Today you can follow the orange trail marking to help create a long-distance Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) for more than 1,300 miles, crossing more of the state, offering recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities. The Florida Trail is the perfect destination for new hikers, families and even those who enjoy hiking as a way to exercise. Follow the orange blaze on the Florida Trail to stay on track while hiking the Appalachian Scenic Trail or to enjoy the state’s vast natural beauty.

The USDA Forest Service is the steward of the Florida Trail. Among the many non-motorized trail user groups who work collaboratively to close the last remaining gaps and establish permanent protection along the entirety of the Florida Trail, the USDA Forest Service is a priority on the Florida Trail.

The USDA Forest Service is the administrator of the Florida Trail, working in planning, design, recreation development and establishing partnerships to create the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST). As an advocacy group of public and private partners, work collaboratively to close the last remaining gaps and establish permanent protection along the entirety of the Florida Trail.

Recreation

Whether you want to trek through the wilderness in solitude or explore a Gateway Community along an urban trail, your adventure starts nearby on the Florida Trail.

Hiking and Backpacking

Hiking and backpacking are favorite activities on the Florida Trail. Trips range from short day hikes to month-long treks. There is no single type of hiker or day-tripper. From small streams to old-growth forest, spend an afternoon or a secluded month on the trail; the choice is yours.

Biking

Biking allows you to access the entire network of trails in Florida and stay off the main road. Bike sections of Cross Florida Greenways, Bike paths follow the historic Kissimmee River, explore the disappearing Suwannee River, or enjoy the beautiful Suwannee River State Forest.

*Please refer to local land manager rules and regulations to see if these activities are available and/or if a trail segment near you.

Scenery and Nature

The Florida Trail is the perfect destination to surround yourself in the richly colored sunsets of Lake Okeechobee or to enjoy jaw-dropping views of the Everglades at Shark Valley entrance. Experience Florida cowboys culture first-hand, or enjoy a great view over a pine savannah on your ride.

Water Sports

In streams, springs and lakes along the Florida Trail it is a great way to appreciate the state. Cool down and paddle the famous Suwannee River, explore the disappearing Suwannee River State Forest or enjoy the pristine gator-filled water of the Upper Suwannee River.

Local Land Managers

Florida’s state parks provide backcountry camping opportunities. For more information on state parks, please visit FLORIDA STATE PARKS.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are abundant in Florida. From the ancient shell middens of the Florida Keys to the magnificent stone circles of the Timucua, history is everywhere. Find more information on cultural resources and the importance of protecting Florida’s cultural history on the Florida Trail. The Florida Trail is renowned for its potential opportunities, home to such unique birds as the white-crowned pigeon, Florida scrub-jay, Florida grasshopper sparrow and woodcock.

Trail Community

The TRAIL COMMUNITY is one of the most inspiring features of the Florida Trail. Their dedication and hard work are critical to the success of the trail. Community members, such as “trail angels” or enjoying the outdoors, are a major reason for the success of the Florida Trail. Casual hikers and avid backpackers find a friendly smile is never hard to find on the Florida Trail.

You may enjoy the Florida Trail in a variety of ways. For additional information, please check with the FTA, the local land manager or the US Forest Service.

Trail markers are characterized by painted 2x4 inch orange blazes. A double blaze indicates a turn, junction or other area that requires hikers to be alert. Blue blazes mark side trails leading to campsites, water supplies and/or other facilities. A double-blue blaze indicates a trail turn, junction or other area that requires hikers to be alert. A double-bluish gray blaze indicates a trail turn, junction or other area that requires hikers to be alert.

Permitted uses vary by section. The Florida Trail is a non-motorized trail. Foot travel is allowed on all segments of the trail. Other non-motorized uses, including bicycling and horseback riding, are permitted on specified segments.

Fees and Permits

The Florida Trail is a public use trail. Users of the trail may be required to obtain an entrance and camping fee. Campers may be required to obtain a camping fee. Some state land managers may require users to camp at designated sites, obtain permits or pay fees.

Access to water is a priority on the Florida Trail. Plan your trip ahead of time, bring a map and compass, fresh water, adequate clothing and proper equipment and appropriate clothing and footwear.

You can visit the website at www.floridatrail.org.
Panhandle
Starting just south of the state capital and reaching the Northern Terminus at Fort Pickens, the Panhandle is home to the world’s 5th largest biodiversity hotspot. This corridor includes Forest Service and state lands with longleaf and loblolly pine forests in the remote section of Florida.

- Gulf Islands National Seashore is in the Northern Terminus of the Florida Trail and home to the only National Scenic Trail beach hike in the nation. Get immersed in colonial history at Fort Pickens, search for wildlife along Santa Rosa Sound or simply enjoy the white quartz beaches on the Gulf of Mexico.
- Escambia Creek Wildlife Management Area travels along bluffly, deep ravines and first magnitude springs. Cross two of the trail’s largest suspension bridges, while strolling along beautiful, spring-fed Escambia Creek.
- St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is world renowned for the more than 200 species of migratory birds who find habitat here. A trip here is not complete without a visit to the 2nd oldest lighthouse in Florida, or a hike along the limestone bluffs. Get sweeping views of sandy beaches, Florida springs and even whitewater rapids.

North Florida
North Florida is a window into the past, passing through 1700’s plantations and civil war battlefields. This region is known primarily for its Florida woods forests and hilly terrain along spring-fed, tannin-rich rivers.

- Aucilla River Sinks is one of the more unique geological features on the trail. Travel the Aucilla River as it is meandered underground and reappears in a series of massive sinkholes.
- Suwannee River is considered an artery of Northern Florida, providing spectacular views of sandy beaches, Florida springs and even whitewater rapids. The Florida Trail follows conservation lands along the river for more than 60 miles, intersecting with everything from Florida Folk Culture to secluded swimming holes.
- Rice Creek Conservation Area was originally an 18th century indigo and rice plantation. Now the trail is connected by a series of boardwalks and bridges that highlight a Florida Trail shelter and one of the state’s largest cypress trees.

Central Florida
Circling conservation areas around the Greater Orlando Metro Region, the Florida Trail splits into its Eastern and Western corridors. Travel through pampas and pine woodlands, creekside hammocks, rolling sandhills and floodplain forests.

- The Ocala National Forest is known as the heart of the Florida Trail. From shady wilderness hikes through hydric hammocks or open prairies filled with wildflowers, Ocala is known for its diversity of ecosystems and recreation experiences. Don’t leave without jumping into sparkling Alexander Springs.
- Little Blue Streak State Forest provides hikes along the narrow and winding Econlockhatchee River. Trek through wetland wet prairie habitats, a railroad bed built by Henry Flagler and jungle-like riverside views in this state forest.
- Withlacoochee State Forest is known for its abundant wildlife and challenging loop hikes, which have helped many outdoor enthusiasts train for the Appalachian Trail. The "crooked river" connecting its three large tracts helped this location earn the title of "10 Coolest Places You've Never Been in North America" by the World Wildlife Fund.

South Florida
Explore the wet wilderness of sawgrass prairies, hardwood hammocks and sawcypress groves of Southern Florida. Start your journey at the Southern Terminus in Big Cypress National Preserve, trek through examples and follow the winding Kissimmee River through historic cattle country.

- Kissimmee Prairie Preserve is one of South Florida’s premier locations for hiking. The preserve is surrounded by a designated Dark Sky Rec. Area. Discover this successful restoration project and the vast biodiversity of the state’s largest dry prairie by foot, bike or horse.
- Lake Okeechobee is the 2nd largest freshwater lake in the continental United States, encircled by 113 miles of the Florida Trail. Whether you take a paved route walk around the eastern shore or explore the more remote marshlands to the west, make sure you’re there in time for an unforgettable sunrise.
- Big Cypress National Preserve is often noted as the most remote wilderness hike on the Florida Trail. Get your feet wet while you trek through cypress groves in search of rare ghost orchids, migratory bird populations or even a glimpse of the endangered Florida panther.