliable and consistent over the three study years; however, the software available for analyzing and working with the data is limited in its functionality and usefulness. The Trailmaster 1550 units purchased at the end of 2005 have been reliable for the short period of time they have been used. The software that accompanies the Trailmaster 1550 allows for very easy interpretation and analysis of data. In addition, the Trailmaster 1550 units are approximately ½ the price of the Diamond Traffics units. Research conducted in 2006-2007 will utilize both types of infrared eyes to collect data.

Observations are a reliable, yet inefficient, method to find out who is using the FNST. There was only one observation location (Withlacoochee) in 2005-2006. Although the data collected was useful for the research, there were not sufficient observation sessions to make a concrete assessment of use on that section of the FNST, so data from another site supplemented the data from Withlacoochee. More observation sessions are needed to obtain sufficient data, however these are challenging to schedule.

Visitor Surveys

The continued collection of visitor surveys has aided researchers in better defining who is using the FNST and why. Thus far results from each study year have been similar, indicating that the typical FNST visitor is white, married, with no children living at home. Visitors also tend to be employed full-time, and the population as a whole shows a wide range of household incomes with the largest percentage of participants making $100,000 annually.

Although the descriptive results of visitor trip characteristics, motivations, recreation experience and socio-demographic information have been consistent, there has also been a decline in the number of mail back surveys that the researchers have been able to receive thus leading to a comparatively small sample size. During this study year, researchers used other high known use places from both previous and future study sites to help distribute more surveys in hopes of a greater return. While this method proved to be effective in increasing the number of surveys distributed to visitors, the response rate for mail backs was still lower then desired by the research team. As the 2006-2007 study year progresses researchers are looking to conducting a more in-depth on-site survey in hopes of not only interviewing more visitors, but obtaining more valuable information from FNST visitors as well.

In addition to the need to increase survey response, the results have also reinforced the need for the ongoing marketing study being conducted by UF researchers to explore differences if FNST and non-FNST visitors as well as hiker knowledge and awareness of the Florida Trail. Identifying site characteristics in both FNST and non-FNST study areas, user satisfaction pertaining to these particular recreational sites, and what benefits the user is seeking from these sites is essential for recreation managers and planners working with the USFS and the FTA to understand in order to successfully market the FNST as a recreational opportunity.

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APPENDIX I

5 Year Study Schedule

Five Year Schedule

2003-2004

Gulf Islands National Seashore (H)
Goldhead Branch State Park (H)
Ocala National Forest (H)
Eglin Air Force Base (M)
Apalachicola National Forest (M)
Osceola National Forest (H)
Little Big Econ State Forest (H)
Includes Cross Seminole Trail (Multi-Use Trail)
Etoniah Creek State Forest (L)

2004-2005

Suwannee (H)
Lake Okeechobee (H)
Seminole State Forest (M)
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge & Rail Trail (H)
Aucilla River WMA (M)
Pine Log State Forest (M)
Rice Creek (L)

2005-2006

Tosohatchee State Preserve (H)
Withlacoochee State Forest (H)
Blackwater River State Forest (H)
Includes Withlacoochee St. Rail-Trail
Ellaville/Twin Rivers State Forest (M)
Green Swamp East (L)
Green Swamp West (L)
Ecofina Creek WMA (L)

2006-2007

Big Cypress National Preserve (H)
Highlands: S65B to US 98 (H)
Bull Creek WMA (L)
Greenway (H)
Kissimmee River WMA to Avon AFB (L)
Three Lakes WMA (L)

2007-2008

Wrap up

APPENDIX II

Protocol for Classifying Access Points

Protocol for Classifying Access Points

Throughout the study year, researchers get to know all the FNST access points within a site irregardless of whether or not a counter is installed. Researchers talk to land managers as well as visitors who know the area well to get an idea of the type of use at each trailhead. They also randomly visit all access points throughout the year to take notes on the number of cars in the parking lot and the number of people in the area. Data collected from mechanical counters provide continuous counts for selected survey sites. However, there is often more access points within a site then there are mechanical counters. To compensate for these implications, access points that do have mechanical counters are analyzed via protocol and then grouped into the following categories:

- Type A – Very high use, well known access point, 500 users/month or more
- Type B – High use, between 100-499 users/month
- Type C – Medium high use, between 50-99 users/month
- Type D – Medium low use, between 15-49 users/month.
- Type E – Low use, trailhead or road crossing with really low numbers, 15 users/ month or less

An average for each type of access point is then formulated. Then based on observations and notes taken about access points without counters an access point average that seems suitable for the access point is applied.

APPENDIX III

Monitored Access Points 2005-2006

Monitored Access Points

Tosohatchee State Park
Powerline Road
Nicolas Road
Beehead Road

Blackwater River State Forest
Red Rock (Juniper Creek)
Deaton Bridge
Hurricane Lake Campground

Withlacoochee State Forest
Hog Island
River Junction
Richloam Fore Tower
Townsend (rail trail)
Citrus Springs (rail trail)

Twin Rivers State Forest
Ellaville
Black Tract
North Mill Creek Tract

Green Swamp East
River Road
SR 471
Green Swamp West
Rock Ridge Rd.

Ocala National Forest
Juniper Springs Recreation Area
Clearwater Recreation Area
Grassy Pond
Alexander Springs Recreation Area
Lake Delaney
Juniper Wilderness
Hopkins Prairie
State Road 19

Osceola National Forest
Turkey Run
Battlefield

Apalachicola National Forest
Camel Lake
Sopchoppy
Bradwell Bay
FR 150

APPENDIX IV

Observation Log

Surveyor:_____
Date:_____ Day: _____
Time Block:_____
Site:_____
Access Point:_____

Notes (include weather and where you sat):

Time	Number in Group	Gender (#males/females)	Activity	Direction Heading	Starting Point	Ending Point	Notes

APPENDIX V

2005-2006 Survey Times

Survey Site	# Times Surveyed	Survey Dates	Survey Time Period
Blackwater River State Forest	11	7/16/2005	1pm-7pm
		8/05/2005	7am-1pm
		8/12/2005	7am-1pm
		9/24/2006	1pm-7pm
		11/11/2005	12pm-6pm
		11/12/2005	7am-12pm
		1/27/2006	12pm-6pm
		1/28/2006	7am-12pm
		4/15/2006	7am-12pm
Tosohatchee State Park	6	7/30/2005	1pm-7pm
		8/16/2005	7am-1pm
		8/20/2005	7am-1pm
		3/18/2006	7am-10am
		4/14/06	3pm-6pm
		5/14/2006	12am-6pm
Withlacoochee State Forest	6	12/21/2005	12pm-3pm
		12/31/2005	7am-10am
		1/20/2006	9am-12pm
		1/21/2006	7am-12pm
		2/26/2006	12pm-3pm
		3/5/2006	3pm-6pm
Withlacoochee State Rail Trail	12	7/15/2005	7am-1pm
		7/28/2005	1pm-7pm
		10/21/2005	9am-12pm
		10/21/2006	1pm-5pm
		11/1/2005	9am-12pm
		12/4/2005	9am-3pm
		3/06/2006	3pm-6pm
		3/24/2006	9am-12pm
		5/5/2006	9am-12pm
		5/12/2006	12pm-6pm
		5/16/2006	9am-3pm
Ocala National Forest	13	7/29/2005	1pm-7pm
		7/31/2005	7am-1pm
		8/07/2005	7am-1pm
		1/14/2006	7am-10am
		1/15/2006	12pm-3pm
		2/04/2006	12pm-3pm
		2/05/2006	9am-12pm
		2/10/2006	3pm-6pm
		2/11/2006	9am-12pm
		2/11/2006	12pm-3pm
		3/03/2006	3pm-6pm
		3/06/2006	3pm-6pm
		4/8/2006	12pm-3pm

Site	# Times Surveyed	Survey Dates	Survey Time Period
Goldhead Branch State Park	6	1/28/02006	12pm-3pm
		2/11/2006	9am-12pm
		2/18/2006	12pm-3pm
		3/12/2006	3pm-6pm
		4/1/2006	9am-12pm
		5/19/2006	9am-12pm
Little Big Econ State Forest	5	2/12/2006	3pm-6pm
		2/25/2006	PM
		3/18/2006	3pm-6pm
		3/25/2006	9am-12pm
		3/25/2006	12pm-3pm
Cross Florida Greenway	3	3/19/2006	3pm-6pm
		3/25/2006	9am-12pm
		4/02/2006	9am-12pm
Osceola National Forest	8	8/19/2006	7am-1pm
		12/10/2005	AM
		1/14/2006	9am-12pm
		1/14/2006	12pm-3pm
		1/15/2006	3pm-6pm
		1/21/2006	3pm-6pm
		1/22/2006	3pm-6pm
		2/18/2006	9am-12pm
Econfinia	4	7/17/2005	7am-1pm
		9/25/2005	7am-1pm
		11/13/2005	7am-1pm
		4/13/2006	7am-1pm
Apalachicola National Forest	4	8/14/2005	1pm-7pm
		1/26/2006	9am-12pm
		1/29/2006	9am-12pm
		3/09/2006	12pm-3pm
Green Swamp	6	7/22/2005	1pm-7pm
		8/3/2005	7am-1pm
		8/21/2005	1pm-7pm
		3/4/2006	7am-10am
		5/7/2006	3pm-6pm
		5/21/2006	3pm-6pm
Twin Rivers State Forest	8	7/082005	1pm-7pm
		7/23/2005	7am-1pm
		08/06/2005	7am-1pm
		8/13/2005	7am-1pm
		10/09/2005	9am-12pm
		12/17/2005	9am-12pm
		4/22/2006	9am-12pm
		5/20/2006	9am-12pm

APPENDIX VI

2005-2006 Counter Locations

2005-2006 Counter Locations

Tosohatchee State Park
- Nicolas Road: An infrared eye located @15 feet in from the FNST parking area.

Blackwater River State Forest
- Red Rock (Juniper Creek): From Red Rock Rd. (across the street from the kiosk), the infrared eye was 2 blazes in on the juniper creek trail.

Withlacoochee State Forest
- Hog Island: An infrared eye along the trail near the parking lot.
- Richloam Fire Tower: Following the trail across the street from the fire tower, an infrared eye was installed 1/3 mile down.

Twin Rivers State Forest
- Ellaville: Leaving from the picnic area, an infrared eye was installed several blazes down the trail.

Green Swamp East
- River Road: Pad and then infrared eye installed on FNST which is 1.5 miles from the beginning of the spur trail.
- SR 471: After gate, pad and then infrared eye installed several blazes in along the trail.

Green Swamp West
- Rock Ridge Rd: An infrared eye was installed 1 mile past the entry gate just past the FT sign.

Ocala National Forest
- Juniper Springs Recreation Area: Infrared eye installed ¼ mile in on the FT section going east from the Juniper access road.
- Clearwater Recreation Area: Pad and then infrared eye installed past the intersection of the spur trail and the FT.
- State Road 19: Pad and then infrared eye installed on FT 300 yards from parking lot.
- Lake Delancy: Infrared eye installed north of where FNST crosses FR 75 at the campground.

Osceola National Forest
- Turkey Run: Infrared eye installed along FT @ 150 feet north of parking lot.
- Battlefield: From parking lot follow FNST for ¼ mile past Loop A Trail. Infrared eye installed on FNST @ 100 feet past Loop A Trail.

Apalachicola National Forest
- Camel Lake: Infrared eye @ ¼ mile east of where FNST crosses the forest road near the campground.
- Sopchoppy: Infrared eye along FNST @ 150 feet from Sopchoppy River.

APPENDIX VII

On-Site Survey

Florida Outdoor Recreation Visitor Study

Please take a couple of minutes to fill out this short form. See the letter enclosed in your envelope for details on the study.

To be completed by surveyor if interview given on-site:

Surveyor: _____ **Date: _____** **Monitoring ____**

Site: _____ **Time: _____** **Marketing ____**

Access Point: _____ **Mailback #:_____**

---

1. Did you participate in any recreation activities along the Florida National Scenic Trail today?
___ Yes ____ No _____ I don't know

2. Was this your first time on this particular trail? ___Yes ____ No (☞Go to Question 2)

3. Over the past year, how many times have you used this trail?

___None ___13-20 times
___2-6 times ___21-30 times
___ 7-12 times ___ more then 30 (#___)

4. Did you enter and exit the trail at the same location?

___Yes
___No → Enter_____ Exit_____

5. About how long did you spend on the trail today?

____1hour or less ____Half a day ____More than 1 day (_____number of days)
____A few hours ____One whole day

6. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the perfect experience, how would you rate your experience on this trail? _____

7. If you did not rate your trail experience as a 10, can you explain why not?
_____

8. Are there any other improvements you would like to see on the trail? _____

_____

9. Including yourself, how many people were you with?

_____number of people (___#males, ___#females)

9a. Gender of participant (Mark don't ask)

___ Male ___ Female

10. What type of group are you traveling with?_____

11. What year were you born? _____

12. From the list of activities, please rank the three activities that best describe the reason you and your group visited the trail today.

a. Hiking/Walking	f. Photography	k. Birdwatching	p. other: _____
b. Biking	g. Backpacking	l. Viewing cultural resources	
c. OHV Riding	h. Nature study	m. Trail maintenance work	**1st: _____**
d. Jogging/Running	i. Hunting	n. View Scenery	**2nd: _____**
e. Picnicking	j. Camping	o. Fishing	**3rd: _____**

Participant Name: _____ **Address: _____**

City: _____ **St. _____** **Zip Code: _____** **County: _____**

APPENDIX VIII

Mail Back Survey

Florida Outdoor Recreation Visitor Study

You were recently contacted by an interviewer while visiting one of Florida's public lands. This survey is designed to find out more about your recreation experience in the areas in which you were contacted. Sharing your opinions will help Florida's public land management agencies better plan for your needs. As you fill out this survey, **please think about the visit when you were interviewed by our researcher**. Thanks for your help!

Section 1: Trip Characteristics

1. Please write down the name of the recreation area where you were contacted by our researcher.
   _____

2. On this trip, what activity were you participating in when contacted by our researcher? _____

3. On this trip, how many miles did you travel in the area in which you were contacted?

   [] Less then a mile [] 3-5 miles [] More then 10 miles (# of miles _____)
   [] 1-2 miles [] 5-10 miles

4. On this trip, how much time did you spend in the area where you were contacted?

   [] Less then ½ a day → Please continue to Section 2
   [] ½ a day or a whole day → Please continue to Section 2
   [] More then a day → Please continue to Question 4

5. If you spent more then one day in the area, how many days did you spend? _____

6. If you spent more then one day in the area, where did you stay overnight?

   [] At a nearby hotel/condo
   [] At a campground off the trail
   [] In a tent along the trail
   [] In an established campground along the trail
   [] In a nearby residence of friends or family

Section 2: Recreation Experience

1. How did you first learn about the area where you were contacted by the interviewer? (check only one)

[] Friends or Family
[] Website, please specify: _____
[] Travel Agent
[] Magazine, please specify: _____
[] Roadside Signs
[] Guidebook
[] Brochure
[] Newspaper Article
[] Don't remember, not sure
[] Other, please specify _____

2. How many years have you been participating in the activity you were engaged in the day you were contacted?

[] Less then a year [] 3-5 Years [] 10-15 Years [] 21 Years or more: # of years _____
[] 1-2 Years [] 6-10 Years [] 16-20 Years

3. Please rate your level of experience within the recreation activity you were participating in using the following scale.

1	2	3	4	5
Novice		Intermediate		Expert

4. Do you belong to any outdoor/environmental clubs?

[] Yes → Name of club(s): _____
[] No

5. Do you subscribe to any outdoor/environmental magazines?

[] Yes → Name of magazine(s): _____
[] No

6. People go to particular areas and participate in recreation activities for any number of reasons. Listed below are some possible reasons you might have had for recreating along the trail the day you were contacted. Please

indicate in column A how important each experience was for you during your visit. In column B, please indicate how much you were able to attain this experience during your visit.

Experiences	(A) Importance					(B) Attainment			
	Not at all important	Not very important	Neither	Very Important	Most Important	Did not Attain	Somewhat Attained	Moderately Attained	Totally Attained
Learn about history and culture of the area	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Promote physical fitness	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Reduce tensions and stress from everyday life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Escape noise/crowds	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Learn about the natural environment of the area	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Be with friends and family	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Feel a sense of independence	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Take risks	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Engage in personal/spiritual reflection	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Explore the area and natural environment	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Challenge myself and achieve personal goals	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Depend on my skills and abilities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Enjoy nature	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Strengthen family kinship	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Be in an area where I feel secure and safe	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Meet new people	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4

7. When participating in the activity that you were engaged in when contacted by our researcher do you generally prefer….

Statement	Not at all Important	Not very Important	Neutral	Very Important	Most Important
To travel in areas that seem to be completely natural, untouched by humans	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas that are somewhat modified but appear natural	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas that are substantially modified with human-made and natural features	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas where roads, buildings and power lines clearly dominate	1	2	3	4	5
To travel on trails that are natural; dirt or grass	1	2	3	4	5
To travel on trails that are paved	1	2	3	4	5
To travel on trails that are linear	1	2	3	4	5
To travel on loop trails	1	2	3	4	5
To have very little contact with people outside my travel group (less then 6 people)	1	2	3	4	5
To have little contact with people outside my travel group (6-15 groups per day)	1	2	3	4	5
To have moderate contact with other people outside my travel group (30+ groups per day)	1	2	3	4	5
To have constant contact with other people	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3: Recreation Opportunities

1. To the best of your ability, please provide us with a list of other recreation areas within Florida that you may have visited within the past 12 months.

   _____ _____ _____

   _____ _____ _____

2. Does Florida have a National Scenic Trail?
   - [] Yes
   - [] No → go to question 4 in this section
   - [] I don't know

3. Did you hike on the Florida National Scenic Trail on the day that you were contacted?
   - [] Yes → Go to question 3 of this section
   - [] No → Go to question 4 of this section
   - [] I don't know → Go to question 4 of this section

3. Other then the trail you were hiking the day our researchers contacted you, have you hiked any other sections of the Florida National Scenic Trail?
   - [] Yes → Please name the section(s) hiked: _____
   - [] No

4. If you have heard of the Florida National Scenic Trail, please indicate how you first learned about it? (check only one)
   - [] Friends or Family
   - [] Website, please specify: _____
   - [] Travel Agent
   - [] Magazine, please specify: _____
   - [] Roadside Signs
   - [] Guidebook
   - [] Brochure
   - [] Newspaper Article
   - [] Don't remember, not sure
   - [] Other, please specify _____

5. Are you a member of the Florida Trail Association?
   - [] Yes → If yes, how long have you been a member of the Association?
     - [] 1 year or less
     - [] 2-5 Years
     - [] 6-10 Years
     - [] More then 10 Years
   - [] No

6. Are you familiar with the Florida Trail Association?
   - [] Yes → If yes, how did you learn about the Florida Trail Association? (check all that apply)
     - [] Friends or Family
     - []Website,
     - [] Travel Agent
     - [] Magazine
     - [] Road Signs
     - [] Newspaper Article
     - [] Guidebook
     - [] Brochure
     - [] Don't remember, not sure
     - [] Other, please specify: _____
   - [] No

Section 4: Participant Information

We would like to ask a few questions about you, your background, and your past experiences. This information will be used for statistical analysis only, and all information will remain strictly confidential.

1. What is you gender?
   [] Male
   [] Female

2. What year were you born? 19____

3. How long have you lived at your current residence? _____ years _____ months

4. Which of the following best describes your status?
   [] Married
   [] Single
   [] Divorced
   [] Widowed

5. How many children currently reside in your household? _____

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (please mark one)
   [] Eighth grade or less
   [] Some High School
   [] High School Graduate or GED
   [] Some College
   [] College Graduate
   [] Some Graduate School
   [] Graduate Degree or beyond

7. Are you presently…
   [] Employed Full Time: Occupation _____
   [] Employed Part Time: Occupation _____
   [] Unemployed
   [] Full Time Homemaker
   [] Retired: Previous Occupation _____
   [] Full Time Student
   [] Part Time Student

8. What race or ethnic group(s) would you place yourself in? Please mark all that apply.
   [] African American
   [] Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   [] Asian American
   [] Hispanic or Latino
   [] American Indian or Alaskan Native
   [] White

9. What was your approximate total household income, before taxes this past year?
   [] Less the $10,000
   [] $10,001 to $19,999
   [] $20,000 to $29,999
   [] $30,000 to $39,999
   [] $40,000 to $49,999
   [] $50,000 to $59,999
   [] $60,000 to $69,999
   [] $70,000 to $79,999
   [] $80,000 to $89,999
   [] $90,000 to $99,999
   [] $100,000 or More

If you have any questions or comments, please write them in the space below.

Thank you for your help with this study!

Please place the completed questionnaire in the postage-paid business return envelope provided.

APPENDIX IX
2005-2006 Seasonal Calibration Factors

Table A1. Fall/Spring 2005-2006 Calibration Factors

	Sites	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.*	*Feb.*	*March*	*April*	*May*
Blackwater	Red Rock	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Econfinia	SR 20	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Green Swamp	Rock Ridge Rd.	1	1	1	1				1	1	1	1	1
	SR 471			4	4	4	4		1	1	1	1	1
	River Rd.	.83	.83	.83		.83					1	1	1
ANF	Camel Lake		1			1	1						
	Sopchoppy					1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ocala	Juniper Rec.	1	.92	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Clearwater	1	1										
	Lake Delancy												
	SR 19												
Tosohatchee	Nicolas Rd/Powerline	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22
Twin Rivers SF	Ellaville	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Withlacoochee SF	Richloam	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Hog Island	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Osceola NF	Battlefield	1.12	1.12							1	1	1	1
	Turkey Run	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				1

= Months where data was missing so access point averages from previous research years were used to get monthly count
= Months where data was missing so previous year's research data from that area was used.

APPENDIX X

Individual Site Information

Blackwater River State Forest

(n = 6)

Use History & Knowledge

- 50% knew they were hiking on the FNST
- 67% have hiked the FNST before
- 34% of returning visitors have visited the trail at least twice within the past year

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 84% of visitors entered and exited from the same trailhead
- 84% of visitors spent a few hours or less along the FNST
- 67% or participants traveled in groups of 2-3 people
- 67% of participants traveled with family
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, view scenery, and view cultural resources

Participant Trip Experience

- 84% of visitors rated their experience as a 7 or higher 1ith 10 being a perfect experience
- Reasons why the participants trip was not a ten included
  - Lack of access to the river
  - The area was not the participants preferred scenery
  - The participant(s) did not enjoy the road walks
  - There was a lack of interpretive information along the trail as well as about the trail
- Some suggested improvements for this segment of trail included:
  - Increased water availability
  - Better shelters for backpackers
  - More interpretive information along the trail as well as about the trail

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 50% of participants were between the ages of 40-49 years old
  - 25% of participants were between the ages of 50-59 years old
  - 25% of participants were between the ages of 60-69 years old
- Gender
  - 67% were female
  - 34% were male

2005-2006 Use

- Survey Sites:
  - Surveys were conducted a Juniper Creek (Red Rock)/Jackson Trail Trailheads.
  - Deaton Bridge and Hurricane Lake were visually monitored.
- Counter Type:
  - A Diamond Traffics Infrared eye was installed at Juniper Creek (Red Rock).
  - Hurricane Lake and Deaton Bridge were observed and access point averages were applied accordingly.
- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - There were no reported problems with the counter equipment throughout the study year.
- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - Trail was in good condition throughout the year.

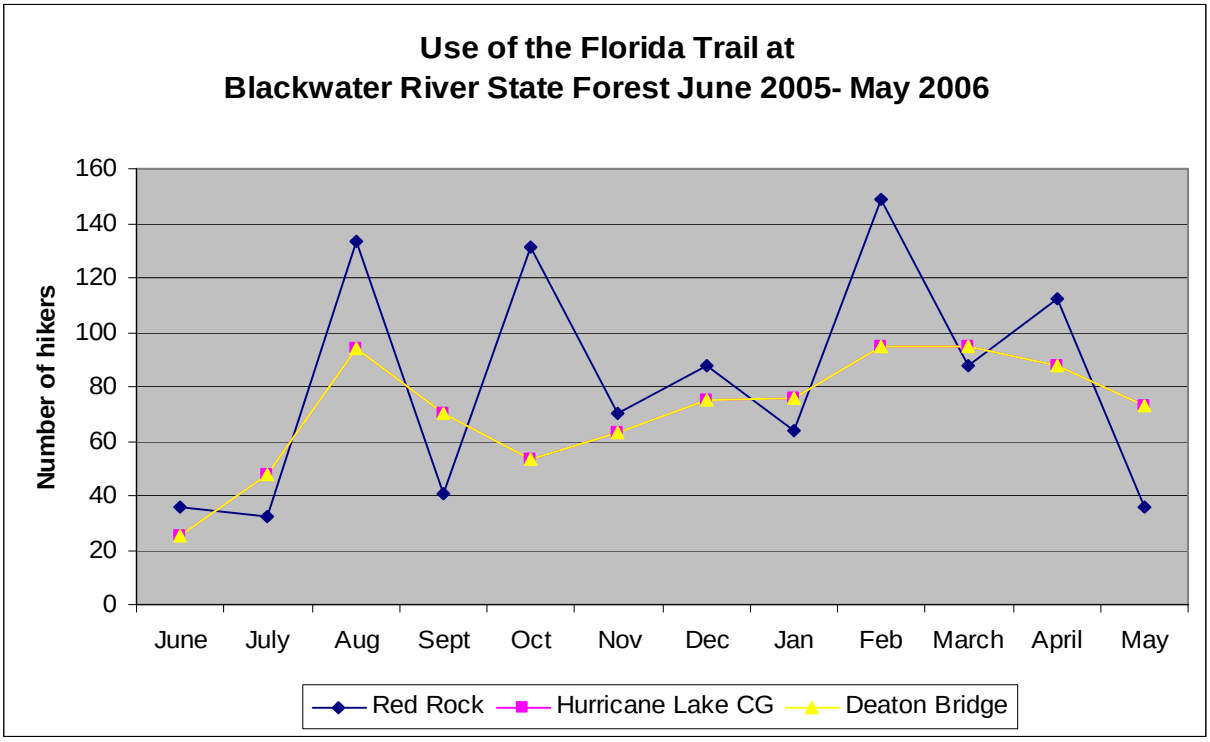
Trail Use Estimates

Preliminary research performed in 2001-2002 indicated that Blackwater River State Forest was a high use site, receiving more than 1000 visitors/ year to the Florida Trail. The estimate was correct, with Blackwater's 2005-2006 research season calculated summer use being 732 and fall/spring use being 1974 for a total annual use of 2,706. The highest use month was February with an estimated 339 FT visits. The lowest use month was June with an estimated 86 FT visits.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail in the Blackwater River State Forest June 2005-May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Red Rock	36	32	133	41	131	70	88	64	149	88	112	36	996
*Hurricane Lake CG	25	48	94	70	53	63	75	76	95	95	88	73	855
*Deaton Bridge	25	48	94	70	53	63	75	76	95	95	88	73	855
TOTAL USE	86	128	321	181	237	196	238	216	339	278	288	182	2706

*= Access point that was not monitored. Use level was estimated and an access point average was applied.



Econfina Water Management District

(n = 3)

Use History & Knowledge

- 100% of the participants knew they were hiking on the FNST
- 67% have hiked the FNST before
- 67% have hiked the FNST 2-6 other times within the past 12 months

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 84% of visitors did not enter and exit from the same trailhead
- 100% of visitors spent a few hours or less along the FNST
- 67% or participants traveled in pairs
- 67% of participants traveled with family or with a significant other
- Participants visited the FNST to hike/jog, view scenery, and study nature

Participant Trip Experience

- 67% of visitors rated their experience as a 7 or higher 1ith 10 being a perfect experience
- Reasons why the participants trip was not a ten included
  - Interpretive signs were not clear
  - Weather (to hot)
  - Personal (tired)
- Some suggested improvements for this segment of trail included:
  - Increased water availability (hand-pump)
  - Better shelters for backpackers
  - More interpretive information along the trail as well as about the trail

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 67% of participants were between the ages of 50-59 years old
  - 34% of participants were between the ages of 40-49 years old
- Gender
  - 67% were male
  - 34% were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type
  - SR 20: Econfina was studied by means of a Diamond Traffics infrared counter installed at the SR 20 trailhead.
  - Scott Rd. was visually monitored and an appropriate access point average was applied.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - There were no reported problems with the counter equipment throughout the study year.

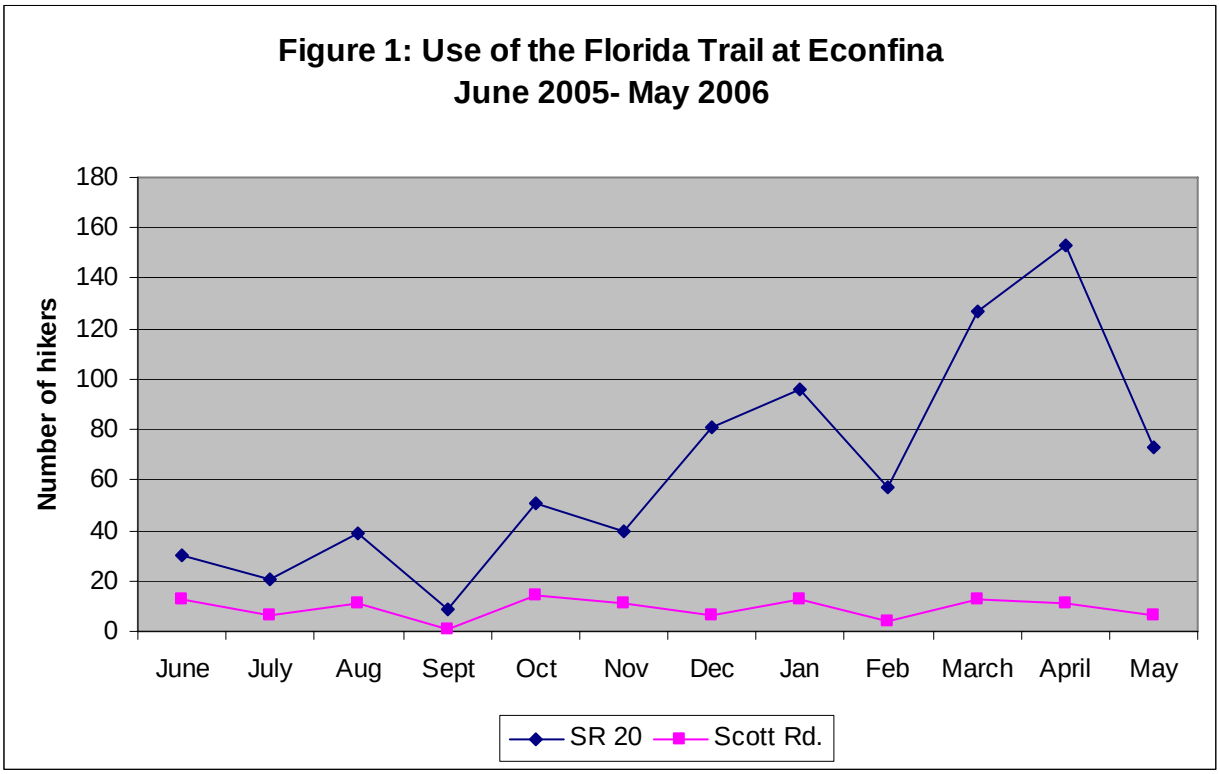
- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - The trail was in good condition throughout the year.

Trail Use Estimates

Preliminary research performed in 2001-2002 indicated that Econfina was a low use site, receiving 365 visits or less/ year. Although Econfina was initially estimated to be a low use site, counter data indicated that it was a medium use site, receiving 886 visits in the research year. Access point averages were applied to Scott Road, which was did not have a counter. The highest use month for Econfina was January with an estimate 109 FT visitors and the lowest use month was September with an estimated 10 FT visitors.

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
SR 20	30	21	39	9	51	40	81	96	57	127	153	73	271
*Scott Rd.	*13*	*6*	*11*	*1*	*14*	*11*	*6*	*13*	*4*	*13*	*11*	*6*	62
TOTAL USE	43	27	50	10	65	51	87	109	61	140	164	79	333

= Months where data was missing so access point averages from previous research years were used to get monthly count
*= Access point that was not monitored. Use level was estimated and an access point average was applied.



Twin Rivers State Forest

(n = 3)

Use History & Knowledge

- 67% of the participants knew they were hiking on the FNST
- None of the participants had hiked the FNST before

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 67% of visitors did not enter and exit from the same trailhead
- 100% of visitors spent a few hours or less along the FNST
- 67% or participants traveled in pairs
- 67% of participants traveled with family or with a significant other
- Participants visited the FNST to hike/walk, view scenery, and hunt

Participant Trip Experience

- 67% of visitors rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experience
- Reasons why the participants trip was not a ten included
  - Lack of blazes
  - Did not enjoy road walks
- Some suggested improvements for this segment of trail included:
  - Better trail maintenance and blazing

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 67% of participants were between the ages of 30-39 years old
  - 34% of participants were between the ages of 40-49 years old
- Gender
  - 67% were male
  - 34% were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
  - Ellaville: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
  - Mill Unit and Black Unit were visually monitored and access points were applied.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - Counter worked well throughout the year.

- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - Trail was in good condition throughout the year.

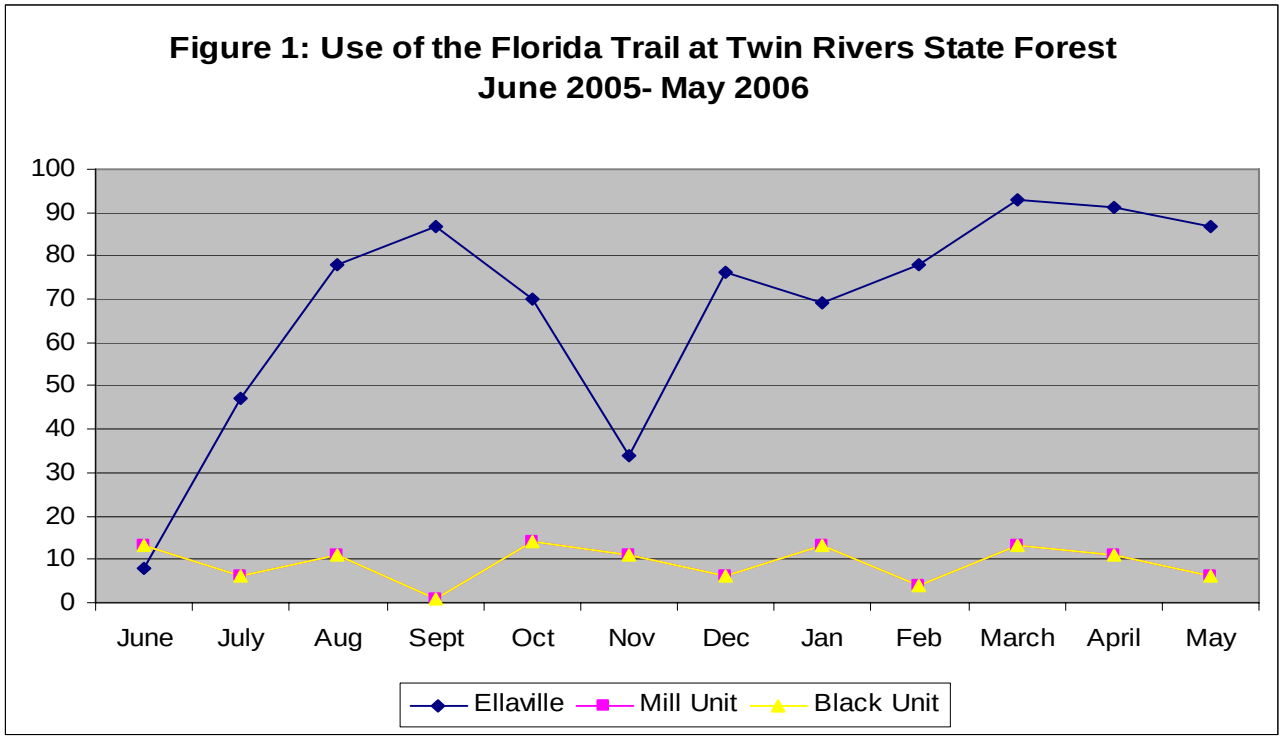
Trail Use Estimates

Preliminary research conducted in 2001-2002 indicated that Twin Rivers was a medium use site, receiving between 366-999 visitors/ year. Research conducted in 2005-2006 indicated that Twin Rivers was a high use site, receiving over 1000 trail visits/ year. Twin Rivers received an estimated 1036 trail visits in 2005-2006. The highest use month was March with an estimated 119 FT visits and the lowest use month was June with an estimated 34 FT visits.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at Twin Rivers State Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Ellaville	8	47	78	87	70	34	76	69	78	93	91	87	400
**Mill Unit*	*13*	*6*	*11*	*1*	*14*	*11*	*6*	*13*	*4*	*13*	*11*	*6*	62
**Black Unit*	*13*	*6*	*11*	*1*	*14*	*11*	*6*	*13*	*4*	*13*	*11*	*6*	62
TOTAL USE	34	59	100	89	98	56	88	95	86	119	113	99	524

*= Access point that was not monitored. Use level was estimated and an access point average was applied.



Withlacoochee State Forest & Rail Trail

(n = 25)

Use History & Knowledge

- 60% of the participants knew they were hiking on the FNST
- 72% of the participants had hiked this section of the FNST before
- 80% of returning visitors have visited the trail more then 12 times in the past year

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 68% of visitors did enter and exit from the same trailhead
- 83% of visitors spent a few hours or less along the FNST
- 39% of participants traveled alone and 31% traveled in pairs
- 43% of participants traveled with family or friends
- Participants visited the FNST to hike/walk, view scenery, and bird watch

Participant Trip Experience

- 100% of visitors rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experience
- Reasons why the participants trip was not a ten included
  - Difficult terrain (hills)
  - Weather (hot)
  - Worried about hunters
- Some suggested improvements for this segment of trail included:
  - Better trail maintenance and blazing
  - Increase water availability
  - Better maps
  - Better enforcement of rules (foot traffic only Hog Island to River Junction)

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 10% of participants were between the ages of 70-79 years old
  - 25% of participants were between the ages of 60-69 years old
  - 20% of participants were between the ages of 50-59 years old
  - 35% of participants were between the ages of 40-49 years old
  - 10% of participants were between the ages of 18-39 years old
- Gender
  - 56% were male
  - 44% were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
  - Richloam fire tower: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
  - Hog Island: Diamond Traffics infrared eye
  - River Junction was visually monitored.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - There were no counter problems throughout the study period.

- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - The trail condition at both sites was good throughout the year. The one exception was Richloam was very wet in June.

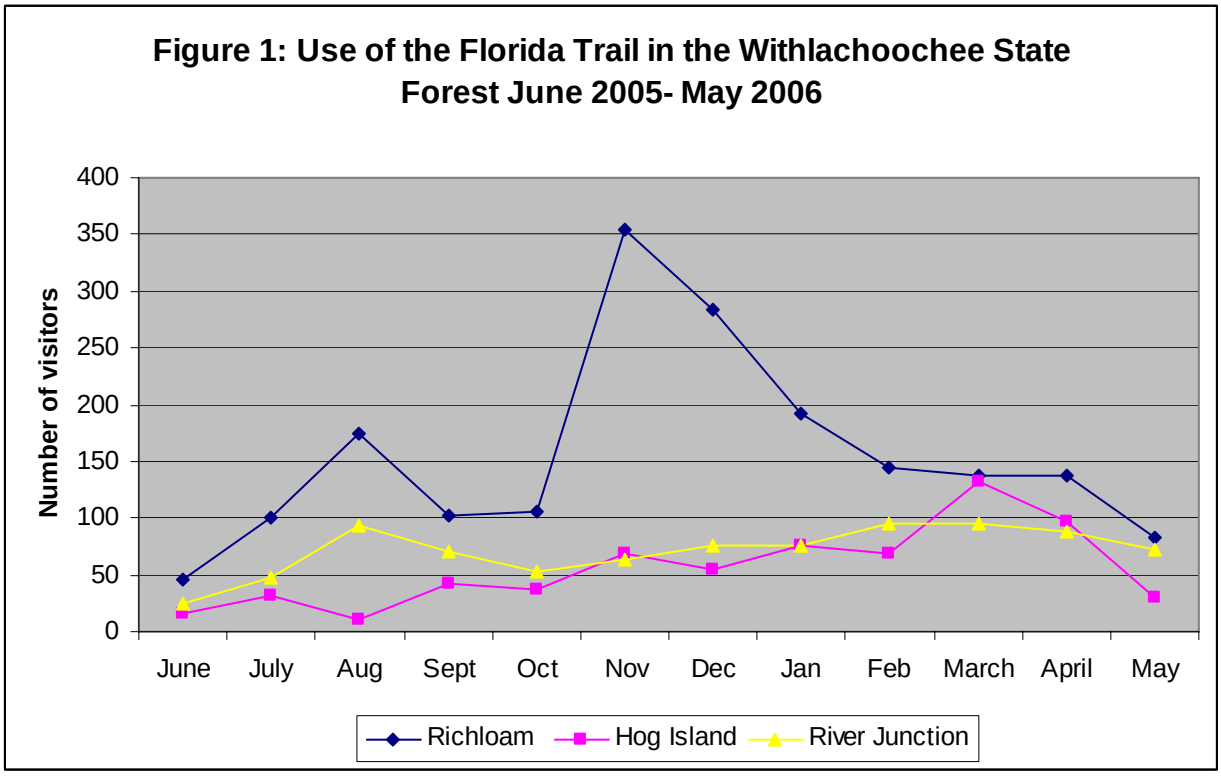
Trail Use Estimates

The Withlacoochee State Forest received an estimated 17,403 visitors to the FNST in 2005-2006. The majority (11,516) of these visitors (66%) were bikers or users other than hikers on the Withlacoochee Rail Trail. The lowest use access point was Hog Island and the highest use access point besides the Rail Trail was the Richloam Fire Tower.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Withlacoochee State Forest

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Use Estimate
Richloam	46	100	174	102	105	355	283	192	145	138	138	82	1860
Hog Island	15	31	10	42	37	68	55	76	69	133	97	30	663
*River Junction	*25*	*48*	*94*	*70*	*53*	*63*	*75*	*76*	*95*	*95*	*88*	*73*	855
`With. RT Foot													2,509
`With. RT Other													11,516
TOTAL USE	40	79	104	112	90	131	130	152	164	228	185	103	17,403

*= Access point that was not monitored. Use level was estimated and an access point average was applied.
` Withlacoochee RT is an observation site that was not monitored monthly, so only annual data is given.



* The Withlacoochee Rail Trail is not included in this figure

Green Swamp (East and West)

(n = 3)

Participant Use History & Knowledge

- 67% of participants did not know they were on the FNST
- 72% of participants had not visited the FNST before

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 100% of participants entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead
- 100% of participants traveled in pairs, all with a family member
- 67% of participants spent half a day or less
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, camp, fish, and study nature

Participant Trip Experience

- 67% rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experiences
- Reasons why the participants experience was not a ten included
  - Lack of wildlife
  - Lack of maintenance (litter present, trail undefined)
- Suggested improvements for the FNST in this area included:
  - Better maintenance and blazes
  - Enforcement of rules (horse and bike traffic)

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 33.3% were between the ages of 40-49 year old
  - 33.3% were between the ages of 30-39 years old
  - 33.3% were between the ages of 18-29 years old
- Gender
  - 50% of respondents were male
  - 50% of respondents were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
  - River Road: Pressure pad, infrared eye
  - SR 471: Pressure pad, infrared eye
  - Rock Ridge Road: Infrared eye

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - River Road initially had a pressure pad installed that had some trouble until finally failing in September 2005. The counter was replaced in February 2006 with a Trailmaster infrared eye which worked fine.
  - SR 471 initially had a pressure pad installed which failed in November 2005. It was replaced in February 2006 by a Trailmaster infrared eye which had a battery problem. The problem was solved in early April and the unit worked fine the remainder of the year.
  - Rock Ridge Road was studied with a Diamond Traffics infrared eye. There was data loss between October and December, but was fixed in January.

- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - At all three access points to the trail were in good condition. The only exception was the spur trail at River Road which was overgrown in the Fall.

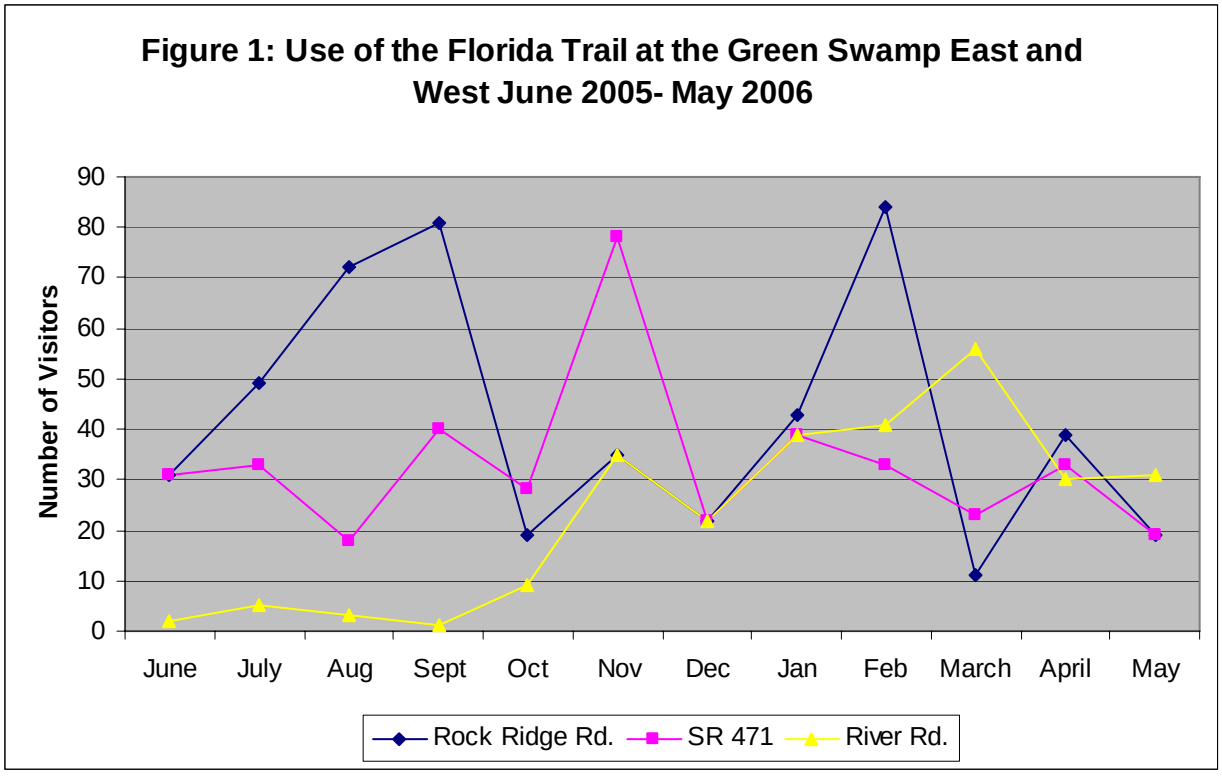
Trail Use Estimates

Preliminary research conducted in 2001-2002 indicated that the Green Swamp was a low use area. Research conducted in 2005-2006 shows the Green Swamp area to be a high use area, having over 1000 visits/ year. The highest use month was February with 158 visitors and the lowest use month was October with 56 visitors. Due to data loss from counters that did not function properly, there were several months where data from access point averages had to be used to get a monthly estimated user count.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at Green Swamp East and West June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Rock Ridge Rd.	31	49	72	81	*19*	*35*	*22*	*43*	*84*	*11*	*39*	*19*	309
SR 471	31	33	18	40	28	78	22	39	33	23	33	19	250
River Rd.	2	5	3	1	9	35	22	39	41	56	30	31	77
TOTAL USE	64	87	93	122	56	148	66	121	158	90	102	69	636

= Months where data was missing so access point averages from previous research years were used to get monthly count



Tosohatchee State Preserve

(n=8)

Participant Use History & Knowledge

- 67% of participants did not know they were on the FNST
- 63% of participants had visited this segment of FNST before
- 50% of returning visitors have visited the trail at least 12 times or more in the past

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 88% of participants entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead
- 38% of participants alone
- 63% of participants traveled in groups of 2 or 3 people, typically with friends or family
- 88% of participants spent a few hours on the FNST the day of their visit
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, view scenery, photography, and study nature

Participant Trip Experience

- 100% rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experiences
- Reasons why the participants experience was not a ten included
  - Roads accessing trails where dry and sandy making them difficult to drive
  - Not preferred scenery
- Suggested improvements for the FNST in this area included:
  - Better maintenance and blazes
  - More information (maps)
  - More facilities (water fountains, picnic areas, restrooms, and benches)

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 13% were between the ages of 70-79 years old
  - 25% were between the ages of 50-59 years old
  - 38% were between the ages of 40-49 year old
  - 13% were between the ages of 30-39 years old
  - 13% were between the ages of 18-29 years old
- Gender
  - 88% of respondents were male
  - 12% of respondents were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
  - A Diamond Traffics was installed at Nicolas Rd.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - The counter worked well throughout the year.

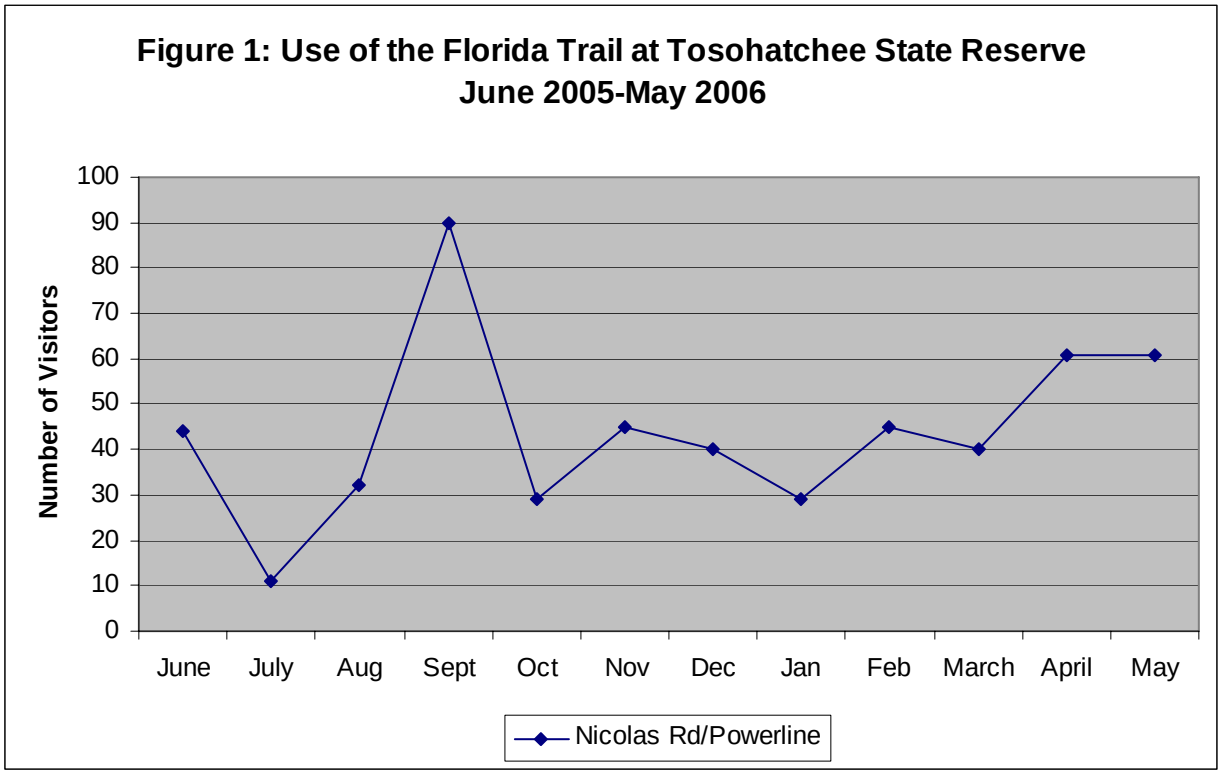
- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - The trail was in good condition except in November it was flooded.

Trail Use Estimates

Preliminary research conducted in 2001-2002 estimated that Tosohatchee was a high use site, receiving over 1000 visitors/ year. The research conducted in 2005-2006 indicates that Tosohatchee is a medium use site, having between 366 and 999 trail visits/ year. The total recorded FT visits for Tosohatchee was 527. The highest use month was September with 90 visits. The lowest use month was July with 11 visits.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at Tosohatchee State Reserve June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Nicolas Rd/Powerline	44	11	32	90	29	45	40	29	45	40	61	61	291
TOTAL USE	44	11	32	90	29	45	40	29	45	40	61	61	291



Ocala National Forest

(n = 38)

Participant Use History & Knowledge

- 80% of participants knew they were on the FNST
- 53% of participants had not visited this segment of FNST before
- 57% of returning visitors have visited the trail at least 1 other time or in the past 12 months

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 79% of participants entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead
- 69% of participants traveled alone or with another person, typically with friends or family
- 50% of participants spent a few hours to a half a day on the FNST the day of their visit
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, view scenery, and study nature

Participant Trip Experience

- 78% of participants rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experience
- Reasons why the participants experience was not a ten included
    - Weather (to hot and windy)
    - Excessive litter along the trail
    - Noise from vehicles
- Suggested improvements for the FNST in this area included:
    - Trail clean up
    - Provide more information in the way of detailed maps and trail mileage

Participant Demographics

- Age
    - 28% were between the ages of 18-29 years old
    - 25% were between the ages of 50-59 years old
    - 22% were between the ages of 40-49 years old
- Gender
    - 69% of participants were male
    - 31% of participants were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
    - Juniper Recreation Area: pressure pad, Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
    - Clearwater Lake: pressure pad, Trailmaster infrared eye.
    - Lake Delancy: pressure pad, Trailmaster infrared eye.
    - SR 19: pressure pad, Traimaster infrared eye.
    - Juniper Wilderness was visually monitored.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - Juniper Recreation Area: pressure pad failed in August and was replaced in November by a Diamond Traffics infrared eye which worked fine.
  - Clearwater Lake: Pressure pad failed in August 2005 and replaced by a Trailmaster infrared eye in February 2006. There were some problems with the batteries because they were not Alkaline. This was fixed and the unit worked fine until the display was cracked in May 2006.
  - Lake Delancy: Pressure pad failed and removed in November 2005 and replaced by a Trailmaster infrared eye in February 2006. Had to install alkaline batteries in April because they failed.
  - SR 19: Pressure pad failed in August 2005 and replaced by a Trailmaster infrared eye in February 2006. Batteries failed in March 2006 and installed new alkaline batteries in April and counter stolen sometime between April and June.

- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - The trail at all locations was in good condition throughout the year.

Trail Use Estimates

Previous years' research has shown the Ocala National Forest to be a high use site, receiving over 1000 visitors/ year. Research conducted in 2005-2006 confirmed this with the forest receiving 5,844 visits, making it the most heavily used area studied this research year. The highest use month was March with an estimated 804 FT visits and the lowest use month was June with an estimated 256 FT visits. The most heavily used access point researched was the Juniper Recreation Area with 1,724 total visits. Clearwater, Lake Delancey, and SR 19 were monitored sites; however, almost no data were collected due to counter failure. Therefore, data for these three sites came from past years' research. Juniper Recreation Area had four months of data loss which was made up for by applying an access point average to the missing months.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Ocala National Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Juniper Rec.	28	32	27	33	41	170	178	200	217	303	284	211	509
Clearwater	31	50	38	33	67	54	33	95	107	39	110	69	306
Lake Delancy	15	5	12	0	12	10	5	11	3	12	10	5	59
SR 19	34	35	23	0	9	78	124	160	138	185	128	62	303
Juniper Wilderness	*25*	*48*	*94*	*70*	*53*	*63*	*75*	*76*	*95*	*95*	*88*	*73*	428
Alexander Springs	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
Hopkins Prairie	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
Buck Lake	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
Grassy Pond	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
TOTAL USE	256	295	301	267	260	515	503	698	724	804	724	497	2397

= Months where data was missing so access point averages from previous research years were used to get monthly count
= Months where data was missing so previous year's research data from that area was used.
*= Italicized data indicates an access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

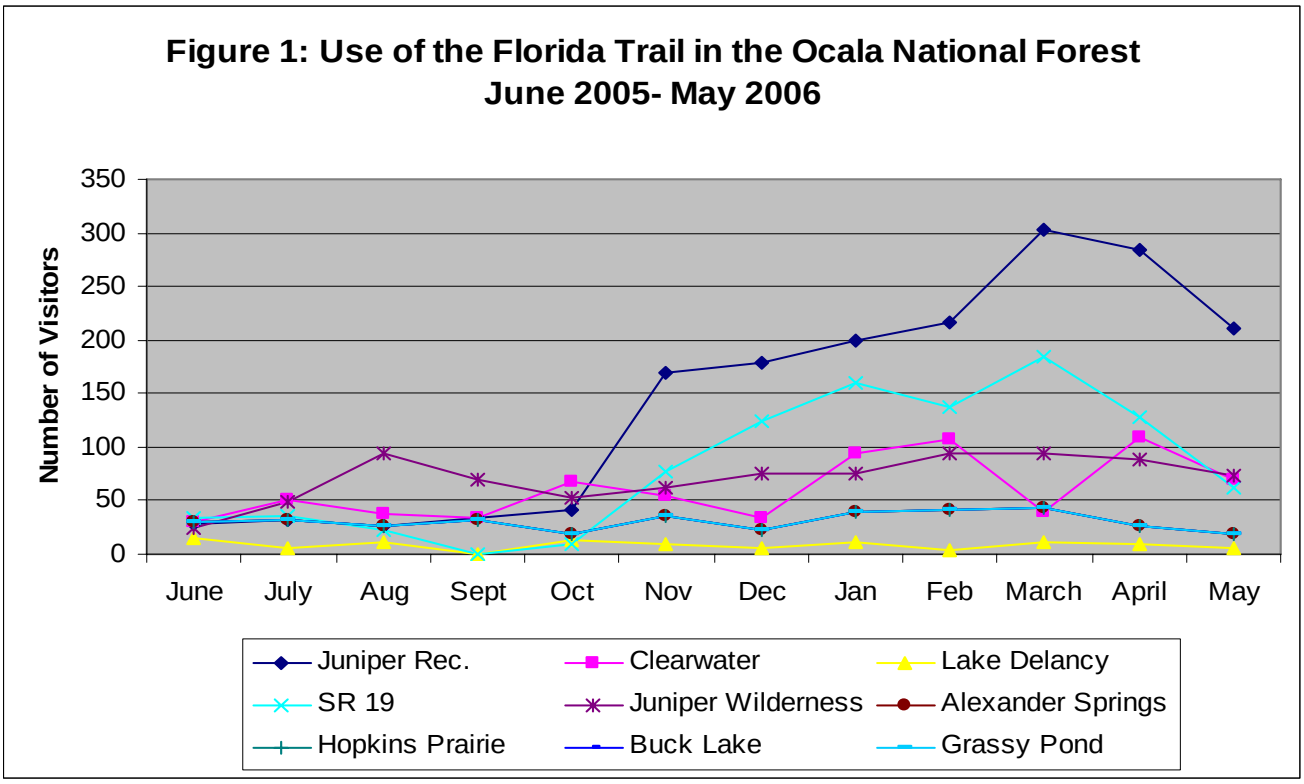


Figure 1: Use of the Florida Trail in the Ocala National Forest
June 2005- May 2006
Number of Visitors
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan
Feb
March
April
May
Juniper Rec.
Clearwater
Lake Delancy
SR 19
Juniper Wilderness
Alexander Springs
Hopkins Prairie
Buck Lake
Grassy Pond

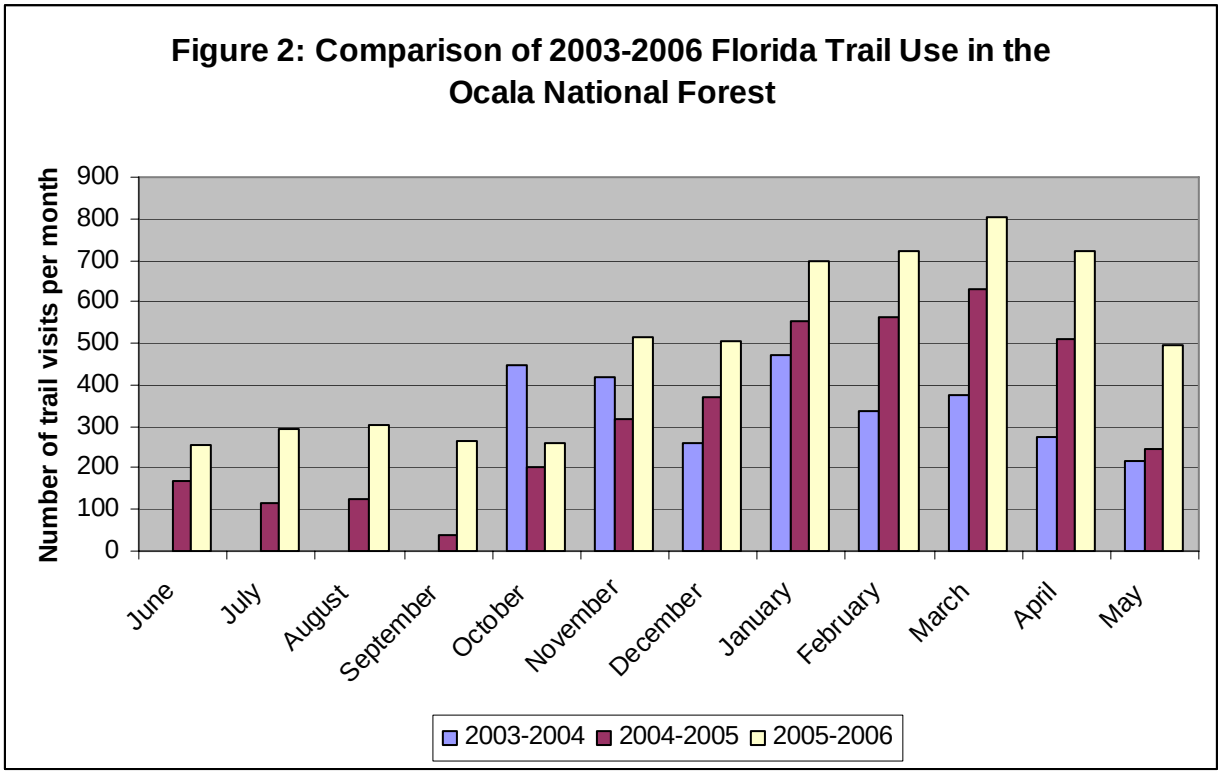
2003-2006 Use Estimates

A comparison of data collected from 2003-206 shows that the highest use year was the 2005-2006 study season with 5,844 estimated FNST visits. This is a 34% increase over the 2004-2005 season.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Ocala National Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	TOTAL
2003-2004	*	*	*	*	449	421	260	471	336	377	273	218	2,805
2004-2005	170	114	124	38	203	315	372	554	563	630	511	244	3,838
2005-2006	256	295	301	267	260	515	503	698	724	804	724	497	5,844

* 2003-2004 research of the Ocala National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only between 2004-2005 and 2005-2006



Osceola National Forest

(n=7)

Participant Use History & Knowledge

- 100% of participants did not know they were on the FNST
- 57% of participants had not visited this segment of FNST before
- 29% of returning visitors have visited the trail 2-6 times in the past 12 months

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 71% of participants entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead
- 57% of participants traveled in an organized group (FTA)
- 57% of participants spent a few hours or less on the FNST the day of their visit
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, view scenery and cultural resources

Participant Trip Experience

- 100% rated their experience as a 8 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experiences
- Reasons why the participants experience was not a ten included:
  - Weather (wet)
  - Not preferred scenery
- Suggested improvements for the FNST in this area included:
  - Provide improved facilities in the way of improved boardwalks and benches along the trail
  - Widen the trail

Participant Demographics

- Age
- 100% of participants were between the ages of 50-59 years old
- Gender
  - 50% pf participants were male
  - 50% of participants were female

2005-2006 Use

- Counter Type:
  - Battlefield: pressure pad, Trailmaster infrared eye.
  - Turkey Run: Diamond Traffics infrared eye, Trailmaster infrared eye.
  - Deep Creek was visually monitored.

- Counter-related problems and solutions:
  - Battlefield: pressure pad stopped working after July 2005 and was replaced by a Trailmaste infrared counter in February 2006. After two months of excessively high counts the Trailmaster unit was repositioned and it worked really well.
  - Run: The Diamond eye would not align properly so it was replaced by a Trailmaster unit in February 2006. The Trailmaster was giving excessively high counts for a couple of months and so it was repositioned and worked fine after that.

- Trail condition throughout the year:
  - The trail condition at both study sites was good throughout the year.

Trail Use Estimates

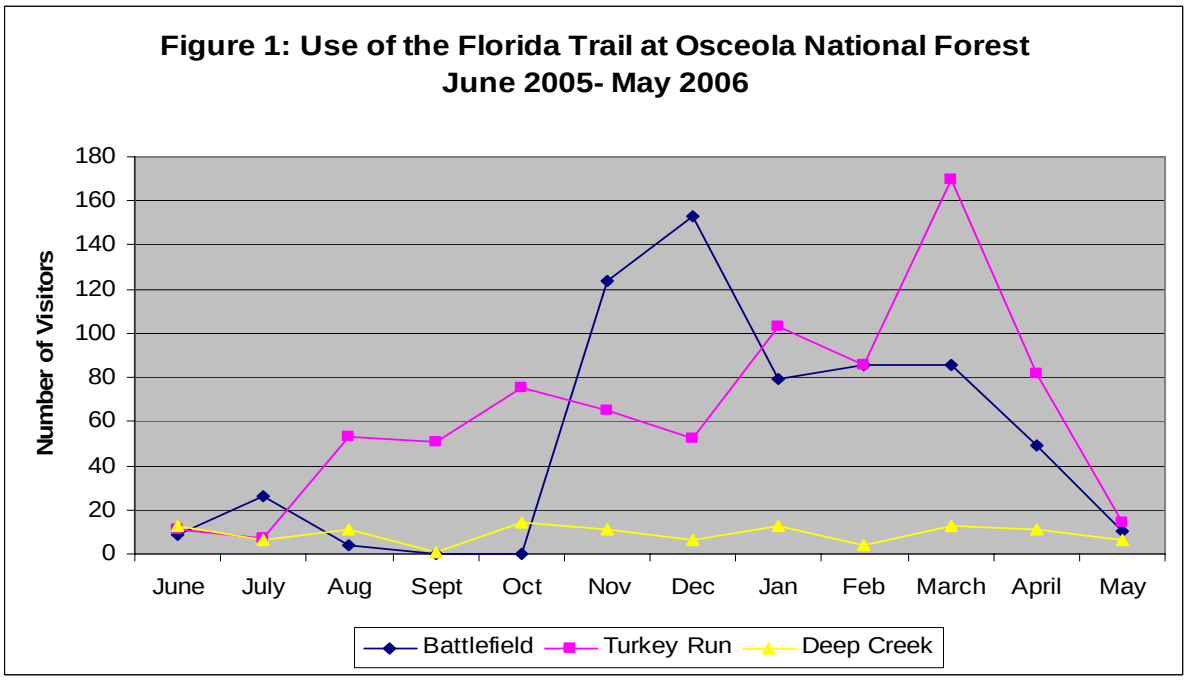
Previous years' research has shown the Osceola National Forest to be a high use site, receiving over 100 trail visits a year. Research in 2005-2006 confirmed this, with Osceola receiving an estimated 1,504 FT visits. The highest use site was Turkey Run with 769 FT visits. The highest use month was March with an estimated 269 FT visits. The lowest use month was May with 30 FT visits. Both Battlefield and Turkey Run had several months where data was missing due to counter difficulties. The data that was used during those months came from previous years' research.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Osceola National Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Battlefield	9	26	4	0	0	124	153	79	86	86	49	10	316
Turkey Run	11	7	53	51	75	65	52	103	86	170	82	14	314
Deep Creek	*13*	*6*	*11*	*1*	*14*	*11*	*6*	*13*	*4*	*13*	*11*	*6*	62
TOTAL USE	33	39	68	52	89	200	211	195	176	269	142	30	692

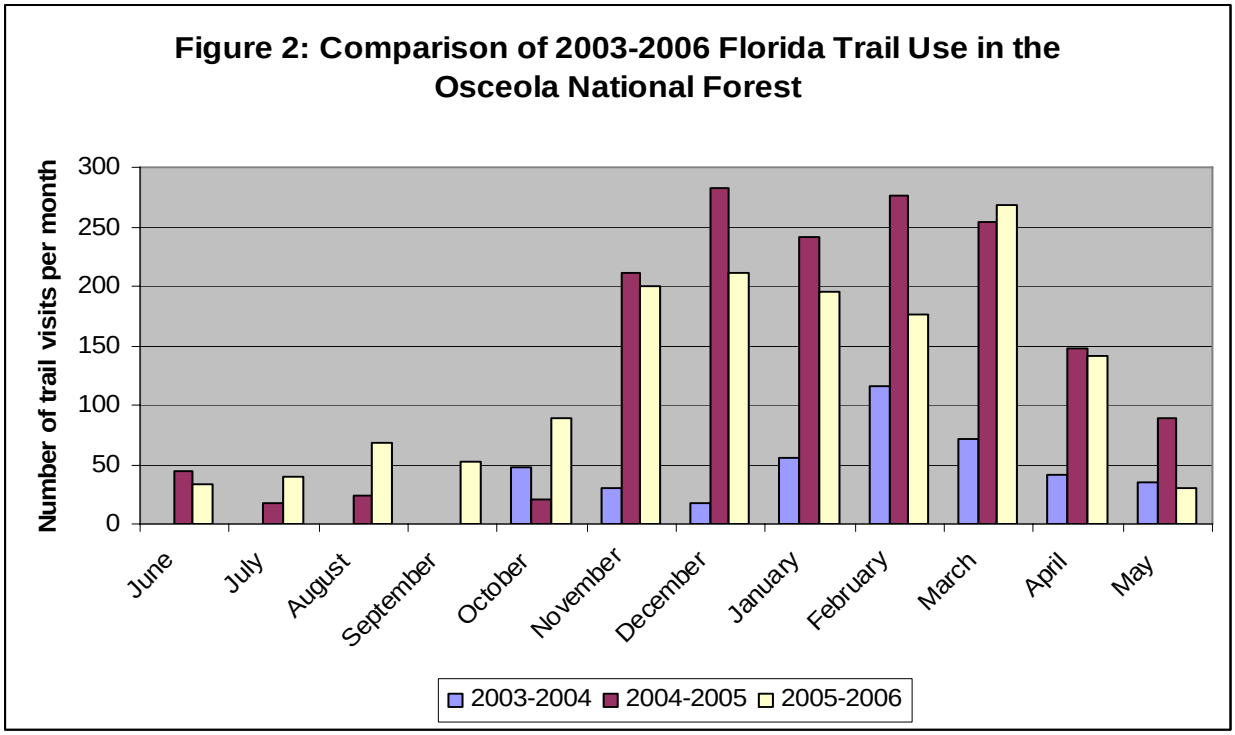
= Months where data was missing so previous year's research data from that area was used.

*= Italicized data indicates an access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied



2003-2006 Comparative Use

A comparison of data collected from 2003-2006 shows that the highest use year was the 2004-2005 study season with 1,609 estimated FNST visits. This is 7% greater than the 2005-2006 season.



Note: 2003-2004 research of the Ocala National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only between 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.

Apalachicola National Forest

Participant Use History & Knowledge

- 100% of participants did not know they were on the FNST
- 80% of participants had visited this segment of FNST before
- 60 of returning visitors have visited the trail at 2-6 times in the past 12 months

Participant Trip Characteristics

- 60% of participants entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead
- 60% of participants traveled alone
- 40% of those traveling with a group traveled with a significant other
- 40% of participants spent an hour or less on the FNST the day of their visit
- Participants visited the FNST to hike, view scenery and cultural resources, and photography

Participant Trip Experience

- 60% rated their experience as a 7 or higher with a 10 being a perfect experiences
- Reasons why the participants experience was not a ten included:
  - The trail was overgrown
- Suggested improvements for the FNST in this area included:
  - Clean up the trail

Participant Demographics

- Age
  - 80% of participants were between the ages of 40-69 years old
- Gender
  - 80% of participants were male
  - 20% of participants were female

2005-2006 Use

Counter Type:

- Camel Lake: Diamond Traffics infrared eye, Trailmaster infrared eye.
- Sopchoppy: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Porter Lake was Visually Monitored
- Use at FR 150 was inferred from previous years data.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- The only problem at Camel Lake was a reflector was melted by a controlled burn in December 2005 and was replaced by a Trailmaster infrared counter in February 2006.
- At Sopchoppy the Diamond Traffics counter wasn't functioning properly so it was replaced with a working Diamond Traffics counter in March 2006.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- The trail at both counter locations was in good condition. At Sopchoppy through hikers were routed around that section because Monkey Creek bridge was out.

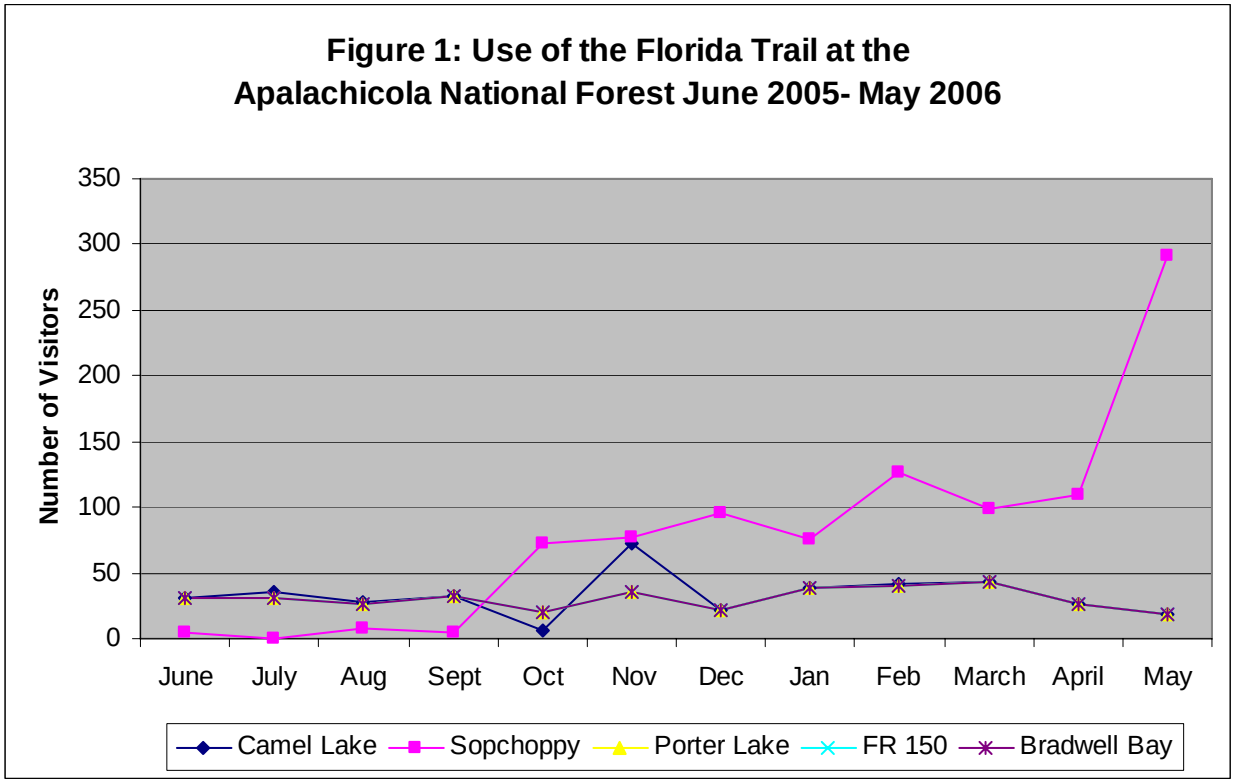
Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at Apalachicola National Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Camel Lake	31	35	27	33	6	73	22	39	41	43	26	19	227
Sopchoppy	4	0	8	5	73	77	96	75	127	99	110	291	263
Porter Lake	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
FR 150	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
Bradwell Bay	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	198
TOTAL USE	127	129	115	136	137	255	184	231	291	270	214	368	1084

= Months where data was missing so access point averages from previous research years were used to get monthly count
= Months where data was missing so previous year's research data from that area was used.
*= Access point that was not monitored. Use level was estimated and an access point average was applied.

Trail Use Estimates

Previous years' research has shown the Apalachicola National Forest to be a medium use site, receiving between 366 and 999 visitors per year. 2005-2006 showed an increase in estimated use levels with 2,457 estimated total users on the Florida Trail in the Apalachicola National Forest, classifying it as a high use site. The highest use month was May with an estimated 368 FT users and the lowest use month was August with an estimated 115 FT users. Due to data loss from counters that did not function properly, there were several months at Camel Lake where data from access point averages had to be used to get a monthly estimated user count. In addition, Sopchoppy had several months where data was not recorded, so previous year's data was used in its place.



2003-2006 Comparative Use

A comparison of data collected from 2003-206 shows that the highest use year was the 2005-2006 study season with 2,457 estimated FNST visits. This is a 45% increase over the 2004-2005 season.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Apalachicola National Forest June 2005- May 2006

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	TOTAL
2003-2004					150	107	63	156	154	273	334	158	1933
2004-2005	115	61	65	33	79	106	79	118	122	171	80	72	1099
2005-2006	127	129	115	136	137	255	184	231	291	270	214	368	2457

* 2003-2004 research of the Apalachicola National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only between 2004-2005 and 2005-2006