

Additional Resources



Weather and Wildlife
If you suspect a fish, wildlife, boating or environmental violation, contact FWC's Wildlife Alert at 888-404-3922. Use this line also to report dead, sick or injured sea turtles and marine mammals.

USGS Current Water Data for Florida
WaterData.USGS.gov

NOAA Tides, Currents and Weather
TidesAndCurrents.NOAA.gov

Recreation
Fishing guides, ecotours and kayak/canoe rentals in the Franklin County area:
FloridasForgottenCoast.com

Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System
EDDMaps.org/Florida

Prescribed Fire
FDACS.gov

Research, Stewardship, Education and Coastal Training Programs at ANERR
FloridaDEP.gov/RCP



Keep up with events, news and stories through the Friends of the Reserve:
ApalachicolaReserve.com

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A guide to exploring the recreational opportunities of the Apalachicola River and Basin

Where a River Meets the Sea



Welcome to the Apalachicola River and Bay Basin. Deep in the tupelo and cypress swamps of the floodplain, dark and rich water seeps in the flow of a large alluvial river that makes its way to one of the most productive estuaries in the world. This gem of natural diversity - the Apalachicola River and Bay Basin - includes the uplands, floodplain, riverine, estuarine and barrier island environments, all of which are closely interrelated and influenced by each other.

The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR) encompasses nearly 250,000 acres of public lands and water in the Florida Panhandle. Public lands within the boundary of ANERR are managed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection; the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD); Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC); the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks. The Florida Forest Service and U.S. Forest Service also manage public lands adjacent to the reserve. This diverse group of natural resource managers seeks to conserve the biological function of the watershed, its natural communities and the many ecosystem services they provide.

Although the reserve encompasses only the lower 52 miles of the Apalachicola River, it is connected to a sprawling watershed that traverses three states and covers nearly 20,000 square miles. The basin's upper reaches begin 90 miles north of Atlanta where the Chattahoochee River originates as a small mountain stream. Flowing south for 436 miles, it meets the 350-mile-long Flint River at the state of Florida line and Lake Seminole. Below this point, the Apalachicola River stretches 107

miles to Apalachicola Bay and eventually to the Gulf of Mexico.



The many habitats found within the Apalachicola River watershed support a high diversity of plant and animal species. More than 1,300 plant species have been identified here, with 103 of them listed as threatened or endangered. This region contains more than 40 species of amphibians and 80 species of reptiles, giving this part of the Panhandle one of the highest diversities of these animal groups in North America.

The Apalachicola basin lies on the eastern fringe of the Mississippi flyway, receiving large numbers of birds from both the Midwest and Atlantic Seaboard during migratory periods. Lands and waters of the Forgotten Coast serve as some of the most important bird habitats in the southeastern United States, harboring up to 350 species, depending on the season. Over 270 species of fish have been observed, of which approximately 90 are strictly freshwater, along with more than 50 species of mammals.

This Roadmap to Recreation showcases the recreational opportunities across these conservation lands. Primitive camping, hiking, nature observation and paddling are just a few ways to enjoy the ecosystems while also having minimal impact on the natural communities.

Please be aware of your impact on our natural and cultural resources while you explore and enjoy the beauty of the Apalachicola River and Bay Basin.



Statewide Recreation Programs



The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail (GFBWT) is a 2,000-mile-long network of more than 500 locations in Florida that offer premier wildlife viewing opportunities. The trail promotes bird-watching, environmental education and ecotourism. Regional sites that have been designated along this trail include St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, Cash Bayou and Sand Beach Day Use Areas; Fort Gadsden Historic Site; High Bluff Coastal Hiking Trail; St. George Island State Park; Woody's Walk in Apalachicola and Unit 4 (East Hole) on St. George Island.

La Florida is the "Land of Flowers." The Panhandle is considered one of the best areas in the state to view native wildflowers in natural ecosystems because of the abundance and breadth of public lands. The soils, diverse geological features and a warm, moist climate allow many unique species of plants to thrive. In addition, the majority of public land is routinely managed by prescribed fire, which promotes native plant communities.

Recreational opportunities in Florida's state forests are as diverse as the resources themselves. The **Trailwalker Program** challenges hikers to complete as many as 30 trails in Florida state forests.

Visitors can explore many of these areas by bicycle, horseback or canoe/kayak.

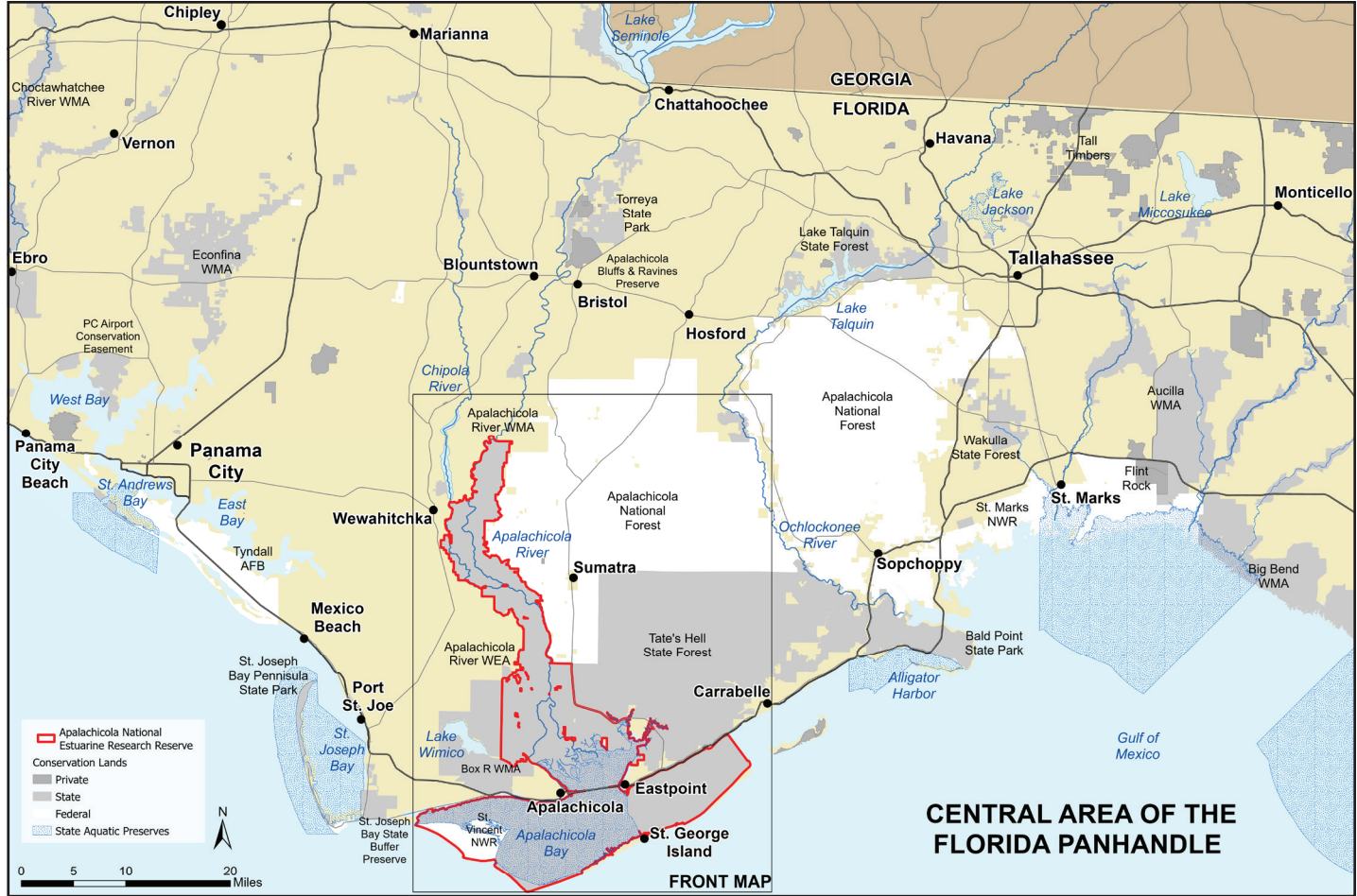


Safety Tips for the Trail

On Every Hike and Paddle
• Bring plenty of water and food. One gallon of water is suggested per person, per day, for overnight trips. For day trips, a half-gallon per person is recommended.
• Bring these essentials: map and compass/CPS, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, whistle, bug spray and first aid kit.

Land Exploration
• Know your route and capabilities. Be aware of the trail terrain, length and species features.
• Stay on the trail and do not take shortcuts. The trail has been designed to minimize damage to surrounding vegetation and to prevent erosion.
• If you find trash along the way, pick it up. Leave the trail or campsite better than when you found it!

Water Exploration
• Know waterway conditions. Check tides, wind and water levels before you set out on your journey.
• Wear a personal flotation device (PFD). Florida law requires a readily accessible and wearable Coast Guard approved PFD with attached whistle for each occupant. Children under age 6 must wear PFDs.



Regional Land Stewardship

Successful land stewardship does not only focus on management and restoration within a single site or tract. Rather, collaborating across multiple properties, landowners and management objectives moves the needle toward landscape-level conservation.

Florida conservation lands and waters span various entities, from federal, state and county lands to private holdings. Land managers often juggle scientific research, natural resource activities and environmental education in pursuit of a variety of management goals.



Some of the ways in which land managers foster sustainable natural ecosystems in Florida include:

- Application of prescribed fire.
- Management of invasive plant and animal species.
- Protection of threatened and endangered species.
- Encouragement of sustainable recreation.
- Habitat mapping and monitoring.
- Long-term monitoring and research.
- Fostering public stewardship of resources through education and outreach programs.

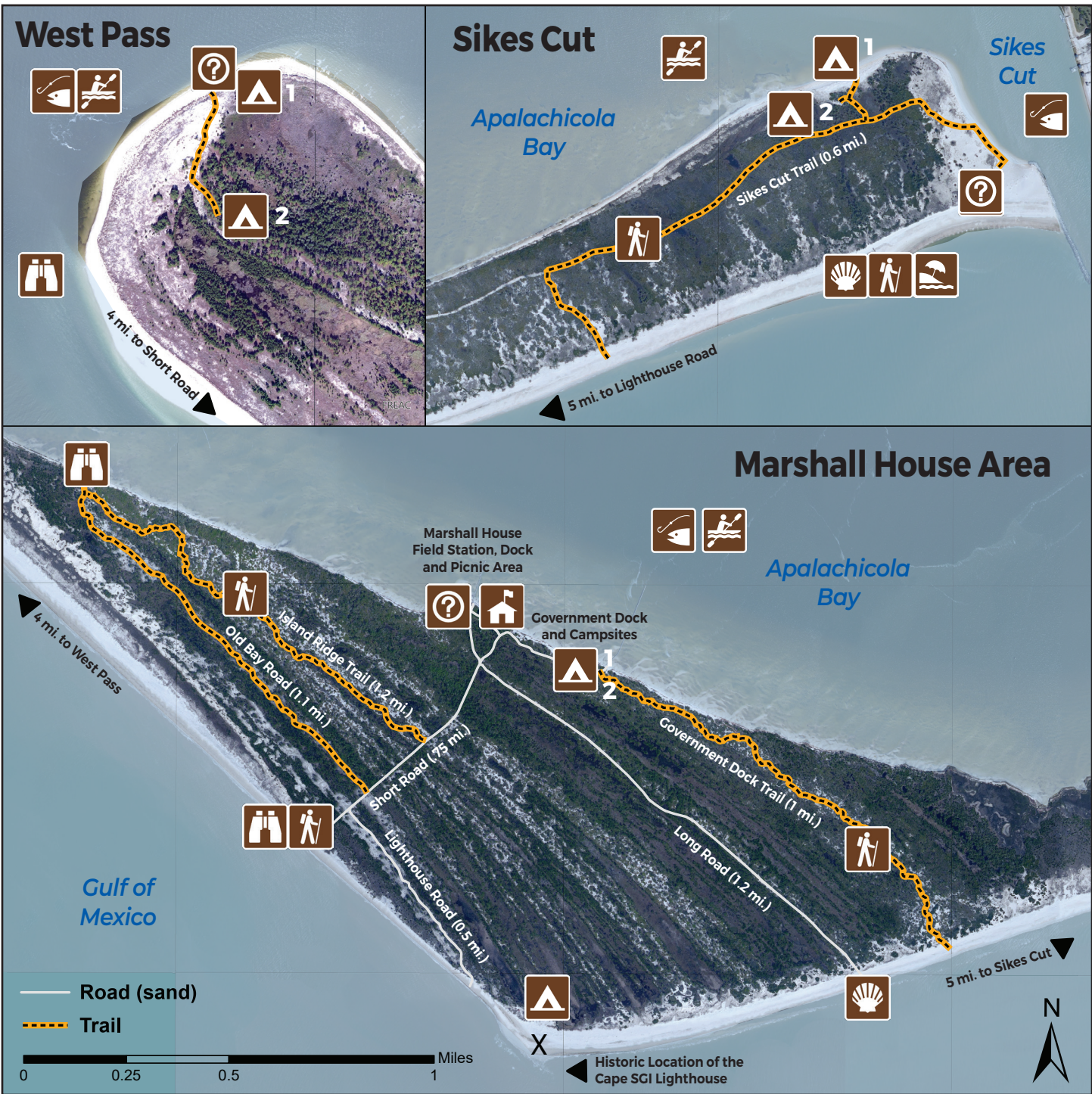
Recreation Opportunity Chart (match management area on map to this table)

	Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve	Apalachicola National Forest	Apalachicola River Water Management Area	Apalachicola River Wildlife and Environmental Area	Box R Wildlife Management Area	Dr. Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park	St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge	Tate's Hell State Forest and Wildlife Management Area
Start Here	Nature center and Unit 4 (East Hole) accessible by vehicles. Free to public (day use/camping fees apply in some areas). Little St. George Island (LSCI), Nick's Hole, and Lower River Marsh tracts accessible by boat only. Pets leashed.	Accessible by vehicles. Free to public (day use/camping fees apply in some areas). Pets leashed.	Florida River Island Recreation Area accessible by vehicles, but most areas accessible by boat. Free to public. Pets leashed.	Multiple access points by vehicle and boat. Free to public. Pets leashed.	Accessible by vehicles. Free to public. Pets leashed.	Accessible by vehicles. Entrance fee at ranger station. Pets leashed.	Accessible by boat only. Free to public (fees apply at shuttle service from Indian Pass). No pets allowed.	Accessible by vehicles. Free to public (day use/camping fees apply in some areas). Pets leashed.
Amenities	Restrooms, elevator and ADA boardwalks available at the nature center. Cellular service, potable water varies across satellite properties.	Restrooms and potable water available at developed recreation areas and camps. Limited cellular service in many areas.	Restrooms available at Florida River Island Recreation Area. Limited cellular service in most areas.	All campgrounds are primitive. No restrooms or potable water available at designated recreation areas or camps. Limited cellular service in many areas.	Restrooms may be available at check station area. No potable water. Limited cellular service in most areas.	Restrooms, showers and potable water available at beach pavilions, the main campground and youth camp area. Limited cellular service in some areas.	Restrooms available at the Indian Pass boat launch. Restrooms may be available at West Pass Cabin/Indian Pass. No potable water. Limited cellular service in most areas.	Restrooms and non-potable water available at designated recreation areas and camps. Limited or no cellular service in most areas.
Non-Motorized Trails	9+ total miles including Cap Point Trail, Nick's Hole Trail, West Pass Trail, Island Ridge Trail, Government Dock Trail, Sikes Cut Trail, nature center boardwalks.	109 total miles including Wright Lake Trail, Trail of Lakes and Camel Lake Loop, Fort Caddisen Trail, Florida National Scenic Trail.	No primitive hiking trails but hiking allowed on multiple-use roads.	0.5 mile Pine to Palm Trail (Sand Beach).	No primitive hiking trails but hiking allowed on multiple-use roads.	3.5 total miles including Cap Point Nature Trail, East Slough Boardwalk and Trail.	1+ total miles including Central Trail, East Beach and West Beach Access Trails.	9+ total miles including Cash Creek Interpretive Trail, RK Dwarf Cypress Boardwalk and High Bluff Coastal Hiking Trail.
Multiple-use Roads	3 miles of unpaved roads (LSCI).	1,500+ miles of mostly unpaved roads.	8 miles of unpaved roads.	100+ miles of unpaved roads.	40+ miles of unpaved roads.	4 miles of unpaved road and nearly 6 miles of paved.	90+ miles of unpaved roads.	850+ miles of unpaved roads plus 19 miles paved.
Designated Paddling Trails	9+ miles on Van Horn Slough and Chipley Creek. Part of the 1,645-mile circumnavigational trail.	7+ miles along the Apalachicola River. Part of the 163-mile Apalachicola River Blueway Paddling Trail. Part of the 62-mile Lower Ochlockonee River State Trail.	19+ miles along the Apalachicola River. Part of the 163-mile Apalachicola River Blueway Paddling Trail.	100+ miles within the Apalachicola River WEA State Paddling Trail System (11 designated trails, see Map 4); Part of the 163-mile Apalachicola River Blueway Paddling Trail.	7 miles along the Jackson and Apalachicola rivers. 8+ miles along Columbus, Little Huckleberry, Pine Log, and Huckleberry creeks. Part of the 122-mile Panhandle Intracoastal Waterway Paddling Trail.	Part of the 1,645-mile circumnavigational trail.	Part of the 1,645-mile circumnavigational trail.	10+ miles along Whiskey George, Cash Creek, High Bluff Creeks. Part of the 25-mile New River Paddling Trail. Part of the 62-mile Lower Ochlockonee River State Trail. Part of the 1,645-mile circumnavigational trail.
Water Access	3 hand-launches available at Millender Park, Nick's Hole, Sawyer Street. 2 public docks (LSCI). 2 fishing piers (old SCI Bridge). public boat ramps in Apalachicola, Eastpoint and SCI.	24 launches total (18 boat ramps, 6 primitive). 9 lakes/ponds.	1 launch (boat ramp at Florida River Island Recreation Area).	7 launches total (5 boat ramps, 2 primitive).	1 boat launch with 2 floating docks (Abnormoco Boat Ramp at Pine Log).	2 primitive boat launches and beach access available.	No designated boat ramps or canoe launches but beach access is available. 1 boat house for staff use only. Boat launch at Indian Pass open to public.	30 launches total (5 boat ramps, 25 primitive). 1 wood dock (Cash Creek).
Primitive Camping	9 primitive campsites. Free and year-round. First come, first served. Registration is recommended but not required. Leave No Trace required.	6 designated campgrounds, 19 hunt camps, and dispersed camping available year-round (14 days max). First come, first served at most sites. Fees apply in certain areas. During the general gun season, camping is allowed only in designated hunt camps. Electric hookups only available at Camel, Wright and Hickory Landing. Online reservations for Camel and Wright Lake available at Recreation.gov.	1 designated campground (total 10 campsites) at Florida River Island Recreation Area. Reservation required (free) and year-round. Dispersed camping allowed throughout the WMA (on river sandbars and in floodplain).	4 designated campgrounds (total 17 campsites) with 2 permit (free). No permit required at Whiskey George primitive camp. Dispersed camping is allowed throughout the WEA (14 days maximum).	No public camping permitted.	1 designated full-facility campground (60 sites). 2 primitive camps on Cap Point plus 1 youth group camp. Reservation fee required and available at camping allowed throughout the Reserve. FloridaStateParks.org	No public camping permitted. Overnight stays allowed only in conjunction with refuge hunts, by permit, at 2 designated hunt camps.	57 campsites including 28 hunt camps (special permit required) and 4 campgrounds. Most sites are on the river banks with canoe/kayak small boat access and fishing. Reservation fee required and available at FloridaStateParks.org.
Nature Observation	Bald eagles, osprey, dolphins, waterfowl, American oystercatchers, diamondback terrapins, barrier island dune and swale habitats, expansive salt marshes, Woody's Walk (Apalachicola) and Unit 4 (LSCI) are designated CFBWT sites.	Red-cockaded woodpeckers, gopher tortoises, Apalachicola king snakes, Longline pine and pitcher plant habitats. 5 designated CFBWT sites: Fort Caddisen, Wright Lake, County Road 22 Pond and Forest Dock, 123 sites near Sumatra).	Vast, forested floodplain populated by many bird, reptile, amphibian and mammal species as well as tupelo and cypress trees.	White-tailed deer, raccoons, bald eagles, river turtles, 200+ bird species, 4 designated CFBWT sites (Cash Bayou, Sand Beach, Bloody Bluff, Howard's Creek Agriculture Fields).	Wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, hogs, river otters, osprey and wetland birds across flatwoods and river floodplain habitats.	Shorebirds and seabirds, dolphins, sea turtles. Barrier island dune and beach habitats. St. George Island State Park is a designated CFBWT site.	Alligators, red wolves, bald eagles, sambar deer, water moccasin, Dune ridge and swale habitats. St. Vincent Island is a designated CFBWT site.	Florida black bears, swallow-tailed kites, barred owls, frog species, pygmy rattlesnakes, Dwarf pygmy, flatwoods and coastal ridge habitats. 2 designated CFBWT sites (Deep Creek Tract, High Bluff Coastal Hiking Trail).
Special Opportunities	9.5 miles of undeveloped gulf beach (LSCI). Biking (excluding electric bikes) allowed.	83 miles designated off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails (Leon County, permit required). Biking allowed on multiuse roads.	Biking allowed on multi-use roads.	Horseback riding and biking allowed on multi-use roads.	Horseback riding and biking allowed on multi-use roads.	Events and ranger programs are available year-round (check website calendar). Biking allowed on multiuse roads.	Seasonal guided tram tours available. 9 miles of undeveloped gulf beach. Biking allowed on non-OHV roads and on multiuse trails.	Hunting managed by FWC under Apalachicola River Wildlife Management Area regulations. Special permit fees allow hunt for the duration of hunting season available. Freshwater and saltwater fishing available.
Hunting and Fishing	Hunting on the Lower River Marsh tract is managed by FWC under Apalachicola WEA regulations. Dove hunting allowed on LSCI. Freshwater and saltwater fishing available.	Hunting managed by FWC under Apalachicola WEA regulations. Freshwater fishing available.	Hunting managed by FWC under Apalachicola WEA regulations. Freshwater fishing available.	Hunting managed by FWC under Apalachicola River WEA regulations. Squirrel and dove hunting popular. Hunting activity generally peaks between mid-November and mid-January. Check the regulations summary and hunt calendar before your visit. Freshwater and saltwater fishing available.	Hunting managed by FWC under Box R regulations. Deer, hog and turkey hunting popular. Quota permits for deer are available, and dove field hunting is open without a quota permit on opening day of dove season. Check the regulations summary and hunt calendar before your visit. Freshwater fishing available (not saltwater).	No hunting allowed. Saltwater fishing available.	First-come, first-served permits for 3 hunts (sambar, archery, muzzleloader). FWC issues permits for refuge hunts and hunts managed by WFS staff. Freshwater and saltwater fishing available around St. Vincent Island and from 14 Mile parcel.	Hunting managed by FWC under Tate's Hell Wildlife Management Area regulations. Special permit fees allow hunt for the duration of hunting season available. Freshwater and saltwater fishing available.
Contact	Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve 108 Island Drive Eastpoint, FL 32328 850-670-7700	Apalachicola District Office Ranger Station 11152 N.W. State Route 20 Bristol, FL 32321 850-643-2282	Northwest Florida Water Management District 81 Water Management Drive Havana, FL 32333 850-539-9999	Northwest Florida Regional FWC Office 3911 Highway 2321 Panama City, FL 32409 850-265-3676	Northwest Florida Regional FWC Office 3911 Highway 2321 Panama City, FL 32409 850-265-3676	Dr. Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park 1900 E. Gulf Beach Drive St. George Island, FL 32328 850-927-2111	St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge P.O. Box 447 Apalachicola, FL 32329 850-653-8808	Florida Forest Service Tate's Hell State Forest 289 Airport Road Carrabelle, FL 32232 850-697-0010
Scan QR code for more information								

Lower Apalachicola River Corridor | Road Map to Recreation | Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve | 108 Island Drive | Eastpoint, FL 32328 | FloridaDEP.gov/ANERR | 850-670-7700

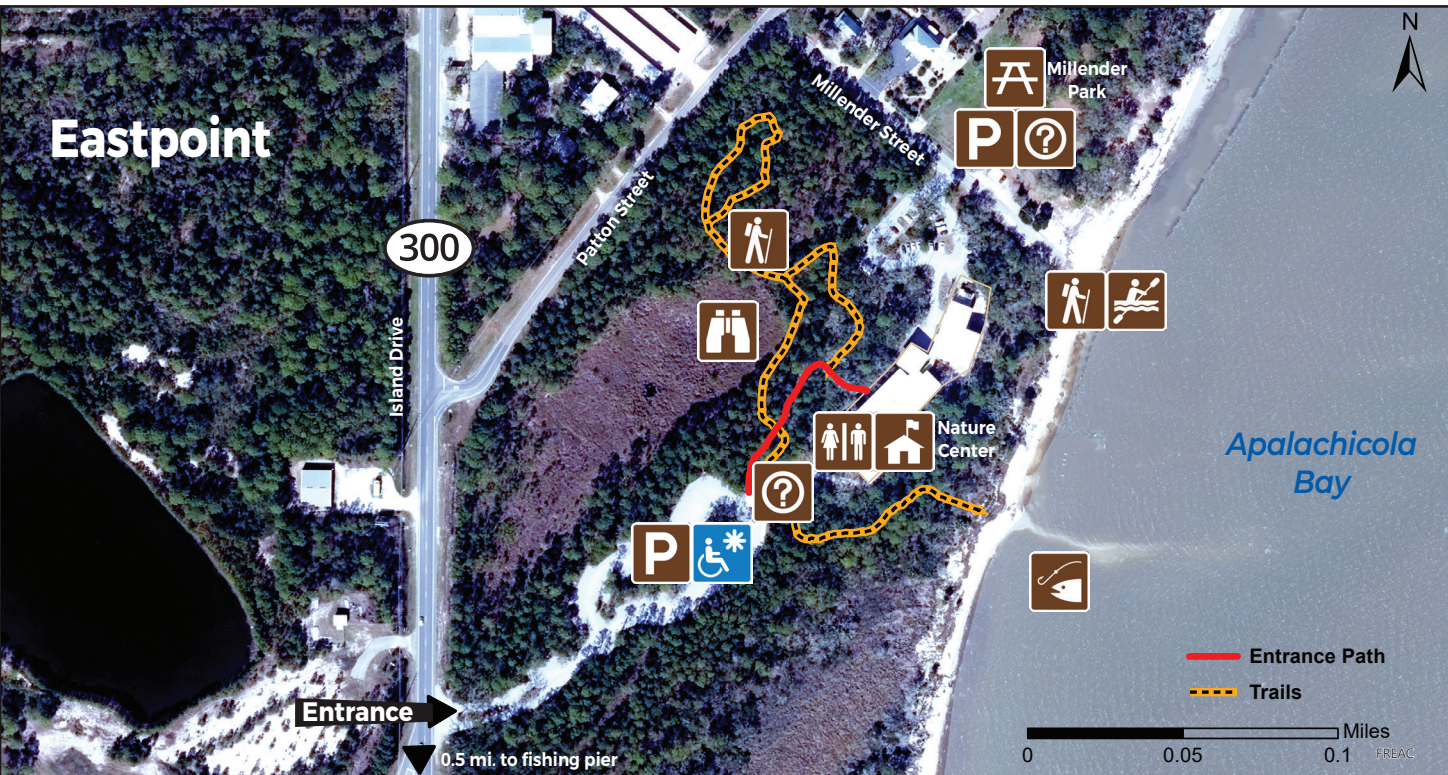
Map 1 - Little St. George Island

Little St. George Island is open year-round to the public for beach activities, fishing, hiking, paddling and primitive camping. The island is accessible by boat only, and access points include West Pass, Marshall House/Government Dock and Sikes Cut.



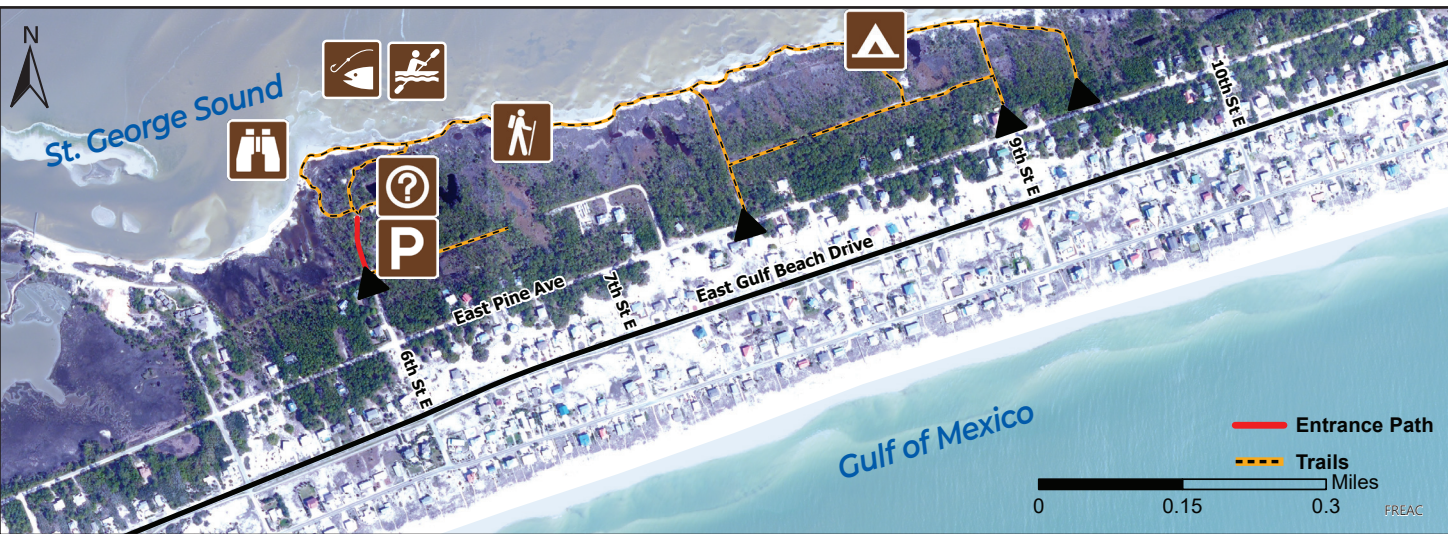
Map 2 - ANERR Nature Center

The nature center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and is located at 108 Island Drive in Eastpoint. Aquatic tanks and historical and cultural exhibits are featured in the center. Outdoor boardwalks are also available. Admission is free.



Map 3 - Unit 4 on St. George Island

The Unit 4 (East Hole) tract is open year-round and is easily accessed at the end of Sixth Street East on St. George Island.



Map 4 - Apalachicola River Paddling Opportunities

There are a variety of paddling trips for all ages, skill levels and interests in the Apalachicola River and Bay Basin. For detailed trip planning, including maps, campsites, points of interest and amenities, refer to the Apalachicola River Blueway website by scanning the QR code in the corner of this map or by visiting MyFWC.com.

