

Office of Greenways and Trails Trail Towns & Designations

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Florida Department of Environmental Protection

BPAC Meeting | March 13, 2024

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THE OFFICE OF GREENWAYS AND TRAILS FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Office of Greenways and Trails was established to fulfill the Florida Greenways and Trails Act...

To ... *"conserve, develop and use the natural resources of this state for healthful and recreational purposes"*.

[Florida Greenways and Trails Act, Chapter 260, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#)

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Florida Greenways and Trails Council (FGTC)

- Established in Chapter 260.0142, F.S.
- **Advises** the department on greenway and trail related issues.
- Promotes **intergovernmental cooperation** and **private partnerships** for developing the greenways and trails system.
- Recommends **priorities** for critical links in developing and managing the system.



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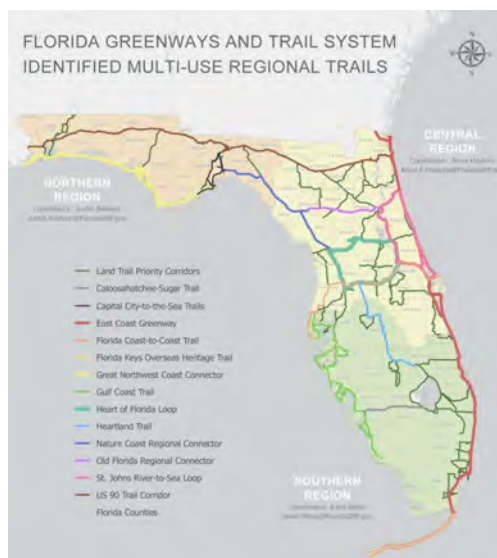
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Florida's Greenways and Trails System Includes:

- 1,500-mile Florida National Scenic Trail.
- 1,515-mile Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail.
- 250-mile Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail.
- 260-mile St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop.
- 270-mile Gulf Coast Trail.

... And much more.

FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAIL SYSTEM
IDENTIFIED MULTI-USE REGIONAL TRAILS



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Florida's Designated Trail Towns

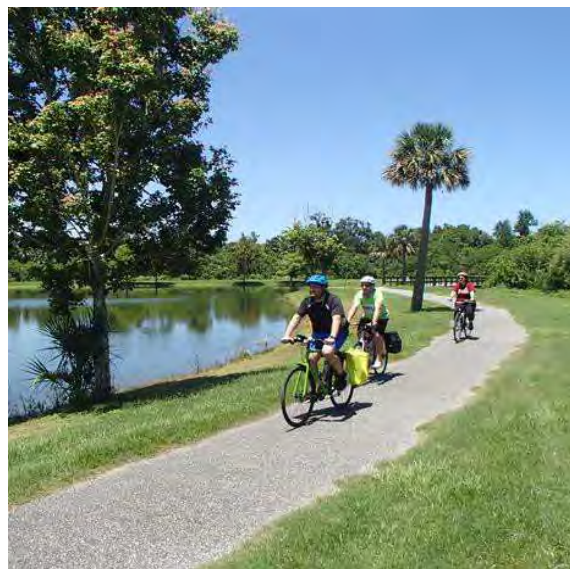
- Dunedin
- Titusville
- Malabar
- Vilano Beach
- Clermont
- Palatka
- Inverness
- Deltona
- Everglades City
- Winter Garden
- Depot Park, Gainesville
- DeBary
- Winter Haven
- Mount Dora
- Brooksville
- Capital Cascades Corridor, Tallahassee
- Milton
- Sopchoppy
- White Springs



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Trail Town Goals:

- Enhance the quality of Florida's trail experience.
- Promote tourism and growth of Florida's trails and throughway towns.
- Increase the amount and frequency of trail users in Florida.
- Engage citizens with Florida's trail system through active community participation.





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What Makes a Trail Town?

- A portal, gateway or hub to a regional or priority trail or trail system.



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What Makes a Trail Town?

- Trails and greenway action plan.
- Shared vision.
- Local business support – Trail Town business pledge.
- Social infrastructure.



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What Makes a Trail Town?

- Trail-related services and businesses such as:
 - Shuttles.
 - Supplies and gear for hiking, biking, paddling or horseback riding.
 - Rentals of canoes, kayaks or bikes.



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What Makes a Trail Town?

- Amenities for trail users that are safe and easily accessible such as:
 - Lodging.
 - Restaurants.
 - Points of Interest- museums, retail shops, etc.



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What Makes a Trail Town?

- Clear directional signage on and to the trail.





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What Makes a Trail Town?

- “Trail friendly” experience with knowledgeable citizens who interact with visitors.
- Business owners and employees who can answer trail questions.





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What Makes a Trail Town?

- A variety of community events/competitions that promote the outdoors or involve local trails.



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What Makes a Trail Town?

- Provides a "sense of place"
 - Local citizens willing to share culture, history, and stories.
- Local trail users and local trail promotion.
- "Trail Champions" – standout citizen supporters.



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Interested in becoming a Trail Town?

- Interested communities should contact their OGT Regional Coordinator and complete the Trail Town Self-Assessment found at www.floridadep.gov/ogt.





FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAIL SYSTEM IDENTIFIED MULTI-USE REGIONAL TRAILS

NORTHERN REGION
Coordinator: Lynn Barber
lbarber@floridadep.com

CENTRAL REGION
Coordinator: [Name]
[Email]

SOUTHERN REGION
Coordinator: [Name]
[Email]


- Land Trail Priority Corridor
- Caloosahatchee-Sugar Trail
- Capital City-to-the-Sea Trails
- East Coast Greenway
- Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail
- Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail
- Gulf Northwest Coast Connector
- Gulf Coast Trail
- Heart of Florida Loop
- Heartland Trail
- Nature Coast Regional Connector
- Old Florida Regional Connector
- St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop
- US 90 Trail Corridor
- Florida Counties



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The Trail Town Process:



Trail Town Questionnaire

Use the Self-Assessment to assist with completing the questionnaire.


Trail

What types of trails connect to or are located near your town? (hiking, biking, paddling, shared use non-motorized, multi-use, equestrian, etc.)

List any neighboring trails and their proximity to your town.

Who maintains your trail(s)? Please identify each trail and the manager.





1. Interested communities review the Trail Town Self-Assessment and complete the Questionnaire.
2. OGT staff conduct a site visit with local trail advocates and planners after receiving an application.
3. After a town is approved, the Designation is presented to the Florida Greenways and Trails Council for official recognition.



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The Trail Town Process



4. Designated Trail Towns receive signage, stickers, website presence and publicity/promotion.



Brooksville: a Florida Trail Town

Equal parts historic & scenic, Brooksville offers trails with historic sites and adventure amongst the Spanish-moss draped oak streets.

5. Story Map tours are developed for each Trail Town and posted on the OGT website.



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Trail Town celebration events are great for publicity and community involvement.

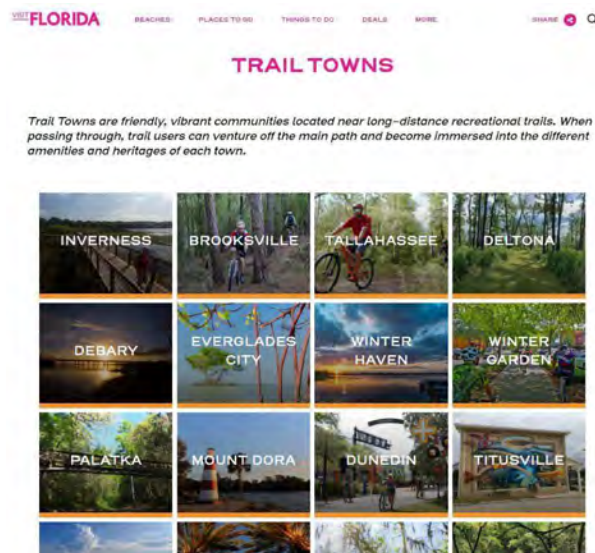




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Legislation passed in 2023 directed Visit Florida to increase promotion of trails and Trail Towns.

[Webpage Link](#)



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Choose your adventure- there is a Trail Town for everyone!



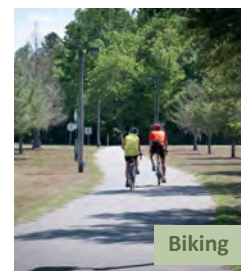
Small Town



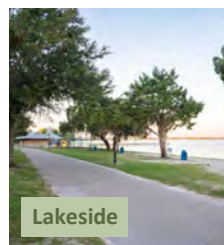
Developed City



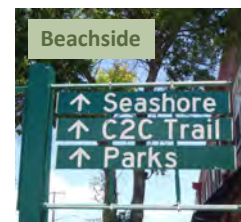
Paddling



Biking



Lakeside



Beachside

And So Much More!

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Designation Program

- Land trails, greenways, blueways, and sites across the state can be designated as part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) through an application process and voluntary landowner agreement.
- Lands may be public or private.
- Paddling trails are included.



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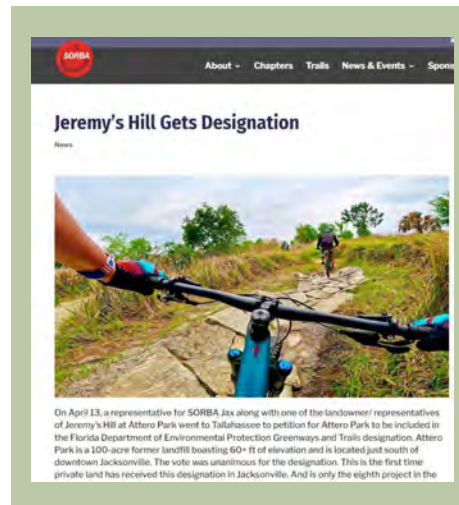
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Purpose of Designation

- Further the goals and objectives of the FGTS, creating an **interconnected system**.
- Encourage **voluntary partnerships** in conservation, development, and management of the system's many pieces.
- Provide **recognition** for individual pieces of the system and partners involved.
- Raise **public awareness** of the conservation and recreation benefits of the system.



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Basic Criteria

- A designated land or waterway must protect and/or enhance natural, recreational, cultural or historic resources.
- AND**
- Provide linear open space, a hub or a site.
- OR**
- Promote connectivity between or among conservation lands, communities, parks, other recreational facilities, cultural sites, or historic sites.

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Paddling Trail Criteria

- Local, regional or state entity agrees to be the **manager** of the trail in terms of development and long-term maintenance. The manager must agree to monitor the trail at least once a year.
- At least **three miles** in length.
- Adequate **public access**.
- Adequate **information** is provided in terms of difficulty, mileage, safety considerations and environmental conditions.
- **Campsites** and **overnight stops** are only required when public access points are further than **20 miles** apart so that paddlers can complete day trips in a reasonable amount of time.



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Benefits of Designation

- Gives **public recognition** to local greenway and trail projects.
- Private landowners receive **liability protection**.
- Lands and waterways receive **additional consideration** in some acquisition and grant programs, such as the Florida Communities Trust Land Acquisition Program, the Recreational Trails Grant Program (RTP), and the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP).
- Paddling trails included in OGT **regional story maps**. Paddling guides created as needed/able.

Name	Guide	Story Map
Putnam County Blueways	External Link	
Pellicer Creek	Paddling Guide	Story Map
Wallow Creek	Paddling Guide	Story Map
Tomoka River	Paddling Guide	Story Map
Spring Creek	Paddling Guide	Story Map
St. Johns River Blueway	Paddling Guide and Data Base	Story Map
Wekiva River/Rock Springs Run	Paddling Guide	Story Map
Escanlonhatchee River	Paddling Guide	Story Map
Shingle Creek	External Link - Launch/View Guide	External Link - Paddling Guide



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The Designation Process

