



# FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL



## State of the Trail Report Summary

Full Report at [www.fs.usda.gov/FNST](http://www.fs.usda.gov/FNST)

September 22, 2012



With approximately 25 distinct partners having a management interest in the FNST, communication and dissemination of up-to-date information is central to its effective management.

The State of the Trail (SOT) Report provides a “snap shot” of the FNST’s current conditions and resources. These snap shots provide a current inventory of Trail mileage, infrastructure, and facilities as well as insight into which areas should be targeted for improvement and additional resources.

Each FNST segment page contains a description and photo typical of that portion of the Trail as well as information regarding the segment’s ownership, mileage, volunteer support, trail class, infrastructure, condition, and management priorities.

Each year, the USFS will update the SOT by soliciting information regarding trail management priorities, trail condition, and trail plans for the upcoming year from land managers.

This first- edition SOT Report divides the FNST into four regions and further divides each region into segments. The regions and their segments are listed from south to north.

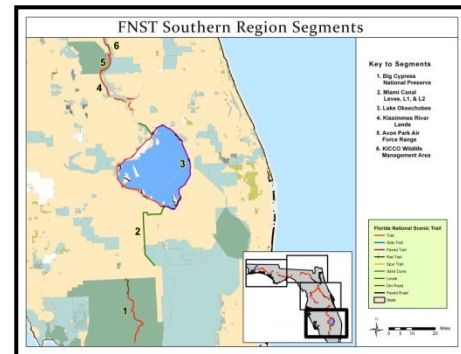
The SOT contains a description and brief assessment of the major gaps in the FNST.

### Trail Status (approximate):

- FNST Miles:** 986
- Gap Miles:** ~ 350
- Trailheads:** 93
- Campsites:** 97



FNST Regions map from the 2012 State of the Trail report



Southern Region map from the 2012 State of the Trail report

# Sample Segment Page from the 2012 State of the Trail Report

## SEGMENT: ST. MARKS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AND ST. MARKS RAIL TRAIL

### Trail Ownership

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (43.7), FDEP-Div. of Recreation and Parks (2.8)

### Narrative

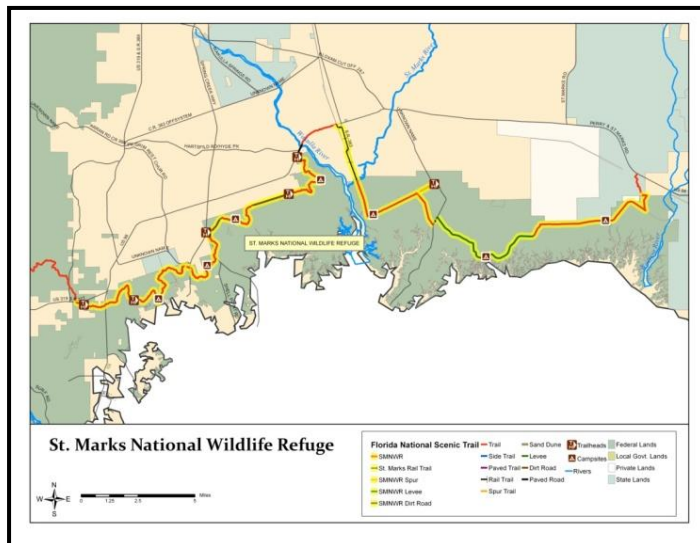
Crossing U.S 98 from the Aucilla Wildlife Management Area, the FNST enters St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Established in 1931 as a refuge for migratory birds, the Refuge covers over 68,000 acres of upland forests, salt marsh, tidal creeks, islands, and estuaries. The Trail here is through Gulf coastal pine flatwoods, hardwood hammocks, and a salt marsh wilderness. The terrain is flat and dry over most of the Trail except during periods of heavy rain. For approximately seven miles the Trail follows a series of dikes built to impound freshwater for the thousands of waterfowl which winter here. Along with the waterfowl, some species visitors may encounter include: southern bald eagles, ospreys, otters, alligators, white-tailed deer, and black bears. The historic St. Marks Lighthouse overlooking Apalachee Bay and the Visitor Center along Lighthouse Rd. are popular attractions at the Refuge. The St. Marks Rail Trail runs from Tallahassee to St. Marks, with just under three miles designated as FNST.

<b>Total Miles Certified:</b>	<b>46.2</b>
<b>Thru trail:</b>	45.1
<b>Spur trail:</b>	1.1
<b>2013 Planned</b>	
Trail miles	Reroute Tram Rd and Port Leon Rd
Trailheads	New parking at Spring Creek Hwy
Campsites	Upgrade signage
Structures	
Bridges	
Boardwalks	Replace Spring Creek section



St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge

	DESCRIPTION
<b>Volunteer Support</b>	FTA Apalachee chapter
<b>Type</b>	Trail (32.4), levee (5.7), rail trail (2.8), paved road (2.9), spur trail (1.1)
<b>Trail Class</b>	
<b>Facilities</b>	- 6 trailheads - 7 campsites; only available by permit to Refuge through-hikers.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	- 6 bridges, 8 boardwalks
<b>Trail Condition Summary</b>	- Overall, the trail is in good condition. A wet spring/summer has caused vegetation to encroach on the treadway but for the most part, the trail remains dry enough for foot traffic. An occasional tree may be down due to a weak root system and soggy ground. The boardwalks through the Spring Creek area are still out. Reroute instructions for thru-hikers are posted at both entry points to the area.
<b>Trail Management Priorities</b>	- Treadway and infrastructure maintenance occurs from Oct. to Feb.



St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge map from the 2012 State of the Trail report