

PERMITS NEEDED TO THRU-HIKE THE FLORIDA TRAIL

THE FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION is working with land management agencies to streamline the registration and permitting process on all portions of the Florida Trail System. As new trail is being continuously added the permits required are in a constant state of change. The most important requirements and information for thru-hikers are listed below. When in doubt, check with the local land managers. **BE SURE TO CARRY YOUR FTA MEMBERSHIP CARD AND A PHOTO ID AT ALL TIMES WHEN HIKING THE FNST.**



Big Cypress National Preserve, Map 41-42 – The rest area at mile marker 63 along Interstate 75 has reopened. The up-graded facility includes backcountry access parking on the north and south sides of the interstate for those wanting to hike into the backcountry of the national preserve. For more information on this and other access from I-75 into Big Cypress go to <http://www.nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/interstate-75-access-facilities>. Phone: (239) 695-1107 Email: bob_degross@nps.gov



Big Cypress South, Map 42 - A permit card must be signed by hikers at the southern end of the trail at Loop Road or Oasis Visitor Center. This card must be carried while in Big Cypress.



Big Cypress North, Map 41 & Seminole, Map 40 - Permission is needed to hike through the Seminole Indian Reservation and hikers must sign a release form. **This form is the General Release and Covenant Not to Sue. (enclosed) If you are from outside Florida, you need two witnesses. If a citizen of Florida, you will need to have it notarized. Mail it to:**

Seminole Tribe of Florida
Attn: Real Estate Services, Room #104
6300 Stirling Road
Hollywood, FL 33024-2198

They will contact you only if there is a problem. Keep a copy with you or as a picture on your phone.





Highlands/Okeechobee, Map 35 - Permits must be obtained from the SFWMD to camp in Chandler Slough, Hickory Hammock and Boney Marsh. Call SFWMD for free permits, (863) 462-5260. Thru-hikers are given a several day window for camping.





Kissimmee River, Map 34 – Thru-hikers must stop at the Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park office at waypoint 34-5 and pay the park entrance fee and any camping fees. Reservations for KPPSP's three primitive campsites are required: call (863) 462-5360. Thru-hikers are given an 8-day window for camping. Crossing the S-65A Lock at waypoint 34-7 requires **at least seven days advance notice. Hikers must call Kim Willis at Dupuis Management Area at 800-432-2045 ext.3333, or email Kim at kwillis@sfwmd.gov to schedule a crossing of the lock. A horn is provided at the lock to signal the locktender.**


Approximate mileages to Lock: (for Northbounders)	(for Southbounders)
Oasis Ranger Station: 220 Miles	88 Store "Eastern Route" 240 Miles
Loop Road 230 Miles	88 Store "Western Route" 277 Miles
Key West 430 Miles	


 Green Swamp East, Map 30 - Permits waived for thru-hikers but hunting restrictions on camping still apply. Section hikers and weekenders - permit must be obtained from the SWFWMD to camp in Green Swamp East. NO DOGS. Southwest Florida Water Management District, 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, FL 34604, (352) 754-6877, (800) 423-1476 (FL only)


 Green Swamp West, Map 29 – Permits waived for thru-hikers but hunting restrictions on camping still apply. Section hikers and weekenders - permit must be obtained from the SWFWMD to camp in Green Swamp West. Southwest Florida Water Management District, 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, FL 34604. (Note: the Florida Trail campsites for GSW are not included on their permit at this time.) (352) 754-6877, (800) 423-1476 (FL only)

 Cassia, Map 21 - In Seminole State Forest there is a \$1.00 per person entrance fee. No permission or additional fee is required to hike through or to camp at the three on-trail campsites, except that no camping is allowed during their very limited hunt dates.

 Gold Head Branch State Park, Map 18 - Requires a fee to camp in the State Park including the primitive campsite. Hikers entering from the south end of the park can call the entrance station and pay the next day on the way out.

 Camp Blanding, Map 17 – Hikers should check the kiosks located just inside the east and west entrances to Camp Blanding. Camp closures are posted on these kiosks. If the Camp is closed for military exercise hikers should follow the white blazed alternate trail around the base.

 St. Marks, Map 11 - Requires a permit and small fee for each campsite used. Camping is only available to persons hiking the entire length of the Refuge. You must obtain the written permit prior to entering the refuge. St Marks is the ONLY National Wildlife Refuge that allows hikers to camp and that privilege is extended ONLY to thru and section hikers of the Florida Trail. **Failure to obtain your permit may jeopardize this agreement for future hikers.** St Mark's National Wildlife Refuge, PO Box 68, St Marks, FL 32355, (850) 925-6121

 Pinelog State Forest, Map 6 – The established campground (fee) is the only camping allowed in Pinelog during hunting dates.



Eglin East, Map 4, & Eglin North, Map 3 & Eglin West, Map 2 –

Hiking

A recreation permit is required to hike in Eglin. To purchase a permit you will need to register (New User) for an iSportsman account. Please follow the instructions found here:

<https://eglin.isportsman.net/OutdoorRecPermits.aspx>

Please be aware that to complete the registration process, you will need to watch the online Safety Brief. Once you have watched the video, you will be able to view available permits. Print your permit and copy the image to your smartphone.

Camping

Currently, Camping Permits are only available for in-person pickup at the Natural Resources Office (address below).

However, if you have registered for a recreation permit (your information is in their system), a local “Trail Angel” has volunteered to coordinate with FNST Thru-Hikers to pick up the Eglin Camping Permit for them and to relay the permit information.

If you are a Thru-Hiker interested in this, please contact “Eglin Camping Trail Angel” @ marymckinley24@gmail.com for more info.

Eglin’s Natural Resources Office

107 Highway 85 North

Niceville, FL 32578

[\(850\) 882-4165](tel:8508824165) or [\(850\) 882-4166](tel:8508824166)

For 2017/2018 the recreation permit is \$20, and camping is \$5 per night.

While on the trail, all hikers must also complete and carry the tear-off Hiker Registration Cards that are available at each Trailhead Kiosk they pass (US 331, Alauqua, SR 285, SR 85, SR 87 and River Rd). All hikers are also required to carry positive proof of identification (photo ID).

NOTE: This list may not include every permit and fee you may need while hiking the Florida Trail, but it does include the major ones you need to know about in advance.