Florida National Scenic Trail Visitor Assessment

2007

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, 2006 – May 31 2007. 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 (2003-2006 only)
- Supplemental Materials (2003-2004 only)
- Visitor Questionnaires

2006-2007 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: 343,991**
- Total pedestrians: 185,708
- Total other users: 158,283
- Total estimated summer use (June- September) : 33,425
- Total estimated fall/spring use (October-May) : 310,566

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 the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway with an estimated 29,792 users (93% were hikers) and Gulf Islands National Seashore with an estimated 22,673 users[a] (47% 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).

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 2006-2007 (6481 and 1640 hikers respectively) than in 2005-2006 (4,725 and 1,120 hikers respectively). The Osceola National Forest had 669 fewer hikers in 2006-2007 (669) than in 2005-2006 (1,311).

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 344,000 visits per year (Figure 1). Survey methodology was modified over the course of the project to improve accuracy, so it is felt that numbers for the last three study periods most accurately reflect trail usage.

[a] estimates calculated in the 2003-2004 study year.

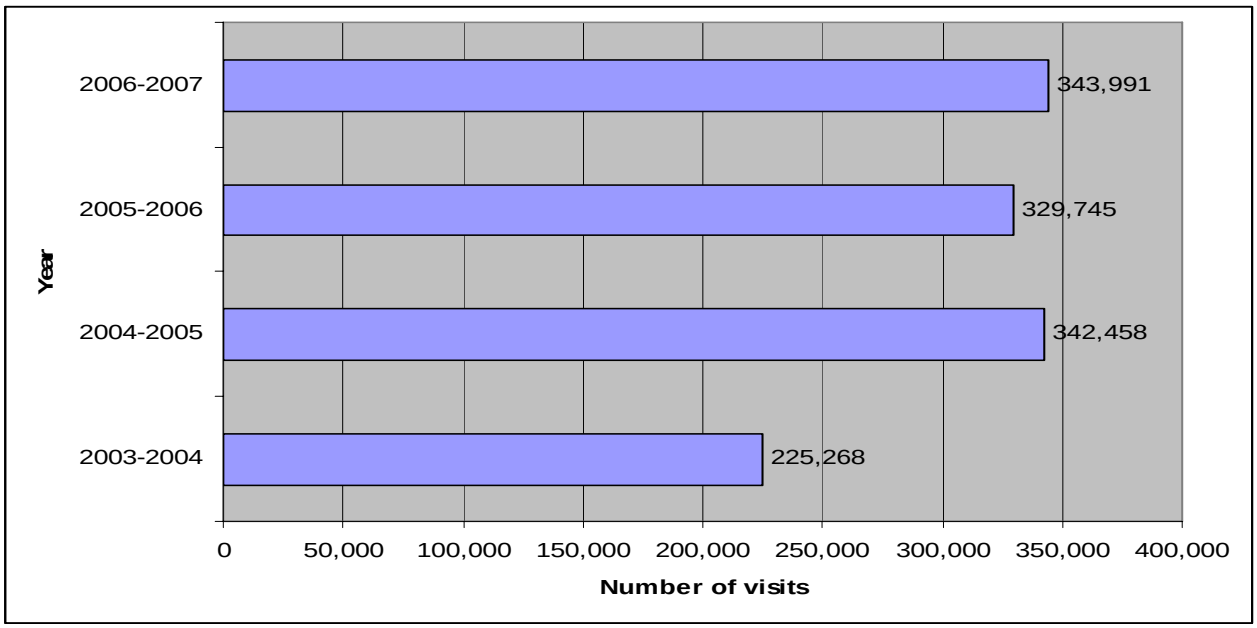

Figure 1. Annual use of the Florida National Scenic Trail 2003-2007
* 2004-2005 results are less than originally reported due to a change in data analysis methods

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

70 % have hiked the FNST before
39 % of participants have hiked the FNST more then 30 times in the past year
65 % of participants spent an hour or less along the FNST
94% used the trail to promote physical fitness & reduce stress and tension
86% visited the trail because they felt it was a safe environment
86% visited the trail to enjoy nature
86% or more of respondents participate in activities such as hiking or viewing scenery.

Participant FNST Experience & Knowledge

82 % of participants rate their FNST experience as an 8 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10
64 % of participants know they are hiking on the FNST.

Visitor Demographics

55 % of participants travel with family and/or friends when visiting the trail
51% of participants are 50 years of age or older
53 % of participants are employed outside the home of which 75 % are employed full-time.
90 % of participants are Caucasian.

Introduction

The 1,400 mile Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) 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 *et al.*, 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 recreation opportunities and acquire appropriate funding (Loomis, 2000).

This report presents the information collected from June 1, 2006 through May 31, 2007 at six identified survey sites through which the Florida National Scenic Trail traverses. In addition to these six 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). 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). Fourth, each survey site was further divided into potential FNST access points (Table). 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). 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 9 study sites from June 1, 2006-May 31, 2007 from:

1. Big Cypress National Preserve
2. Cross Florida Greenway
3. Highlands/Okeechobee
4. Bull Creek WMA
5. Three Lakes WMA
6. Kissimmee River WMA & Avon AFB
7. Ocala National Forest
8. Osceola National Forest
9. Apalachicola National Forest

Information on individual sites where visitor surveys were gathered can be viewed in Appendix IX. These nine study sites contained a total of 17 access points (Appendix IX) that where monitored throughout the study year.

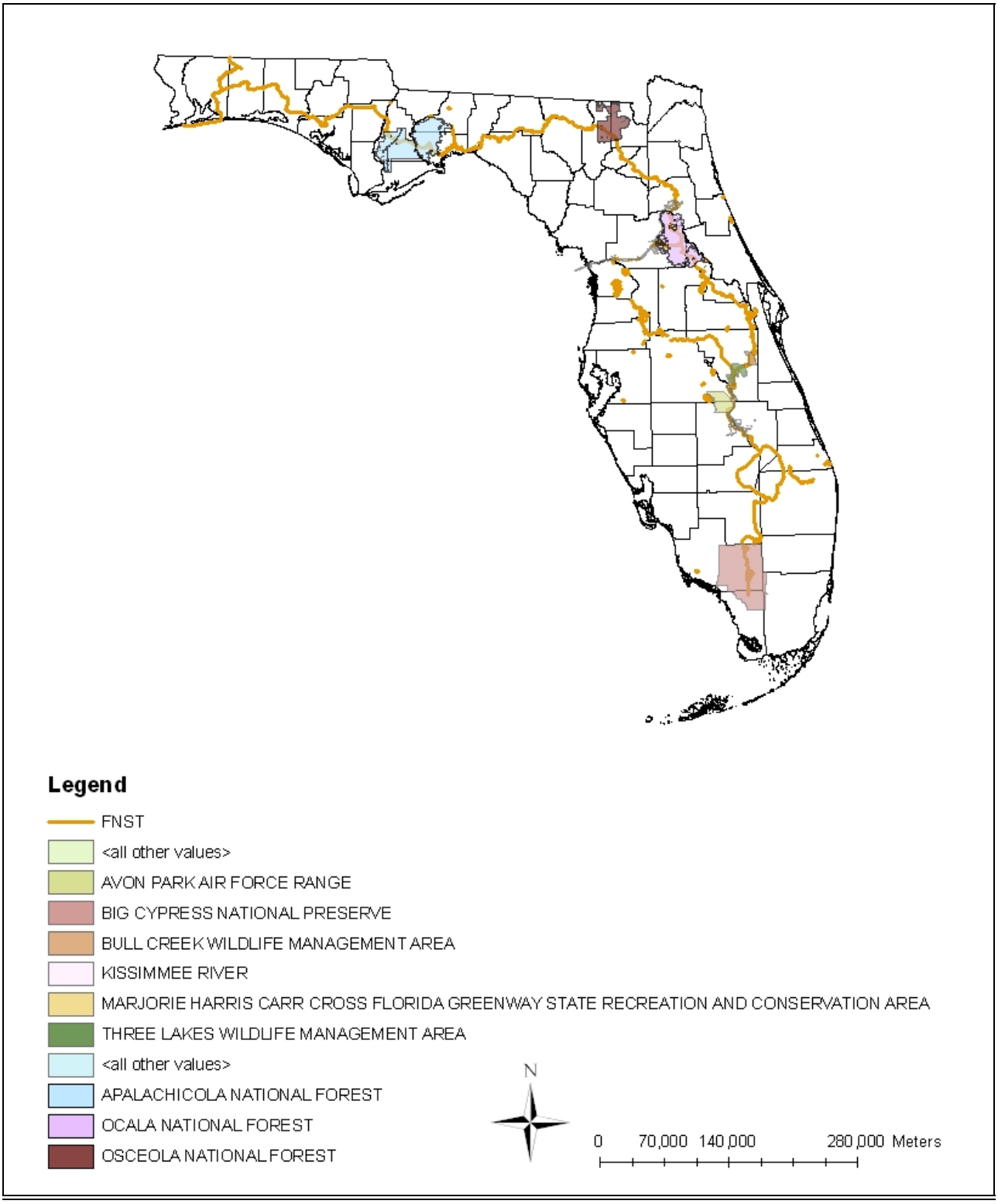

Figure 2. Study sites 2007

How

To obtain a reliable use estimates of pedestrians on 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 two strata:

1. Day type
    a. Weekdays (Monday - Thursday)
    b. Weekends (Friday - Sunday)
2. Time of day
    a. Morning
    b. Afternoon

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).

For the fall/spring season, 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 Baseline trailhead at the Cross Florida Greenway 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 infrared counters to generate visitor use estimates. 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. A total of twenty-one counters where installed for the 2006-2007 survey season (Appendix V).

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 with no differentiation 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 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 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.

Both types of trail counters were calibrated on a monthly basis. Calibration of counters was essential in obtaining and maintaining counters accuracy. Researchers walked on or across the counter 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 VIII). 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 some 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 the 2003-2004 study season, 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 proceeding study years to help calculates estimates for similar use areas. There were no additional survey sites in 2006-2007 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 in the most efficient way possible, on-site interviews where conducted at high-use study sites only in addition to Goldhead Brach State Park, a previous study site. A total of 81 on-site interviews were completed from October 2006 through May of 2007. In addition, 74 mail back surveys where distributed, of which 30 where returned equaling a 40.54 % 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 seven 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, and contained 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 areas where mechanical counters could not be installed. 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 *m*th 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 regardless 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

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. 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
- Results from this year's research

There is a difference in estimated counts between 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. There were more estimated visitors in 2006-2007 than there were in 2005-2006. All study sites have now been researched and so the assumption is that this year is the most accurate reflection of the approximate number of Trail users. In addition, the equipment used during the 2006-2007 study year had limited failures, so there was much more consistent data collection than there was the previous season, which could also account for some of the difference in numbers.

Data were collected as consistently as possible, with most of the new Trailmaster 1550 infrared counters functioning throughout the research season. Trailmaster 1550 counters were selected to replace the pressure pads and three failed Diamond Traffics counters due to reported reliability, cost efficiency (as compared to Diamond Traffics infrared counters), and improved data interface. The Diamond Traffics infrared counters that were used also performed well throughout the year. These counters have been used throughout the duration this study, however the data interface on this equipment is primitive and challenging to work with. Fortunately, the equipment failures of the 2005-2006 research season did not repeat and there are very few gaps in the data collected this year. Except for one damaged and one stolen counter, the equipment did not need to be replaced during the 2006-2007 survey research season.

Estimate of Summer Visits

Total estimated summer use for the entire Florida Trail during the summer of 2006 is 33,425. This number is 4,205 (13%) more than 2005 summer use estimate of 29,220. The higher count could occur because in years past three of the sites, Bull Creek WMA, Kissimmee River WMA, and Three Lakes WMA had all been considered Low use sites (averaging 15 users/ month or less). When these sites were studied this year, Bull Creek and Kissimmee they had enough visits to be considered Medium use and Three Lakes was changed to a high use site. Two of the national forests had higher counts in the summer of 2006 than in 2005. Specifically, Apalachicola national forest increased by 7% with 509 hikers in the summer of 2005 to 549 hikers in 2006, and the Ocala national forest increased use by 25% jumping from 1,119 trail visits in 2005 to 1,494 trail visits in 2006. Osceola national forest had a 66% decrease in foot traffic visitors, with 192 hikers in 2005 and 85 in 2006. The decrease in summer visitation also resulted in reclassifying Osceola national forest as a medium use site in 2006-2007 study season as opposed to a high use site as it had been in 2005-2006 study season.

The estimate for all nine sites studied during the summer of 2006 is 10,808 (Table 3). The sites studied consisted of six high use and three medium use sites. Bull Creek WMA, Kissimmee River WMA, and Three Lakes WMA were originally classified as low use sites, however use data collected at these sites revealed that these areas where receiving more visitors than originally estimated. As a result, these areas were since reclassified to reflect levels of actual use.

Table 3. Estimate of summer FNST visits for the 2006-2007 study sites

Use Type	Site	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Visitor
High	Big Cypress National Park	310	0	310
	Highlands	495	0	495
	Cross Florida Greenway	6463	624	7,087
	Apalachicola National Forest	549	0	549
	Three Lakes WMA	491	0	491
	Ocala National Forest	1494	0	1,494
Medium	Bull Creek WMA	199	0	199
	Kissimmee River/Avon AFB	183	0	183
	Osceola National Forest	85	0	85
Total Estimate for Summer 2006 Study Sites				**10,808**

The highest use occurred at the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway, with 7,087 visits. The Greenway is a very popular multi-use recreation site with many easily accessed locations, many of which are near neighborhoods, which contributed to the high numbers. The Greenway was the only site in this year's study that had alternative types of use-mostly bikes that totaled an estimated 624 summer visitors. The Ocala National Forest received the second highest number of summer visitors, 1,494, which is an increase from the 373 counted last year. The lowest use occurred at Osceola National Forest, with 85 total visitors during the months of June- September. Kissimmee WMA was the next lowest with 183 summer visits.

The 2006 summer results were added to 2003-2005 summer visitation estimates. The total estimated visitor use to the FNST during the summer of 2006 was 33,425 (Table 4). The highest use site overall was estimated to be the Cross Florida Greenway, with 7,087 estimated visits. The lowest use sites were estimated to be the Etoniah State Forest and Rice Creek, each with less than 50 visits.

Table 4. Estimates FNST trail-wide visits, summer 2006

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	Big Cypress	310	0	310
	Highlands	495	0	495
	Greenway	6463	624	7,087
	ANF	549	0	549
	Three Lakes WMA	491	0	491
	Ocala National Forest	1494	0	1,494
	Gulf Islands National Seashore	2,430	3,380	5,810
	Little Big Econ St. Forest	3,420	2,685	6,105
	Goldhead St. Park	148	78	226
	Suwannee	199	0	199
	St. Marks (includes RT)	290	1,229	1,519
	Seminole St. Forest	212	0	212
	Blackwater	732	0	732
	Withlacoochie	1,306	2,519	3,825
	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	2,038	2,519	4,557
	2005 summer use averages	1,019	1,260	2,279
	2006 summer use estimates	9,802	624	10,426
	2006 summer use averages	1,634	104	1,738
	Total high use estimate	***18,539***	***10,515***	***29,054***
Medium	Bull Creek WMA	199	0	199
	Kissimmee River/Avon AFB	183	0	183
	Osceola National Forest	85	0	85
	Eglin AFB	54	0	54
	Aucilla WMA	221	0	221
	Pine Log St. Forest	72	0	72
	Green Swamp (E and W)	366	0	366
	Twin Rivers Ellaville	282	0	282
	Tosohatchee	177	0	177
	Econfina	131	0	131
	2003 & 2004 summer use estimates	347	0	347
	2003 & 2004 summer use averages	116	0	116
	2005 summer use estimates	956	0	956
	2005 summer use averages	478	0	478
	2006 summer use estimates	382	0	382
	2006 summer use averages	127	0	127
	Total Medium Use Estimate	***1,770***	***0***	***1,770***
Low	Etoniah	0	0	0
	Rice Creek	43	0	43
	2003 & 2004 summer use estimates	43	0	43
	2003 & 2004 summer use averages	22	0	22
	Total low use estimate	**43**	**0**	**43**
TOTAL SUMMER 2006 FNST USE			**33,425**	

Estimation of Fall/Spring Visits

The estimate use for all nine sites studied during the fall/spring of 2006-2007 was 36,031 (Table 5). The Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway received the highest number of visitors (22,705). Of those visitors, 1,248 were estimated to be uses other than hiking. These estimates were based upon observations at the Greenway. The lowest use area during the fall/spring was Kissimmee with 343 hikers. Osceola National Forest (584 hikers) and Bull Creek WMA (800 hikers) were the next lowest use areas studied.

Total estimated fall/spring use for the entire Florida Trail is 310,566 (Table 6). This number is 10,030 more than last year's estimate of 300,536. The Ocala National Forest had slightly higher counts in the fall/spring of 2006-2007 (4,987) than in 2005-2006 (4,725). The Osceola National Forest and Apalachicola National Forests had fewer hikers in the fall/spring of 2006-2007 (584 and 1,091 respectively) than in 2005-2006 (1,311 and 1,120 respectively). 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 73% of all fall/spring Trail visitors.

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 343,991 total visits in 2006-2007 (Table 7). This number is 14,235 (4%) higher than the estimated 329,756 visits in 2005-2006. Fifty-one percent of these visits were foot traffic and forty nine percent were other use types.

Table 5. Estimate of fall/spring FNST visits for the 2006-2007 study sites

Use Type	Site	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Visitor
High	Big Cypress	3,068	0	3,068
	Highlands	1,240	0	1,240
	Greenway	21,457	1,248	22,705
	ANF	1,091	0	1,091
	Three Lakes WMA	1213	0	1,213
	Ocala National Forest	4,987	*0*	4,987
Medium	Bull Creek WMA	800	0	800
	Kissimmee River/Avon AFB	343	0	343
	Osceola National Forest	*584*	0	584
Total Estimate for Fall/Spring 2006-207 Study Sites				**36,031**

Table 6. Estimated FNST trail-wide visits, fall/spring 2006-2007

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Use
Highest	Lake Okeechobee	89,930	111,482	201,412
	Total Fall Highest Use	***89,930***	***111,482***	***201,412***
High	Big Cypress	3068	0	3,068
	Highlands	1240	0	1,240
	Greenway	21,457	1,248	22,705
	ANF	1,091	0	1,091
	Three Lakes WMA	1,213	0	1,213
	Ocala National Forest	4,987	0	4,987
	Gulf Islands	8,220	8,643	16,863
	Little Big Econ	10,797	5,158	15,955
	Goldhead	4,826	0	4,826
	Suwannee	1,147	0	1,147
	St. Marks (includes Rail Trail)	2,515	10,562	13,077
	Seminole	653	449	1,102
	Blackwater	1,974	0	1,974
	Withlacoochie	4,581	8,997	13,578
	’03/’04 + ’04/’05 fall/spring estimates	28,158	24,812	52,970
	’03/’04 + ’04/’05 fall/spring average	4,693	4,135	8,828
	’05/’06 fall use estimates	6,555	8,997	15,552
	’05/’06 fall use averages	3,278	4,499	7,776
	’06/’07 fall winter use estimates	33,640	1,248	34,888
	’06/’07 fall winter use averages	5,607	208	5,815
	Fall total high use total estimate	***67,769***	***35,057***	***102,826***
Medium	Bull Creek WMA	800	0	800
	Kissimmee River/Avon AFB	343	0	343
	Osceola National Forest	584	0	584
	Eglin AFB	610	0	610
	Aucilla WMA	376	0	376
	Pine Log	662	0	662
	Green Swamp (E and W)	810	0	810
	Twin Rivers Ellaville	752	0	752
	Tosohatchee	428	0	428
	Econfina	755	0	755
	’03/’04 + ’04/’05 fall/spring estimates	1,648	0	1,648
	’03/’04 + ’04/’05 fall/spring average	549	0	549
	’05/’06 fall use estimates	2,745	0	2,745
	’05/’06 fall use averages	1,373	0	1,373
	’06/’07 fall winter use estimates	1,143	0	1,143
	’06/’07 fall winter use averages	381	0	381
	Fall total medium use estimate	***6,120***	***0***	***6,120***
Low	Etoniah	124	0	124
	Rice Creek	84	0	84
	’03/’04 fall use estimates	208	0	208
	’03/’04 fall use averages	104	0	104
	Fall total low use estimate	***208***	***0***	***208***
TOTAL FALL/WINTER 2006-2007 FNST USE			**310,566**	

Table 7. Estimated FNST trail-wide visits, 2006-2007 study season

Use Type	Location	Foot Traffic	Other Traffic	Total Use
Highest	Lake Okeechobee	111,482	89,930	201,412
	Fall total highest use trail-wide estimate	***111,482***	***89,930***	***201,412***
High	Big Cypress	3,378	0	3,378
	Highlands	1,735	0	1,735
	Greenway	27,920	1,872	29,792
	ANF	1,640	0	1,640
	Three Lakes WMA	1,704	0	1,704
	Ocala National Forest	6,481	0	6,481
	Osceola National Forest	669	0	669
	Gulf Islands	10,650	12,023	22,673
	Little Big Econ	14,217	7,843	22,060
	Goldhead	4,974	78	5,052
	Suwannee	1,346	0	1,346
	St. Marks (includes Rail Trail)	2,805	11,791	14,596
	Seminole	865	449	1,314
	Blackwater	2,706	0	2,706
	Withlacoochie	5,887	11,516	17,403
	Year 1 + Year 2 Fall/Spring Estimates	34,857	32,184	67,041
	Year 1 & Year 2 Fall/Spring Average	5,810	5,364	11,174
	Year 3 fall use estimates	8,593	11,516	20,109
	Year 3 fall use averages	4,297	5,758	10,055
	Year 4 fall winter use estimates	43,527	1,872	45,399
	Year 4 fall winter use averages	7,255	312	7,567
	Fall total high use trail-wide estimate	***86,977***	***45,572***	***132,549***
Medium	Bull Creek WMA	999	0	999
	Kissimmee River/Avon AFB	526	0	526
	Eglin AFB	664	0	664
	Aucilla WMA	597	0	597
	Pine Log	734	0	734
	Green Swamp (E and W)	1,176	0	1,176
	Twin Rivers Ellaville	1,034	0	1,034
	Tosohatchee	605	0	605
	Econfina	886	0	886
	Year 1 + Year 2 Fall/Spring Estimates	1,995	0	1,995
	Year 1 & Year 2 Fall/Spring Average	665	0	665
	Year 3 fall use estimates	3,701	0	3,701
	Year 3 fall use averages	1,851	0	1,851
	Year 4 fall winter use estimates	1,525	0	1,525
	Year 4 fall winter use averages	508	0	508
	Fall medium use trail-wide estimate	***7,221***	***0***	***7,221***
Low	Etoniah	124	0	124
	Rice Creek	127	0	127
	'03/04 use estimates	251	0	251
	'03/04 use averages	126	0	126
	Fall total low use trail-wide estimate	***251***	***0***	***251***
	TOTAL TRAIL USE		**343,991**	

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 the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway with an estimated 29,792 users (93% were hikers) and Gulf Islands National Seashore with an estimated 22,673 users (47% 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).

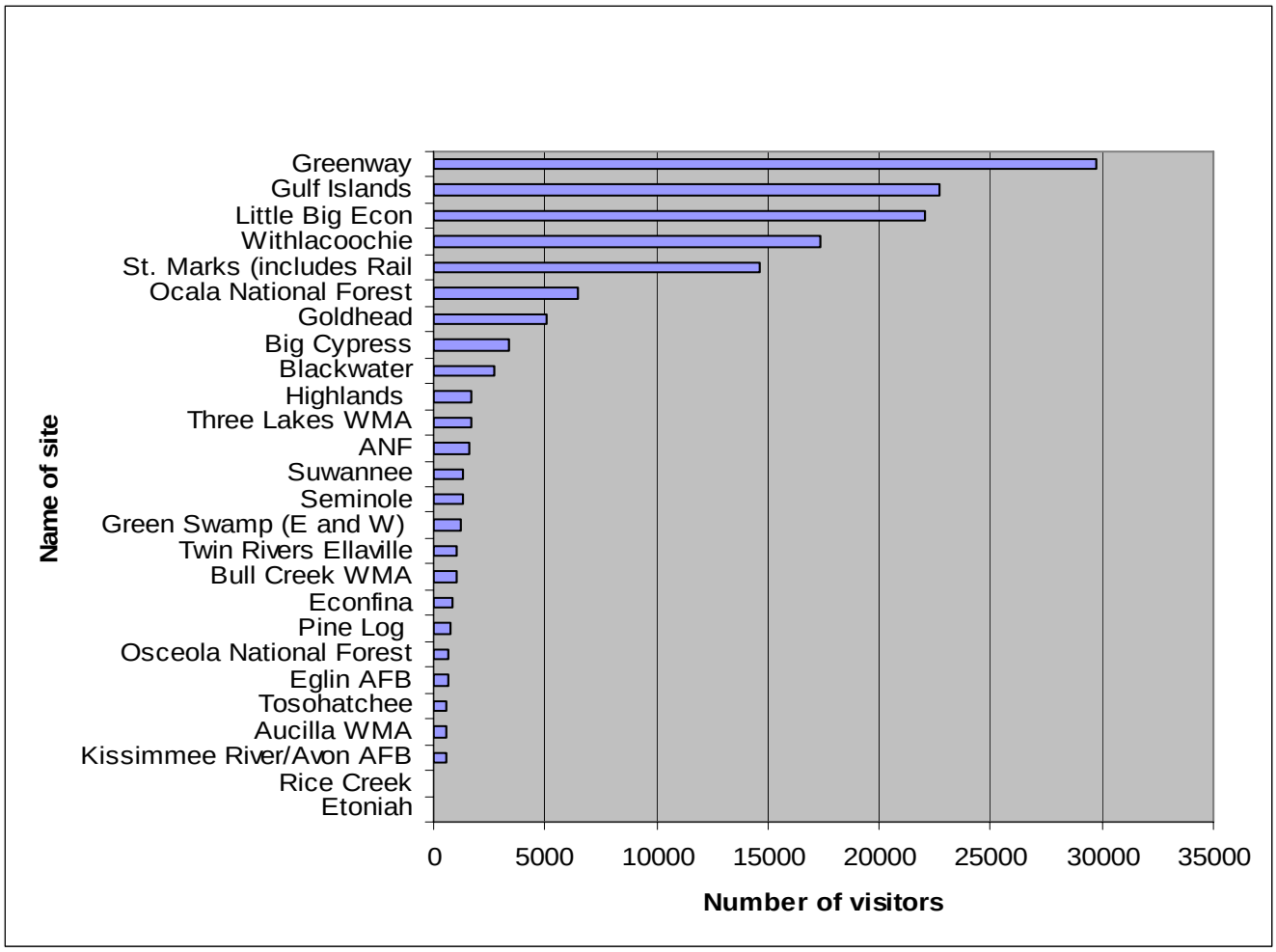

Figure 3. Estimated visitor use on the Florida National Scenic Trail 2006-2007 research sites
Note: Lake Okeechobee is not included in the figure because its very high use (203,970 annually) distorts the graph.

On-Site Survey

Exit interviews were conducted at '06-'07 high-use study sites excluding Big Cypress National Preserve, as well as one high-use site from previous study years for a total of three survey locations. The majority (82.3%) of on-site interviews were completed along the Cross Florida Greenway, Goldhead Branch State Park accounted for just over 11% (11.3%) of completed interviews, and 6.3% of the on-site interviews were completed in Ocala National Forest (Figure 4).

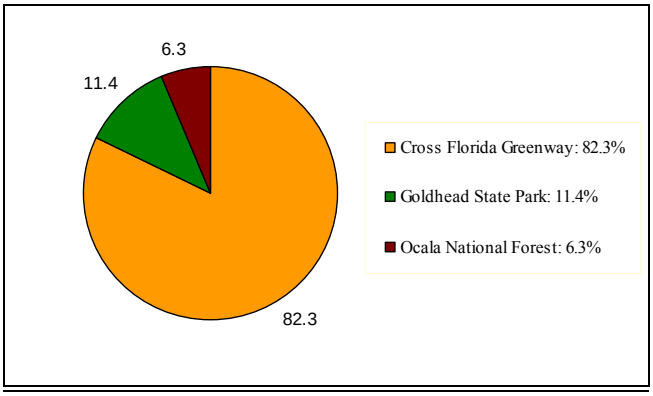

Figure 4. Distribution of on-site surveys

Visitor Demographics

Individuals 50-59 years of age made up the largest age group (28.6%), followed by individuals 40-49 years old. The researcher also noted the gender of the participant. Males made up over 54% (54.4%) of respondents, while females accounted for just over 45% (45.6%). Nearly 74% (73.8%) of participant were residents of Marion county, and only 3.0% of respondents were from out of state (Table 8).

Use History & Knowledge

Surveyors began the interview by asking the participant if they had participated in any recreation activities along the Florida National Scenic Trial in order to determine if the participant knew they were on the FNST. Just over 64% (64.2%) stated "yes", indicating that they knew they were on the trails, and 42.1% said they were had not participated on any activities along the trail (38.4%), or they were not sure if they had participated in an activities along the trail (3.7%). Next, the participants were asked if this was their first time on the trail. The majority (70.3%) of respondents were repeat visitors, coming at least two to six times over the past year (23.5%). For almost 30% (29.6%), the day they were contacted along the trail was their first trip to the area. Almost all (92.6%) respondents entered and exited the trail from the same trailhead location (Table 9).

Table 8. Onsite demographics

Variable	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Age	77	70 years or older	6.5
		60-69 years old	15.6
		50-59 years old	28.6
		40-49 years old	18.2
		30-39 years old	15.6
		18-29 years old	15.6
Gender	80	Male	54.4
		Female	45.6
Residence (County)	65	Marion	73.8
		Clay	7.7
		Alachu	3.1
		Orange	3.1
		Other (in-state)	9.0
		Out of state	3.0

Table 9. On-site survey: Use history and knowledge

Statement	N	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Did the participant know they were on the FNST?	81	Yes No I don't know	64.2 38.4 3.7
Was this the first time visiting this section of The Florida Trail?	81	Yes No	29.6 70.3
Visits to the FNST over the past year	81	None - 1 2-6 7-12 13-20 21-30 More than 30	22.2 23.5 4.9 4.9 4.9 35.8
Did the visitor enter and exit from the same trailhead?	81	Yes No	92.6 3.7

Trip Characteristics

More than 64% (64.6%) of respondents spent one hour or less along the trail, and most respondents traveled alone (36.4%) or with another person (31.8%) who was most likely to be a family member (36.4%). Groups of two or more were most likely to be an even mix of males and females with 57.7% of groups containing at least one male and 44.2% of groups containing at last one female (Table 10).

Respondents were then asked to rank the top three reasons for visiting the trail that day. Hiking or walking was the most popular activity along the trail (84.6%) and viewing scenery was the second most popular reason for visiting (35.3%). Other common reasons for visiting the trail included bike riding on portions of the trail that were multiple-use (23.5%), jogging or running (20%) or bird watching (6.7%) (Table 11).

Table 10. On-site survey: trip & group characteristics

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Time Spent on the FNST	79	1 hour or less A few hours Half a day More then a day	64.6 30.4 2.5 2.5
Group size	79	1 2 3 4 5-10 More then 10	36.4 41.8 8.9 6.3 2.6 2.5
Number of males per group	78	0 1 2 3 4 or more	20.5 57.7 15.4 3.8 2.6
Number of females per group	77	1 2 3 4 or more	31.2 44.2 13.0 5.2
Group type	77	Family Alone Friends Significant other Organized group Friends and family other	36.4 36.4 15.6 3.9 3.9 2.6 1.3

Table 11. On-site survey: activities

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Activity 1	78	Hiking/walking	84.6
		Jogging/Running	1.3
		Other	7.7
		Biking	6.4
Activity 2	34	Viewing scenery	35.3
		Biking	23.5
		Other	20.6
		Hiking/Walking	5.9
		Camping	5.9
Activity 3	15	Viewing Scenery	46.7
		Jogging/Running	20.0
		Hiking/Walking	6.7
		Photography	6.7
		Birdwatching	6.7

Trip Experience

Lastly, the participants were asked to rate their experience on the trail that day on a scale of one to ten with ten representing a perfect experience. All respondents rated their trip a 6 or higher with nearly 52% (51.9%) stating that their trip was perfect. If the participant did not rate their trip a ten, they were asked if there was any particular reason why it had not been a perfect experience. Some reasons such as the weather being to hot or to cold (11.54%) or the lack of wildlife (15.38%) are uncontrollable. Other reasons included rude behavior by others along the trail (15.38%), lack of water fountains or benches along the trail (15.38%) and lack of trail maintenance (15.38%). Participants were then asked if there were any improvements they would like to see to the trail. Just over 31% (31.37%) stated that the trail was fine the way it was, and no improvements were needed. Providing water fountains and benches along the trial (21.57%), providing education about proper trail etiquette (17.65%), and providing improved interpretation opportunities along the trail were also stated as desired improvements (Table 12).

Table 12. On-site survey: participant experience

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Participants FNST Rating	79	10	51.9
		9	6.3
		8	24.1
		7	12.7
		6	5.1
Reasons why visit was not a 10	26	No water fountains	15.38
		Bothered by other people	15.38
		Lack of trail maintenance	15.38
		Lack of wildlife	15.38
		Weather	11.54
		Other	26.92
Suggested improvements	51	None	31.37
		Other	21.57
		Provide water fountains and benches	17.65
		Improve interpretation opportunities	17.65
		Provide behavior education	5.88
		Provide better blazing/signage	5.88

Mail Back Questionnaire

The distribution of returned mail back questionnaires closely reflected the distribution of on-site surveys. The Cross Florida Greenway accounted for most of the returned surveys (87.1%), Ocala National Forest accounted for almost 10% (9.7%) or returned questionnaires, and Goldhead Branch State Par accounted for just over 3% (3.2%) of returned surveys (Figure 5).

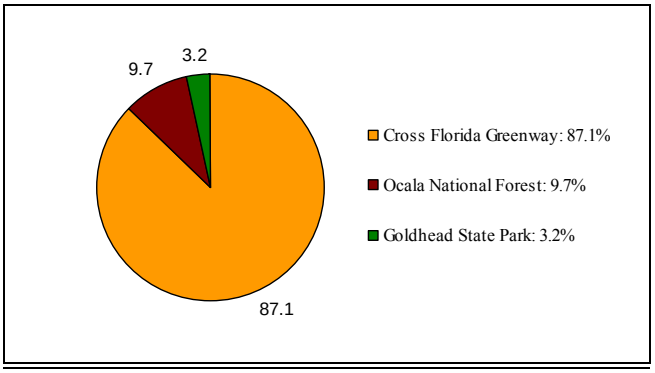

Figure 5. Distribution of returned mail back questionnaires

Socio-Demographics

The mail-back survey provided more extensive socio-demographic information (i.e. ethnicity, education, income etc.) than the on-site interview. Similar to the on-site survey, respondents were more likely to be male (56.3%) then female (43.8%), and between the ages of 40-59 years old (50%). Respondents were also more likely to be married (75%) with no children living at home (53.1%). Participants were highly educated, completing at least some college education (40%). Lastly, more then 53% (53.3%) of respondents were employed outside the home. Household income was variable, with the largest percentage of visitors earning between $50-$59 thousand dollars (23.1%) annually or $80 annually or more (18.6%) (Table 13).

Trip Characteristics

Participants were once gain asked how long they spent on the trail during their visit. The majority (86.7%) indicated they spent less then half a day along the trail, and 10% indicated that they spent more then one day along the trail. Of those that spent more than a day, more then half (66.6%) were likely to camp along or near the trail. While on the trail, participants were likely to hike 1-2 miles (37.9%) or 2-5 miles (37.9%) (Table 14).

Table 13. Mail back survey: socio-demographic information

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Gender	32	Male	56.3
		Female	43.8
Age	30	70 years or older	6.7
		60 – 69 years old	16.7
		50 – 59 years old	20.0
		40 – 49 years old	30.0
		30 – 39 years old	13.3
		18 - 29 years old	13.3
Marital Status	32	Married	75.0
		Single	21.9
		Widowed	3.1
Children in household	32	0	53.1
		1	9.4
		2	31.3
		3	3.1
		4	3.1
Highest level of education	30	High school graduate or GED	30.0
		Some college	40.0
		College graduate	23.3
		Some graduate school	3.3
		Graduate degree or beyond	3.3
Employment	30	Employed outside the home	53.3
		Unemployed	6.7
		Full-time homemaker	13.3
		Retired	26.7
Employed outside home	16	Full-time	75.0
		Part-time	25.0
Race or ethnic group	31	African American	9.7
		White	90.3
Household income	26	$10,000-$19,999	3.8
		$20,000-$29,999	7.7
		$30,000-$39,999	15.4
		$40,000-$49,999	7.7
		$50,000-$59,999	23.1
		$60,000-$69,999	15.4
		$70,000-$79,999	7.7
		$80,000 or more	18.6

Table 14. Mail back survey: trip characteristics

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Length of time on the FNST	30	Less than half a day	86.7
		Half or a whole day	3.3
		More than 1 day	10.0
Where stayed over night	3	At a campground off of the trail	33.3
		In a tent along the trail	33.3
		In a nearby residence of friends/family	33.3
Miles hiked	29	Less than a mile	13.8
		1-2 miles	37.9
		3-5 miles	37.9
		5-10 miles	3.4
		More than 10 miles	6.9

Hiking Experience

Participants were asked several questions regarding their hiking experience. Most participants (96.9%) have participated in some form of hiking for at least a year or more with 25% of respondents indicating they had been hiking/walking for 3-5 years. 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 (81.3%) rated themselves as intermediate (43.8%) or advanced (37.5%). Participants were also asked if they belonged to any hiking or environmental clubs or organizations or subscribed to any outdoor magazines. Most participants indicated that they were not a member of an organization (90.6%) or subscribed to a magazine (90.6%) (Table 15).

Motivations

Participants were presented with 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 possible 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 important. Over 93% (93.4%) stated that "promoting physical fitness" was important to them (mean = 2.94), along with "be in an area where I feel safe a secure (mean = 2.88), "reduce stress and tension from everyday life (mean = 2.86), and "enjoy nature" (mean = 2.83). Reversely, 69% of respondents felt that "take risks" was not important, as well as "meet new people" (mean = 1.41) and "learn about history and culture of the area" (mean = 1.81) (Table 16).

Table 15. Mail back survey: recreational experience

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Years participating	32	Less than a year	3.1
		1-2 years	28.1
		3-5 years	25.0
		6-10 years	9.4
		10-15 years	15.6
		16-20 years	3.1
		21 years or more	15.6
Rate level of hiking experience		1 - Beginner	3.1
		2 - Novice	3.1
		3 - Intermediate	43.8
		4 - Advanced	37.5
		5 - Expert	12.5
Hiking/outdoor clubs		Yes	9.4
		No	90.6
Subscribe hiking magazines		Yes	9.4
		No	90.6

Table 16. Motivations

Motivation	n	Not Important (%)	Neutral (%)	Important (%)	Mean[1]	Standard Deviation
Promote physical fitness	31	0.0	6.5	93.5	2.94	0.25
Be in an area where I feel safe and secure	30	0.0	13.3	86.7	2.88	0.35
Reduce Tensions and Stress from everyday life	30	6.7	0.0	93.3	2.86	0.51
Enjoy nature	29	3.4	10.3	86.2	2.83	0.47
Challenge myself and achieve personal goals	31	16.1	16.1	67.7	2.52	0.77
Escape noise/crowds	30	23.3	6.7	70.0	2.47	0.86
Explore the area and the natural environment	28	21.4	14.3	64.3	2.43	0.84
Depend on my skills and abilities	29	24.1	17.2	58.6	2.34	0.86
Engage in personal/spiritual reflection	30	26.7	16.7	56.7	2.30	0.88
Be with friends and family	30	23.3	26.7	50.0	2.26	0.83
Feel a sense of independence	29	24.1	31.0	44.8	2.21	0.82
Strengthen family kinship	29	27.6	24.1	48.3	2.21	0.86
Learn about the natural environment of the area	25	36.0	16.0	48.0	2.12	0.93
Learn about the history and culture of the area	27	44.4	29.6	25.9	1.81	0.83
Meet new people	28	60.7	32.1	7.1	1.46	0.64
Take risks	29	69.0	20.7	10.3	1.41	0.68

Desired Hiking Conditions

A series of twelve questions were presented to the respondents about the importance of environmental, social, and trail conditions, and respondents were asked to rate the importance of each hiking condition on a scale of one to five with five representing very important and one indicating not at all important. These were then condensed into three categories; important, neutral, or not important. First, participants were asked about the importance of the setting as it related to the presence of development. Just over 46% (46.7%) felt that traveling in areas untouched by humans was important, and 66.7% of respondents felt that traveling through areas that were modified but appeared natural were important. The majority (93.3%) of participants felt that traveling through areas completely dominated by human presence was not important (Table 17).

Second, participants were asked about the importance of preferred social conditions while hiking along the FNST. Having moderate contact with others outside ones own group was the most desired with just of 48% (48.3%) of respondents indicating that this was important. Having little contact outside ones own group was also seen as important (44.8%) compared to having a lot (0%) or constant contact (0%) which was thought to be not at all important (Table 17).

Lastly, participants were asked to indicate the importance of different trail construction and layout. Traveling along paved trails (51.7%) was rated slightly more important then traveling along dirt or grass trails (48.4%), and traveling on loop trails was much more important (40%) compared to traveling on linear trails (6.7%) which was more likely to be rated as unimportant (56.7%) (Table 17).

Table 17. Desired setting, trail & social characteristics along the Florida Trail

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Traveling in an area untouched by man	30	Not important Neither Important	26.7 26.7 46.7
Traveling in an area that has been modified but appears natural	30	Not important Neither Important	16.7 16.7 66.7
Traveling in an area that is both man-made and natural	31	Not important Neither Important	51.6 25.8 22.6
Traveling in an area that is dominated by roads and power lines	30	Not important Neither Important	93.3 6.7 0.0
Desire to have little contact: 6 or less	29	Not important Neither Important	27.6 27.6 44.8
Desire to have moderate contact: 6-15 groups	29	Not important Neither Important	48.3 31.0 20.7
Desire to have a lot of contact: 30 plus groups	29	Not important Neither Important	69.0 31.0 0.0
Desire to have constant contact	30	Not important Neither Important	83.3 16.7 0.0
Travel on dirt or grass	31	Not important Neither Important	25.8 25.8 48.4
Travel on paved	29	Not important Neither Important	31.0 17.2 51.7
Prefer linear trails	30	Not important Neither Important	56.7 36.7 6.7
Prefer loop trails	30	Not Important Neither Important	33.3 26.7 40.0

Florida Trail Knowledge & Association

In order to investigate the visitor's awareness about the FNST, they were asked if Florida had a national scenic trail and they were also once again asked if they had participated in any recreation activities along the FNST the day they were contacted. Just over 62% (62.1%) stated that Florida did have a national scenic trail, however 64.5% of respondents stated that they had not (42.3%) or were not sure if they had (23.1%) participated in any recreation activities along the FNST that day. Of those that were aware of the FNST, respondents were more likely to report that they had learned about the trail from family or friends (26.7%) or from road signs (26.7%).

In addition to investigating the visitor's knowledge about the trail, they were also asked a series of questions about the Florida Trail Association (FTA). Most respondents were not familiar with the FTA (75%), and were not likely to be a member of the organization (92.9%). Of those that were familiar with the FTA, most reported that they could not remember where they had learned of the organization (42.9%). Of those that could remember, a magazine (28.6%) was most likely to be the source of information (Table 18).

Table 18. Mail back survey: FNST knowledge and association

Statement	n	Response	Valid Percent (%)
Does Florida have a National Scenic Trail?	29	Yes	62.1
		No	0.0
		I don't know	37.9
Hike FNST when contacted?	26	Yes	34.6
		No	42.3
		I don't know	23.1
How did the participant learn about the FNST?	15	Friends/family	26.7
		Road signs	26.7
		Newspaper article	20.0
		Don't remember/not sure	13.3
		Guidebook	6.7
		Brochure	6.7
Familiar with FTA	28	Yes	25.0
		No	75.0
How the participant learned about FTA?	7	Don't remember/Not sure	42.9
		Magazine	28.6
		Website	14.3
		Newspaper Article	14.3
Member of FTA	28	Yes	7.1
		No	92.9
How long the participant has been a member	2	2-5 years	50.0
		10 years or more	50.0

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 and infrared eyes. Although pressure pads were used in past years, 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 through the 2006-2007 study year. 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 utilized 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 (Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway) in 2006-2007.

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 $50-$59 thousand annually.

This years results also indicated that while most respondents are aware that Florida has a national scenic trail, most were equally unaware that they had been using it indicating an increased need to promote awareness about the trails presence at the community level. This could be accomplished through interpretation opportunities at trailheads, trail signage, and brochures. Participants that were familiar with the Florida Trail and the FTA indicated they learned from friends/family suggesting that good experiences along the trail may lead to increased suggestions of the trails use. Therefore, working with the trails partnering agencies through which the trail traverses in order to offer quality visitor experiences may be beneficial in promoting word-of mouth knowledge about the trail. Also, respondents were likely to learn about the trail from road signs or magazines. Increasing the presence of the trail in local publications may also help increase awareness about the trail within the community.

The amount of time participants are spending on the trail is fairly low, with most individual spending 30 minutes or less on the trail. This small amount of time on the trail is largely due to the number of people who utilize the trail for physical fitness. However, the trail also offers ample opportunities to explore, enjoy, and experience nature. Future work should focus on how mangers can extend a visitors time on the trail.

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 current and previous study sites to help distribute more surveys in hopes of a greater return. Although this method proved to be somewhat effective in increasing the number of surveys distributed to

visitors, the response rate for mail backs was still lower then desired, and researchers acknowledge that results are more reflective of the study sites, particularly multiple-use areas along the Cross-Florida Greenway, and may not necessarily be reflective of the majority of users along the trail in other areas. In response to this decline in the number of mail back questionnaires being received, researchers will begin to conduct more extensive on-site interviews with participants and discontinue the distribution of mail back questionnaires during the 2008 survey season.

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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

Ocala National Forest
Osceola National Forest
Apalachicola National Forest
Little Big Econ State Forest
Goldhead Branch State Park

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 2006-2007

Monitored Access Points

Big Cypress
Oasis Visitors Center (Two counters)

Bull Creek WMA
U.S. 192
Crabgrass Road

Cross Florida Greenway
Ross Prairie FNST (SR 200)
Land Bridge
Santos
Rodman East
Rodman West

Highlands/Okeechobee
Hickory Hammock
Bluff Hammock

Kissimmee
Kicco

Three Lakes WMA
Parker Hammock Camp

Ocala National Forest
Juniper Springs Recreation Area
Clearwater Recreation Area
Lake Delancy

Osceola National Forest
Turkey Run
Battlefield

Apalachicola National Forest
Camel Lake
Sopchoppy (FR 329)

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: 2006-2007 Counter Locations

2006-2007 Counter Locations

Big Cypress
- Oasis South: Counter located about ¼ mile south of the Oasis Visitors Center.
- Oasis North: Counter located about 1 mile north of the Oasis Visitors Center.

Bull Creek WMA
- U.S. 192: Going south from U.S. 192, counter located about 300 feet from where the trail enters the woods.
- Crabgrass Road: From check station on Crabgrass Road drive to Loop Road . Go east on Loop Road for about 1 mile. When Loop Road makes a turn to the south stay on the access road heading east. Park in front of gate cable. Follow the FT to the east. Counter located about 175 paces from the cable.

Cross Florida Greenway
- Ross Prairie FNST: Counter located about 260 paces east on the FT where it crosses S.R. 200 just north of Ross Prairie.
- Land Bridge: Counter located about 125' west of picnic area.
- Santos: From parking lot follow blue-blazed trail to FT. Counter located about 30 yards south of where the blue-blazed spur trail intersects the FT.
- Rodman East: Where FT crosses Rodman Dam Rd., go through gate on Berm Rd. and follow Berm Rd. for about 225 paces.
- Rodman West: Turn off Rodman Dam Rd., about 1/4 mile before the spillway, onto the boat ramp road and look for a gate and FT to the left, about 150' off main road. Follow FT through the gate. Counter located 108 paces from the gate.

Highlands/Okeechobee
- Hickory Hammock: From parking area follow blue-blazed trail, for about 3/10 of a mile to where it intersects the FNST. Go left (north) on the FT for about 400 paces.
- Bluff Hammock: From parking area head north on FT. Go through gate. From gate go 130 paces.

Kissimmee
- Kicco: From the parking area walk through fence opening. Follow the FT for 133 paces.

Three Lakes WMA
- Parker Hammock Camp: From the parking area go across the road and follow the FT along the canal heading east. Counter is about 122 paces from the road.

Ocala National Forest
- Juniper Springs Recreation Area: Counter located about ¼ mile in on the FT section going east from the Juniper access road.
- Clearwater Recreation Area: From parking area take the blue-spur trail to the FT (about ¼ mile). Go left on the FT for about 115 paces.

- State Road 19: From parking area counter located, north, 317 paces from where trail enters the woods.
- Lake Delancy: Go north 320 paces from the FT sign on the north side of FR 75.

Osceola National Forest

- Turkey Run: Counter located along FT, 150 feet north of parking lot.
- Battlefield: From parking lot follow FT for ¼ mile past Loop A Trail. Counter installed on FT, 100 feet past Loop A Trail.

Apalachicola National Forest

- Camel Lake: Counter located ¼ mile east of where FT crosses FR 105 near the campground.
- Sopchoppy: Heading east from FR 329, counter located about 200 feet from road

APPENDIX VI : 2006-2007 Seasonal Calibration Factors

Table 19. 2006-2007 Calibration Factors

	Sites	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.*	*Feb.*	*March*	*April*	*May*
Big Cypress	Oasis South	1	1	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986	0.986
	Oasis North	1	1	1	1	1	0.982	0.982	0.982	0.982	0.982	0.982	0.982
Bull Creek	US 192	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Crabgrass Road												
Cross Florida Greenway	Ross Prairie FNST	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Land Bridge												
	Rodman East	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Rodman West	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
ANF	Camel Lake	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Sopchoppy					1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ocala	Juniper Rec.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Clearwater	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Lake Delancy	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	SR 19	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Highlands/Okeechobee	Hickory Hammock												
	Bluff Hammock												
Kissimmee	Kicco	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Three Lakes WMA	Parker Hammock	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Osceola NF	Battlefield	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Turkey Run	1	1	1	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 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 Questionnaire

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. Please indicate how important each of the following items were in choosing your leisure destination for this trip.

Reason for Visit	Not at all important	Not very Important	Neutral	Very Important	Most Important
Historical, military, or archeological sites	1	2	3	4	5
Local crafts or handiwork	1	2	3	4	5
Interesting small towns	1	2	3	4	5
Good fishing	1	2	3	4	5
Good hunting	1	2	3	4	5
Manageable size to see everything	1	2	3	4	5
Wilderness and undisturbed nature	1	2	3	4	5
Chance to see wildlife/birds	1	2	3	4	5
To see the natural water features	1	2	3	4	5
Good environmental quality of air, water, and soil	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of campgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

8. 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 in areas that allow pedestrian use only	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas that allow multiple non-motorized uses; hiking, biking, horseback riding	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas that allow a mix of motorized and non-motorized use	1	2	3	4	5
To travel in areas that allow only motorized use	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

10. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements **about the place you were contacted.**

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Few people know this place like I do	1	2	3	4	5
This place is very special to me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I can really be myself at this place	1	2	3	4	5
When I am at this place others see me the way I want them to see me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel a sense of pride in my heritage when I am at this place	1	2	3	4	5
This place is a special place for my family	1	2	3	4	5
Many important family memories are tied to this place	1	2	3	4	5
This place contributes to the character of my community	1	2	3	4	5
My community's history is strongly tied to this place	1	2	3	4	5
My community's economy depends on this place	1	2	3	4	5
My family's income or livelihood depends on this place	1	2	3	4	5
Florida's economy depends on this place	1	2	3	4	5
This place is important in protecting the landscape from development	1	2	3	4	5
This place is important for providing habitat for wildlife	1	2	3	4	5
This place is important in protecting water quality	1	2	3	4	5
I am very attached to this place	1	2	3	4	5
No other place can compare to this place	1	2	3	4	5
This place means a lot to me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel this place is a part of me	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting this place says a lot about who I am	1	2	3	4	5
This place is very special to me	1	2	3	4	5
I identify strongly with this place	1	2	3	4	5
This place is the best for what I like to do	1	2	3	4	5
I get more satisfaction out of visiting this place then any other	1	2	3	4	5
The things I do at this place I would enjoy just as much at a similar site	1	2	3	4	5
Doing what I do at this place is more important to me than doing it in any other	1	2	3	4	5
I wouldn't substitute any other area for doing the types of things I do at this place	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: Community Benefits

Regardless of how far you live from the site in which you were contacted, we would like to know your opinion about how this place benefits local communities. Please read each benefit item in the list below. In column A, please indicate how important you think this benefit is to communities. In column B, please indicate the degree to which you think **YOUR** community attains each benefit from this place.

Benefit	(A) Importance					(B) Attainment			
	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither	Important	Very Important	Does Not Attain	Somewhat Attains	Moderately Attains	Fully Attains
A stronger sense of community togetherness or cohesion	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A stronger sense of family bonds within the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A greater ability to preserve small-town feeling of the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A natural setting in which the community takes great pride in	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A greater retention of distinctive natural landscape features	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
More community involvement in recreation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Heightened sense of community satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Better maintenance of community infrastructure	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Greater retention of community's distinctive architecture	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A feeling of community pride	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Improved care for community aesthetics	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Feeling that the community is a special place to live	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Living in a healthy environment	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A greater concern for the natural environment among residents	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Increased knowledge about the area's cultural resources	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A chance for local people to maintain an outdoor-oriented lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Opportunities for residents to grow spiritually	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Opportunities for exercise that improve people's health	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Having a better sense of place within the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Providing a good quality of life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Having a more stable economy within the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Increased job opportunities within the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Attracting tourism dollars to the community	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Having a more stable economy for the surrounding region	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A sense of security that the natural environment will not be lost	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A place to conserve various natural and unique ecosystems	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Knowing conserved natural resources exists for future generations	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
A higher quality of life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4

Section 5: 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: Individual Site Information

Cross Florida Greenway
(n=65)

Socio-Demographics
54% of respondents were male
45% of respondents were between the ages of 50-69 years old
74% of respondents were married
50% of respondents were employed outside the home
88% of respondents were white
64% of respondents had an annual household income of $50,000 or more annually

Trip Characteristics
74% have visited the trail before
43% have visited the trail 30 times or more in the past year
81% stated that hiking/walking was their primary reason for visiting the trail that day
44% stated that viewing scenery was the secondary reason for visiting the trail that day
40% of participants traveled alone
40% of participants traveled with another person
33% traveled with a family member
18% traveled with a friend
54% rated their experience along the trail as perfect

Motivations*
94% of respondents were visiting the trail to reduce stress
92% of respondents were visiting the trail to promote physical fitness
88% of respondents chose the trail at the Greenway to be in a safe area

Trail Knowledge
58% of respondents knew that Florida had a National Scenic Trail
27% knew they had hiked/walked on the FNST the day they were contacted
36% of respondents learned of the FNST from road signs

2006-2007 Use
Counter Type:
- Rodman East: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Rodman West: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Santos: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Land Bridge: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Ross Prairie FNST: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- Buckman Lock, Marshall Swamp, 64th Avenue, Baseline Road, 49th Avenue, and Pruitt were visually monitored and appropriate access point averages were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:
- Rodman East: Counter worked well except for brush growing in the beam path in April, it was removed, and a cracked reflector in June, it was replaced.
- Rodman West: Counter worked well throughout the study period.
- Santos: Counter worked well throughout the study period. In May the reflector was missing. It was replaced.

* n = 27

- Land Bridge: Counter worked well throughout the study period except in March it was out of alignment. The mounting post may have moved. It was realigned and worked fine afterwards.
- Ross Prairie FNST: Counter worked well throughout the study period except for the batteries dying prematurely in September. They were changed.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Trail conditions at all monitored access were good throughout the study period.

Table 20. Use of the Florida Trail at the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway June 2006-May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Rodman East	33	24	31	34	29	25	51	68	37	93	88	26	539
Rodman West	0	1	4	4	13	20	2	14	10	15	14	9	106
**Santos*	*235*	*112*	*119*	*95*	*248*	*383*	*366*	*400*	*403*	*489*	*402*	*278*	3530
**Land Bridge*	*170*	*163*	*142*	*207*	*239*	*348*	*325*	*392*	*347*	*379*	*378*	*255*	3345
**Ross Prairie*	*11*	*11*	*3*	*19*	*18*	*32*	*33*	*46*	*45*	*55*	*18*	*4*	295
**Buckman Lock*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*11*	*9*	*5*	*11*	*5*	*13*	*9*	*5*	99
**Marshall Swamp*	*30*	*30*	*25*	*32*	*51*	*62*	*78*	*86*	*98*	*102*	*89*	*68*	752
**64th Avenue*	*150*	*125*	*145*	*135*	*728*	*765*	*455*	*769*	*830*	*468*	*567*	*536*	5671
Baseline Rd.	939	939	939	939	936	936	936	936	936	936	936	936	11244
**49th Avenue*	*150*	*125*	*145*	*135*	*82*	*174*	*199*	*234*	*220*	*261*	*204*	*125*	2054
**Pruitt*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	22	31	30	41	45	43	26	18	285
TOTAL USE	1742	1542	1571	1608	2376	2785	2478	2997	2976	2853	2731	2260	27920

___= 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.

Trail Use Estimates

The Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway section of the FNST was monitored using two infrared counters. It was also monitored via personal observations of trail users at the Baseline Road area. The majority of these additional users consisted of bikers and roller bladers. The Baseline Road area is estimated to receive the highest visitation of all CFG access points (11,244 annually). Sixty Fourth Avenue was not monitored, but was estimated to be a high use location, having between 125 and 830 visits per month. Access point averages were used to get 64th Avenue's estimated use. The multiple access points and popularity of the CFG make it the second most heavily used site on the Florida Trail, having an estimated 27,920 users annually.

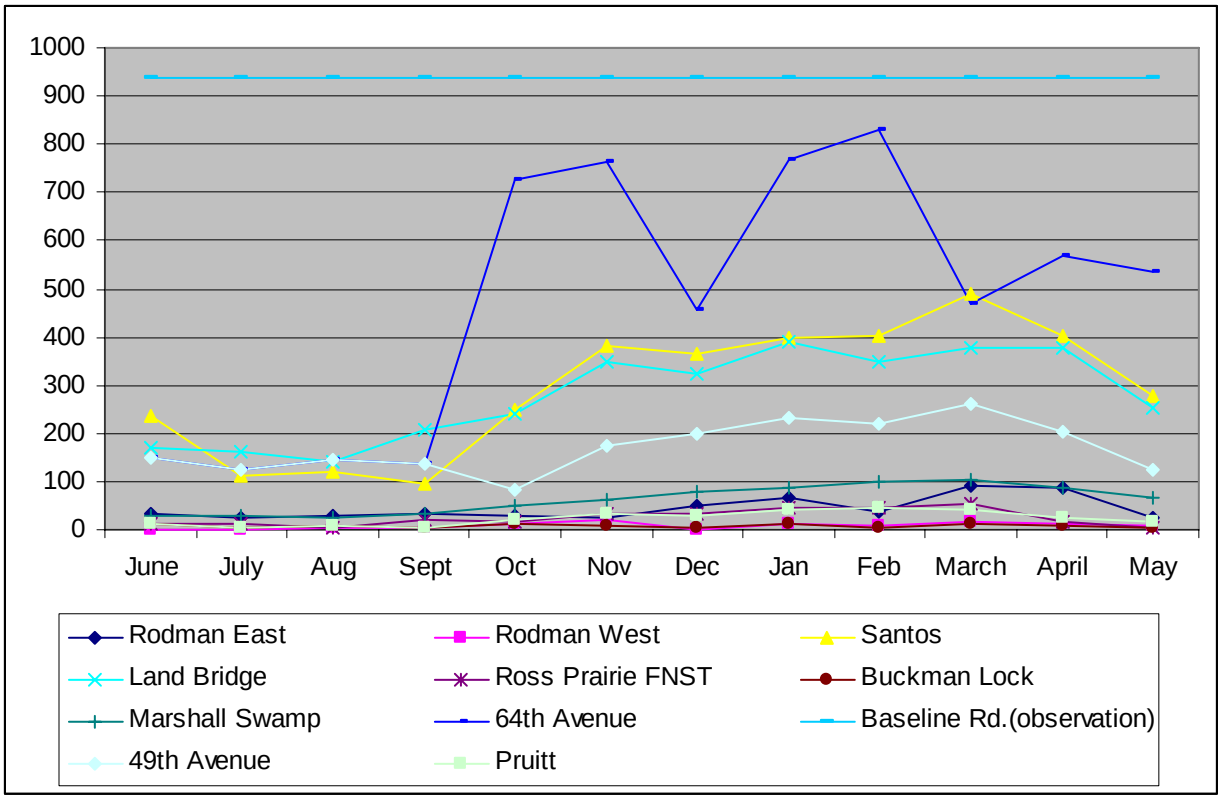

Figure 6. Use of the Florida Trail at the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway June 2006-May 2007

Ocala National Forest
(n= 5)

Socio-Demographics
80% of the respondents were female
60% of on-site respondent were between the ages of 18-39 years old
67% of respondents were married
100% of respondents were white
100% were employed out-side the home
50% of respondents has an annual household income of $100,000 or more

Trip Characteristics
80% of respondents have visited the FNST within Ocala before
60% of respondents have visited the FNST 2-6 times in the past year
100% of respondents stated that hiking/walking was their primary reason for visiting the trail
67% of respondents stated that viewing scenery and photography were secondary reasons for visiting the trail
60% of participants traveled in pairs
100% of respondents were traveling with a family member

Motivations

Enjoy nature	(mean = 4.5 out of 5.0)
Explore the natural environment	(mean = 4.0 out of 5.0)
Promote physical fitness	(mean = 4.0 out of 5.0)
Reduce stress and tension	(mean = 4.0 out of 5.0)

Trail Knowledge
100% of respondents knew they had hiked on the FNST the day they were contacted
100% of respondents learned of the FNST through guidebooks/brochures
68% of respondents were familiar with the FTA

2006-2007 Trail Use
Counter Type:
- Juniper Recreation Area: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Clearwater Recreation Area: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- Lake Delancy: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- SR 19: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Juniper Wilderness, Alexander Springs, Hopkins Prairie, Buck Lake, and Grassy Pond were visually monitored and access points were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:
- Juniper Recreation Area: Counter worked well throughout the year.
- Clearwater Recreation Area: Had problems with brush growing in front of beam in June and July. Unit malfunctioned in Nov., Dec., and Feb. probably because of ants nesting in the receiver. The solution is to keep the ants out by plugging the air vents. Glue was used but sponge would probably be best. There was also a problem of accidentally erasing data by pressing the wrong button on the unit because the metal security strap covers the

buttons. The solution is to use small diameter instrument, like the blunt end of a ball point pen, to press the buttons through the holes in the strap so two are not hit simultaneously.

- Lake Delancy: Counter worked strangely in Nov., Dec., and Jan. because of moisture in the unit caused by ants nesting in it. The solution is to keep the ants out by plugging the air vents. Glue was used but sponge would probably be best.
- SR 19: Counter malfunctioned in May and June because of moisture in the unit caused form being mounted upside down and ants nesting in it. Solution was to mount a new counter right side up.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Trail conditions were good at all monitored access points throughout the study period.

Table 21. Use of the Florida Trail at the Ocala National Forest June 2006-May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Juniper Rec.	123	73	16	45	82	143	222	284	239	295	144	99	1765
Clearwater	86	33	30	60	67	52	48	94	102	39	85	87	783
Lake Delancy	4	0	3	12	22	52	21	30	47	35	16	18	260
SR 19	34	105	89	58	102	107	104	131	216	184	102	123	1355
**Juniper Wilderness*	*25*	*48*	*94*	*70*	*53*	*63*	*75*	*76*	*95*	*95*	*88*	*73*	855
**Alexander Springs*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
**Hopkins Prairie*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
**Buck Lake*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
**Grassy Pond*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
TOTAL USE	395	384	339	376	403	557	558	771	862	819	540	477	6481

= 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.

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 2006-2007 confirmed this with the forest receiving 6,481 visits, 637 visits more than the previous year's 5,844. The highest use month was February with an estimated 862 FT visits and the lowest use month was August with an estimated 339 FT visits. The most heavily used access point researched was the Juniper Recreation Area with 1,765 total visits. Clearwater, Lake Delancy, and SR 19 were monitored sites; and this year data was collected throughout the year. In 2005-2006, counter failures prohibited data collection from these sites for most of the year.

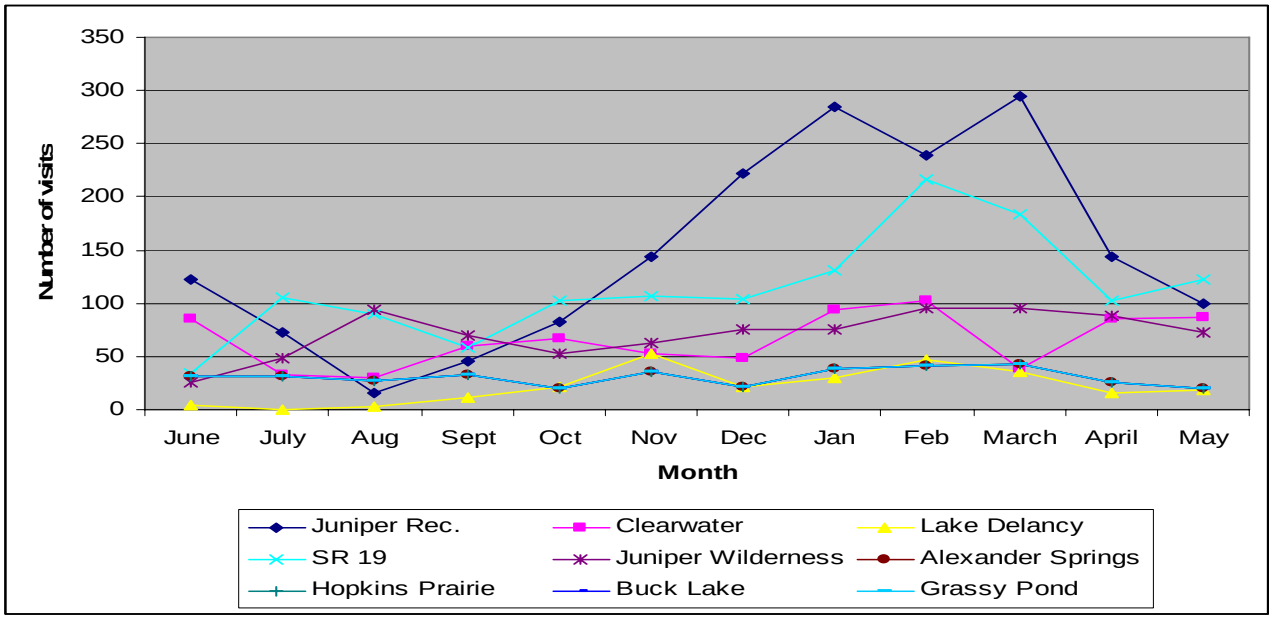

Figure 7. Use of the Florida Trail at the Ocala National Forest June 2006-May 2007

2003-2007 Use Estimates

A comparison of data collected from 2003-2007 shows that the highest use year was the 2006-2007 study season with 6,481 estimated FNST visits. This is a 10% increase over the 2005-2006 season.

Table 22. Use of the Florida Trail at the Ocala National Forest June 2005- May 2007

	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
2006-2007	395	384	339	376	403	557	558	771	862	819	540	477	6,481

* 2003-2004 research of the Ocala National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only from June 2004-May 2007

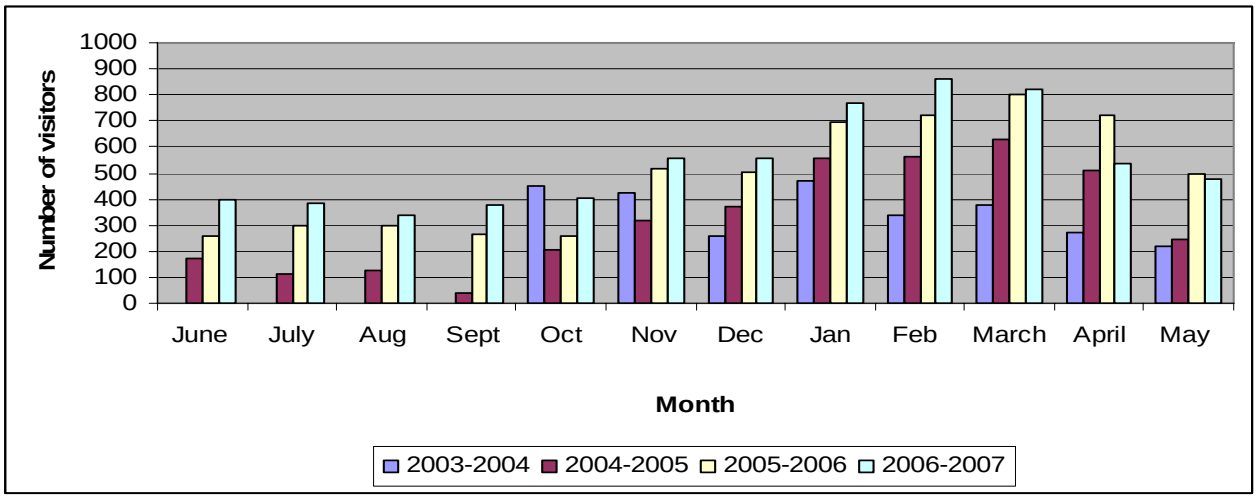

Figure 8. Comparison of use at the Ocala National Forest October 2003-May 2007

Goldhead Branch State Park
(n = 10)

Socio-Demographics
80% of on-site respondents were male
60% of on-site respondents were between the ages of 50-59 years old

Trip Characteristics
50% have visited the site before
90% of respondents sated that hiking/walking was their primary reason for visiting the trail
50% of respondents stated that viewing scenery was their secondary reason for visiting the trail
85% of respondents spent a few hours or less on the trail
43% of respondents traveled in pairs
43% of respondents rated their experience as a 7 or higher out of 10 (10 being perfect)

Motivations*
The mail back respondent felt that promoting physical fitness (mean = 5.0), enjoying nature (mean = 5.0), reducing stress (mean = 5.0) and exploring the natural environment (mean = 5.0) were the most important reasons for visiting the trail the day they were contacted.

Trail Knowledge*
71% of on-site respondents new they were on the Florida National Scenic Trail[a]
100% were familiar with the FTA

* Of the 10 people interviewed at Goldhead Branch, only one completed the mail back survey from which this information was taken. Therefore, these results may not be reflective of the average visitor to Goldhead Branch State Park.

[a]This statistic was pulled from the on-site interview rather then the mail back

Apalachicola National Forest

2005-2006 Use

Counter Type:

- Camel Lake: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- Sopchoppy: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Porter Lake, FR 150, and Bradwell Bay were visually monitored and appropriate access point averages were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- Camel Lake: Counter worked well except in August and November the unit's batteries died before they should have. Solution change batteries at shorter intervals.
- Sopchoppy: Counter had problems throughout the year with maintaining proper alignment. One solution was to change the reflector which worked temporarily. The counter probably should be moved to a sturdier tree.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Battlefield: Trail was in good condition throughout the year.
- Turkey Run: Trail was in good condition throughout the year.

Table 23. Use of the Florida Trail at Apalachicola National Forest June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Camel Lake	3	3	9	1	4	1	9	12	22	32	13	5	114
Sopchoppy	54	41	34	39	26	28	19	30	43	78	15	22	429
**Porter Lake*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
**FR 150*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
**Bradwell Bay*	*31*	*31*	*27*	*33*	19	35	22	*39*	*41*	*43*	*26*	*19*	366
TOTAL USE	149	138	123	138	88	134	94	159	188	238	106	85	1640

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

Trail Use Estimates

2006-2007 showed a decline in visits to the Apalachicola National Forest Section of the Florida Trail. In 2005-2006, this section of the FNST received an estimated 2,457 visits. 2006-2007 had an estimated 1,640 visits, a 43% decrease in visits. There were counter issues both years that could have led to some data inaccuracies and counts that were not reflective of actual use. The highest use month was March with an estimated 238 FT users and the lowest use month was May with an estimated 85 FT users.

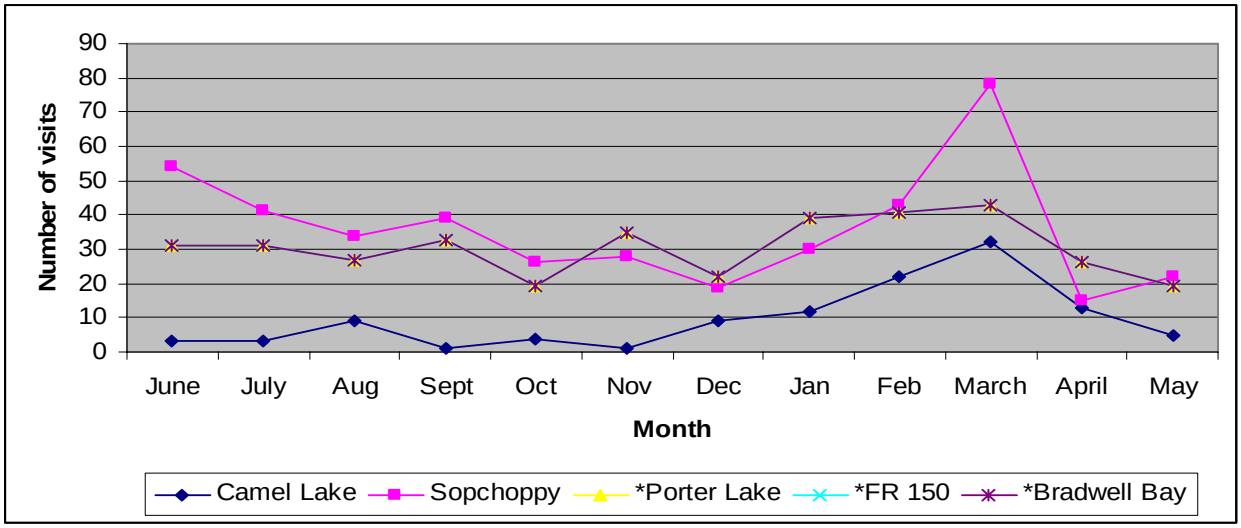

Figure 9. Use of the Florida Trail at the Apalachicola National Forest June 2006-May 2007

2003-2006 Comparative Use

A comparison of data collected from 2003-2007 shows that the highest use year was the 2005-2006 study season with 2,457 estimated FNST visits.

Table 24. Use of the Florida Trail at the Apalachicola National Forest October 2003- May 2007

	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
2006-2007	149	138	123	138	88	134	94	159	188	238	106	85	1640

* 2003-2004 research of the Apalachicola National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only between 2004-2007

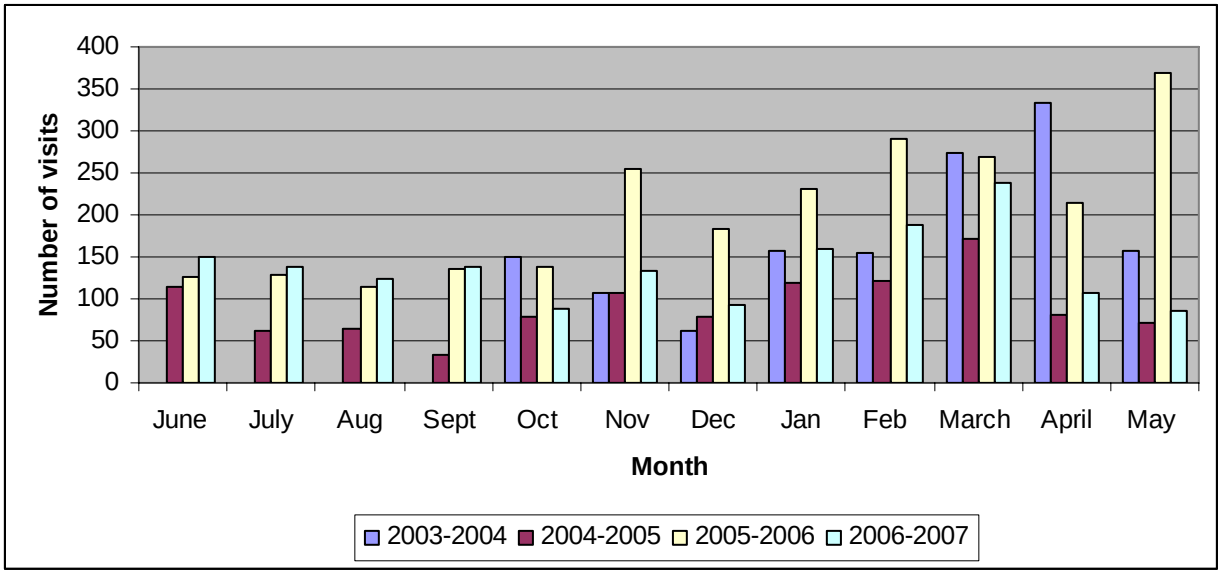

Figure 10. Comparison of monthly use in the Apalachicola National Forest 2003-2007

Osceola National Forest

2005-2006 Use

Counter Type:

- Battlefield: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- Turkey Run: TrailMaster infrared eye.
- Deep Creek was visually monitored and appropriate access point average was applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- Battlefield: Counter malfunctioned from August-December because of moisture in the unit probably cause by insects nesting in it. The solution is to keep insects out by plugging the air vents. Glue was used but sponge would probably be best.
- Turkey Run: Counter worked well except for the transmitter was turned off in October and January. The solution was to put glue over the transmitter switch so it could not be turned off.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Battlefield: Trail was in good condition throughout the year.
- Turkey Run: Trail was in good condition throughout the year.

Trail Use Estimates

The Osceola National Forest received an estimated 692 visits in 2006-2007, 54% less than the previous year's count of 1,504 FT visits. Both monitored sites, Battlefield and Turkey Run received an estimated 316 and 314 visits respectively. The highest use month was February with an estimated 190 FT visits. The lowest use month was May with 24 FT visits. During the 2005-2006 research season, 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. In 2006-2007, only one month had enough difficulties that it could not be calculated.

Table 25. Use of the Florida Trail at the Osceola National Forest June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Battlefield	10	11	4	9	3	4	103	12	115	31	46	7	316
Turkey Run	16	8	11	16	40	11	15	62	71	35	18	11	314
**Deep Creek*	*13*	*6*	*11*	*1*	*14*	*11*	*6*	*13*	*4*	*13*	*11*	*6*	62
TOTAL USE	39	25	26	26	57	26	124	87	190	79	75	24	692

= Month where data was insufficient to calculate number of users so an access point average was used

*= Indicates an access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

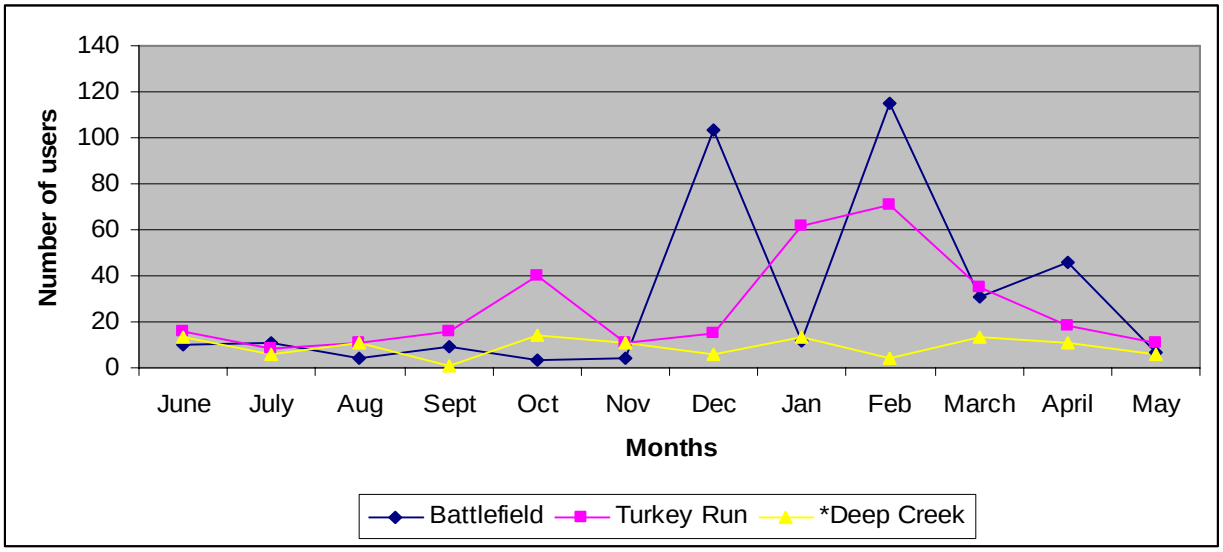

Figure 11. Use of the Florida Trail at the Osceola National Forest June 2006-May 2007

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 and 54% greater than the 2006-2007 season.

Table 1: Use of the Florida Trail at the Osceola National Forest October 2003- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	TOTAL
2003-2004					48	30	18	55	116	71	41	35	414
2004-2005	45	18	24	0	21	212	282	241	277	254	147	88	1609
2005-2006	33	39	68	52	89	200	211	195	176	269	142	30	1504
2006-2007	39	25	26	26	57	26	124	87	190	79	75	24	692

* 2003-2004 research of the Osceola National Forest did not begin until October so June-September comparisons are only between 2004-2007

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.

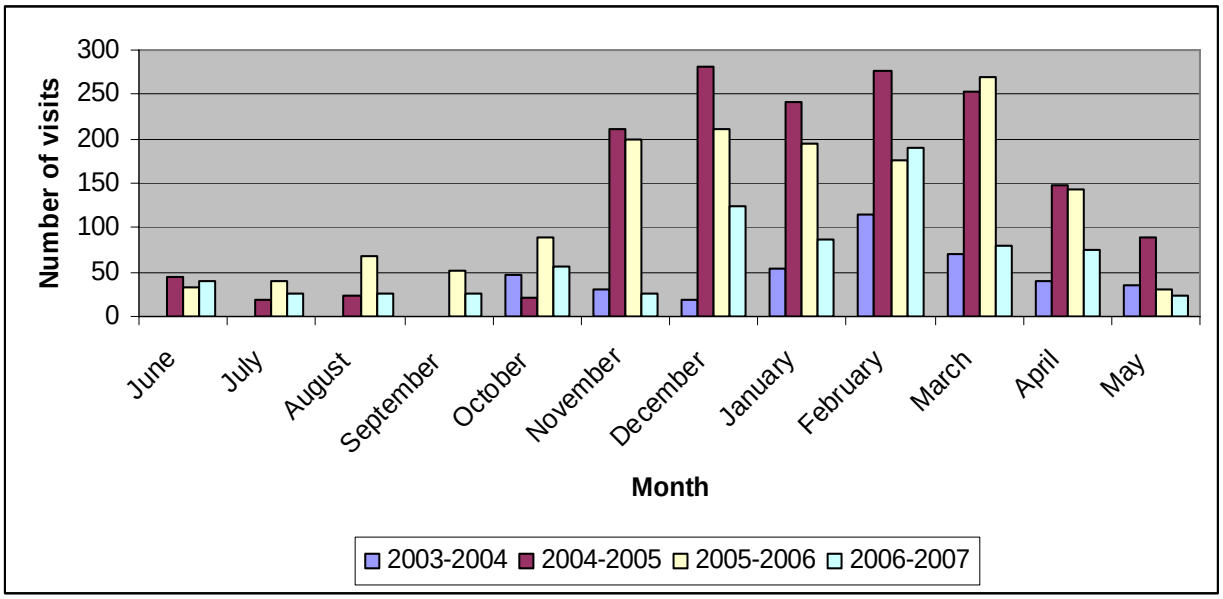

Figure 12. Comparison of use in the Osceola National Forest October 2003- May 2007

Big Cypress National Preserve

2006-2007 Use

Counter Type:

- Oasis South: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Oasis North: TrailMaster infrared eye from 8/24 to 10/31. Diamond Traffics infrared eye from 10/31 to 7/22.
- Loop Road and Alligator Alley were visually monitored and appropriate access point averages were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- The counters functioned well except Oasis North had problems with brush growing in front of eye from April-June. The brush was trimmed.
- Oasis South had dead battery in July and park staff removed the reflector in April but otherwise functioned well. The reflector was replaced. The battery replacement schedule should be closely adhered to.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Oasis North trail condition was in good condition and dry most of the year but was overgrown from August through November.
- Oasis South trail was either muddy or wet except March through May but otherwise in good condition.

Trail Use Estimates:

Big Cypress National Preserve is a high use Florida Trail access area, receiving approximately 3,378 visits in 2006-2007. The highest use month was March with an estimated 591 visits and the lowest use month was August with an estimated 68 visits. Counter monitoring at Big Cypress was done differently than other sites. Since the site was so far from Gainesville, the beginning point for researchers, Florida Trail volunteers were asked to assist with the program. Representatives from the local chapter agreed to assist. Counter monitoring equipment was mailed to the volunteers monthly and they collected data and reported any problems encountered. Researchers went down quarterly to check on equipment. This method of data collection was quite successful and is recommended for future study sites located within an area with FT volunteers that could assist.

Table 26. Use of the Florida Trail at Big Cypress National Preserve June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Oasis South	13	6	6	5	27	31	41	66	85	102	101	20	503
Oasis North	33	33	28	38	52	92	214	332	301	344	289	82	1838
Loop Road	30	30	25	32	51	62	78	86	98	102	89	68	752
**Alligator Alley*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	285
TOTAL USE	88	75	68	79	152	216	362	525	529	591	504	188	3378

___ = Month where data was insufficient to calculate use, therefore an access point average was applied

*Access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

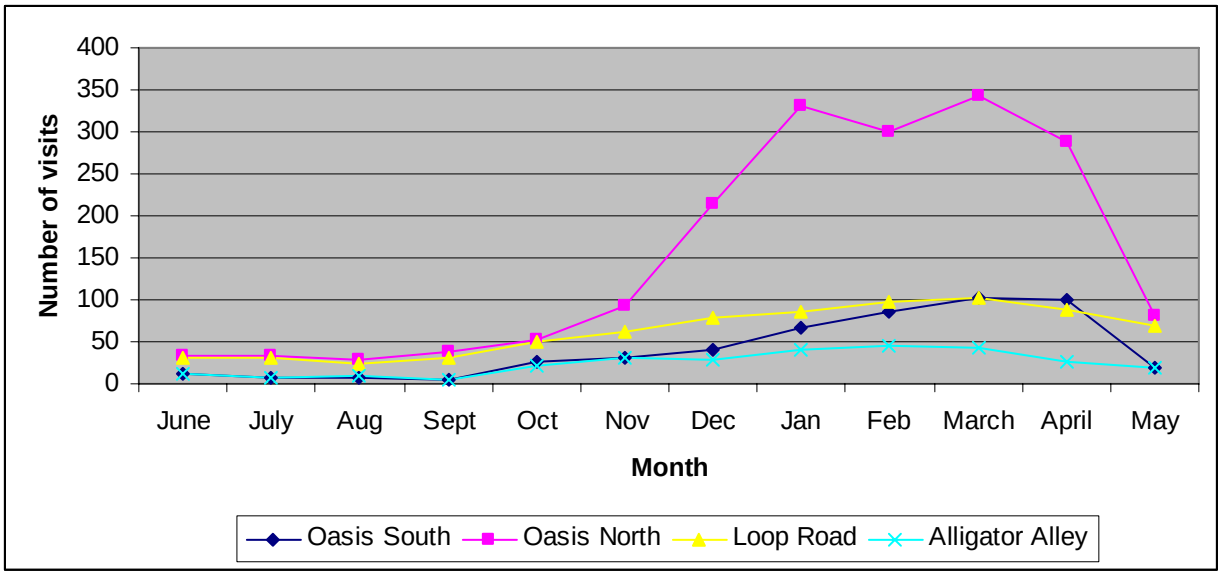

Figure 13. Use of the Florida Trail at Big Cypress National Preserve June 2006-May 2007

Highlands

2006-2007 Use

Counter Type:

- Bluff Hammock: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Hickory Hammock: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Yates Marsh and Platts Bluff were visually monitored and appropriate access point averages were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- Bluff Hammock: Counter worked well throughout the study period except for battery dying prematurely in May. Changed battery.
- Hickory Hammock: Counter worked well throughout the study period except for July, the alignment was only 60%. It was corrected by putting a shim under the reflector.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Bluff Hammock: Trail was completely overgrown from July-October and May-June and slightly overgrown in March and April otherwise it was in good condition.
- Hickory Hammock: Trail was in good condition throughout the year.

Trail Use Estimates

Highlands was a high use site that received an estimated 1,735 visits in 2006-2007. Two access points were monitored using infrared eyes and two access points were visually monitored. The highest use month for Highlands was January, with an estimated 232 visits. The lowest use month was October, with an estimated 81 visits. The Bluff Hammock site showed an unusual pattern of highest use in the months of July, August, and September, usually the hottest months and therefore the times when visitation is lowest. Since counters worked correctly throughout this time there is no immediate explanation for the derivation.

Table 27. Use of the Florida Trail at Highlands June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Bluff Hammock	48	99	108	109	28	40	71	70	88	84	36	29	810
Hickory Hammock	17	29	12	11	10	48	20	80	42	47	11	27	354
**Yates Marsh*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	*285*
**Platts Bluff*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	285
TOTAL USE	89	140	138	128	81	150	150	232	219	216	98	92	1735

* Access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

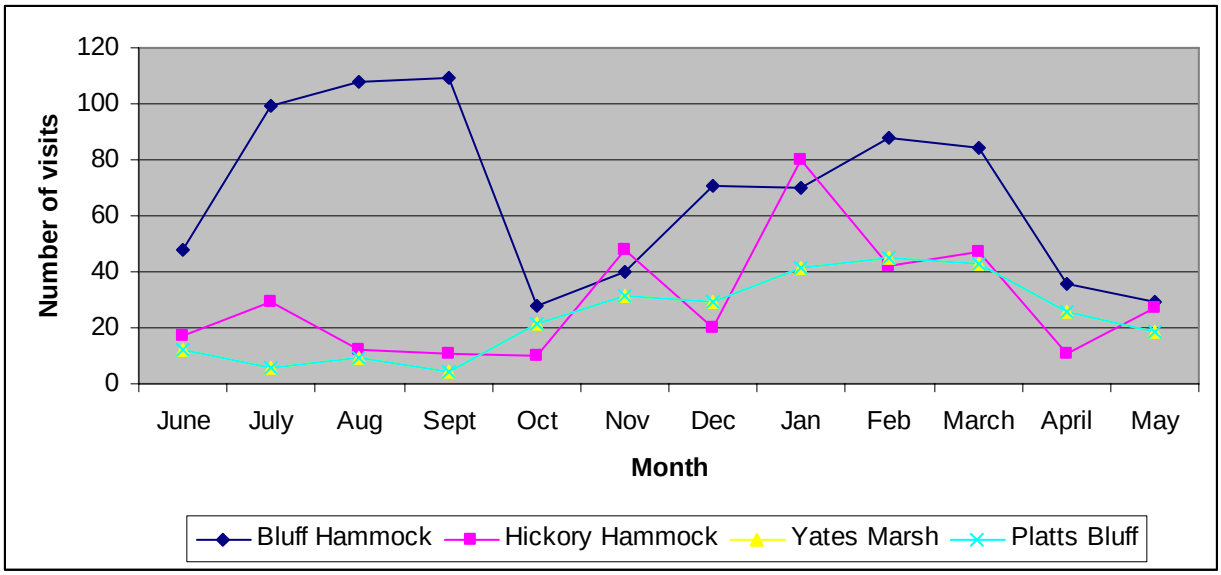

Figure 14. Use of the Florida Trail at Highlands 2006-2007

Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area

2006-2007 Use

Counter Type:

- US 192: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Crabgrass Road: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- US 192: Counter worked well throughout the study period.
- Crabgrass Road: Counter worked well throughout the study period except for in August someone shot the reflector. The reflector was replaced.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- US 192: Trail was in good condition throughout the study period.
- Crabgrass Road: Trail was in good condition throughout the year. Parts of the trail had standing water during wet periods.

Trail Use Estimates

Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area is a medium use site, receiving 999 estimated visits in 2006-2007. Initial research conducted in 2003-2004 indicated that Bull Creek was probably a low use site, however the 2006-2007 season indicated it was a medium use site. The highest use month was November with 118 estimated visits and the lowest use month was July with an estimated 29 visits. One access point was monitored with an infrared counter and one was visually monitored.

Table 28. Use of the Florida Trail at Bull Creek WMA June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
US 192	13	4	10	9	11	4	9	11	13	27	34	25	170
Crabgrass Rd.	46	25	27	65	83	114	93	65	49	126	70	66	829
TOTAL USE	*59*	*29*	*37*	*74*	*94*	*118*	*102*	*76*	*62*	*153*	*104*	*91*	*999*

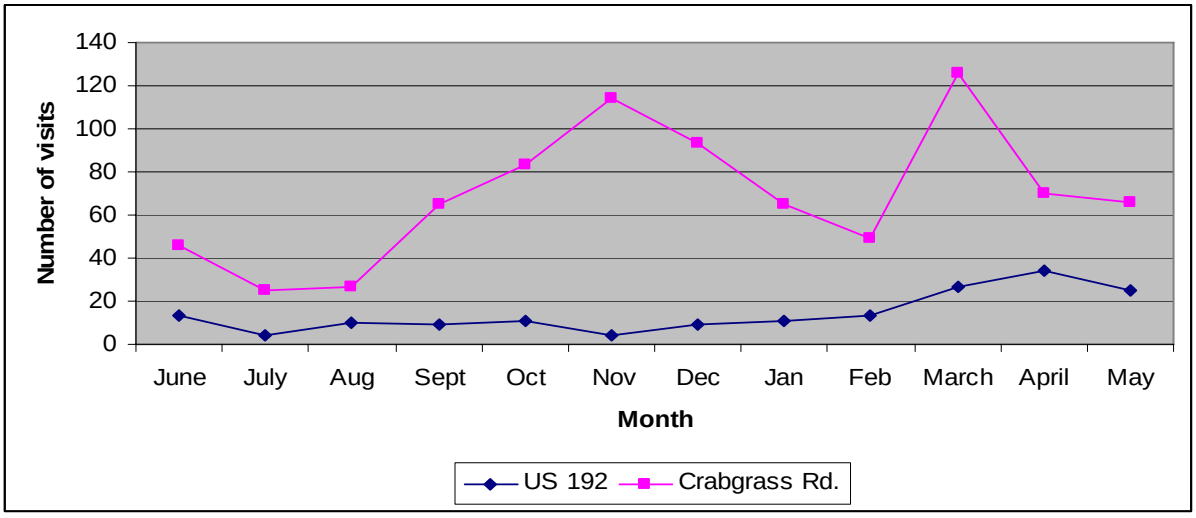

Figure 15. Use of the Florida Trail at Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area June 2006-May 2007

Kissimmee River Wildlife Management Area/ Avon Park Air Force Range

2006-2007 Use

Counter Type:

- Kicco: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- Ft. Kissimmee in Avon Park was visually monitored and an appropriate access point average was applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- Kicco: Counter had had a problem with alignment. This was solved by moving the reflector closer to the counter. Another problem was two cow paths crossed in front of the beam path and the cows were causing counts to register so brush was piled up to divert the cows away from the counter. There was also a problem in February with a battery going dead prematurely. A new battery was installed.

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

Trail Use Estimates

Initial research conducted in 2003 indicated that Kissimmee River WMA was a low use site. Research conducted in 2006-2007 concluded that Kissimmee River WMA was a medium use site with an estimated 526 users. The highest use month was December with 72 hikers and the lowest use months were May and February with 25 hikers.

Table 29. Use of the Florida Trail at Kissimmee River WMA/ Avon Park June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Kicco	15	47	46	44	23	28	67	42	20	43	32	20	427
**Ft Kissimmee in Avon Park*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*11*	*9*	*5*	*11*	*5*	*13*	*9*	*5*	*99*
TOTAL USE	27	53	55	48	34	37	72	53	25	56	41	25	526

* Access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

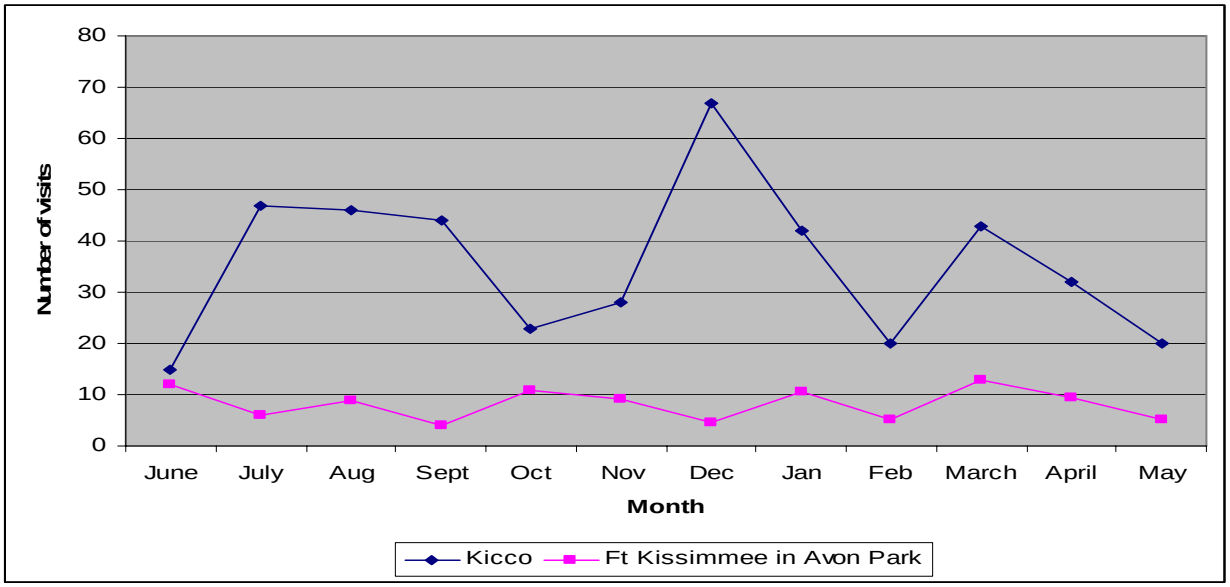

Figure 16. Use of the Florida Trail at Kissimmee WMA June 2006-May 2007

Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area

2006-2007 Use

Counter Type:

- Parker Hammock Camp parking: Diamond Traffics infrared eye.
- SR 523 Prairie Lakes Unit, Lake Jackson boat ramp, Lake Jackson observation tower, and SR 60 south check station were visually monitored and appropriate access point averages were applied.

Counter-related problems and solutions:

- Parker Hammock: Counter worked well throughout the study period.

Trail condition throughout the year:

- Parker Hammock: Trail was in good condition throughout the year except for the months of May and June it started to become overgrown.

Trail Use Estimates

Initial research conducted in 2003 indicated that Three Lakes was probably a low use site. 2006-2007 research concluded that Three Lakes is a high use site, receiving an estimated 1,704 hikers during the year. There are five access points for the FNST at Three Lakes which provides multiple opportunities for hikers to use the FT from the WMA. The highest use month was January with an estimated 218 users and the lowest use month was May with an estimated 78 users.

Table 30. Use of the Florida Trail at Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area June 2006- May 2007

	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Total Use Estimate
Parker Hammock camp parking	16	35	17	41	67	28	69	84	51	32	33	18	491
**SR 523 Prairie Lakes Unit entrance*	*30*	*30*	*25*	*32*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	371
**Lake Jackson boat ramp*	*30*	*30*	*25*	*32*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	371
**Lake Jackson observation tower*	*30*	*30*	*25*	*32*	*22*	*31*	*30*	*41*	*45*	*43*	*26*	*18*	371
**SR 60 South check station*	*12*	*6*	*9*	*4*	*11*	*9*	*5*	*11*	*5*	*13*	*9*	*5*	99
TOTAL USE	118	131	101	141	142	131	162	218	190	173	119	78	1704

*Access point that was not monitored, therefore an access point average was applied

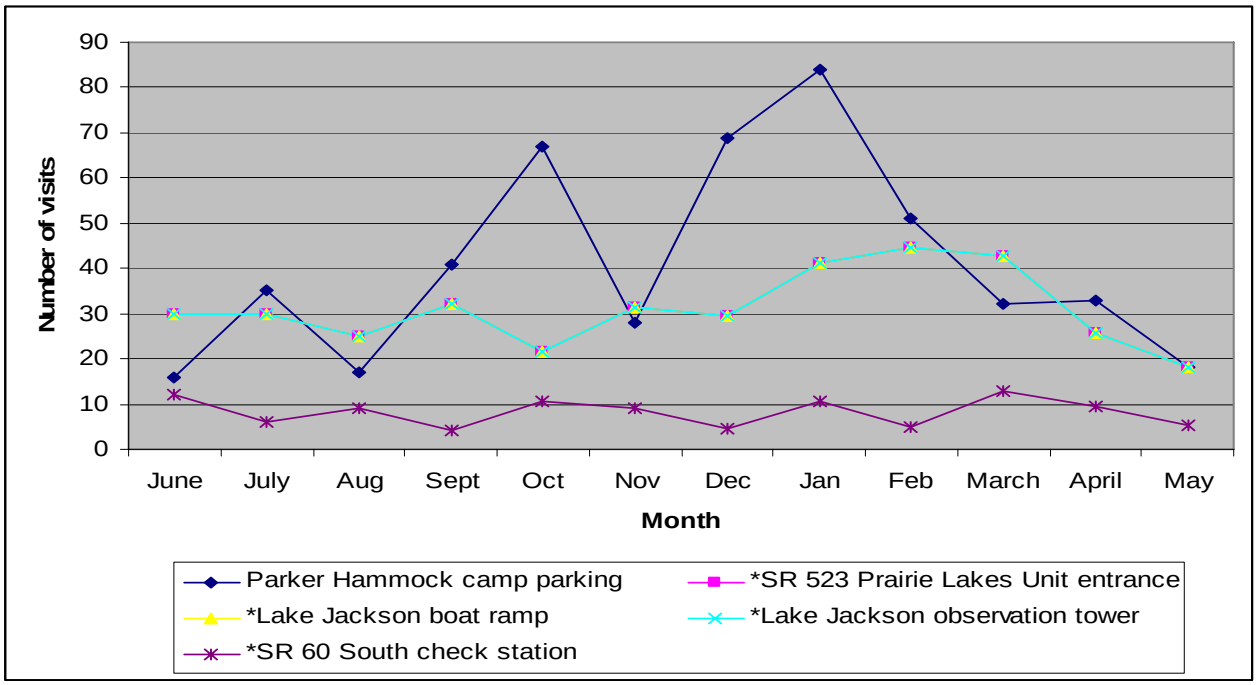

Figure 17. Use of the Florida Trail at Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area June 2006-May 2007