



## What's New on the Circumnavigational Trail

CT Trail changes since the [8<sup>th</sup> edition of the printed Amazon guide](#) was published in June of 2022.

**June 5, 2024:** In Segment 16, camping is currently not allowed on Teacher's Island, so the alternate inside route along Biscayne Bay is recommended since it is 19.5 miles from Matheson Hammock to Oleta River State Park versus 28.4 miles from Boca Chita to Oleta.

In Segment 6, the El-Sea's Fish Camp and Horseshoe Marina, both in Horseshoe Beach, are no longer open.

**March 26, 2024:** Starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, the [Everglades National Park Gulf Coast Visitor Center](#) and canoe/kayak launch in Everglades City will be closed through most of 2024 as a new visitor center and seawall is constructed.

**Dec. 12, 2023:** In Segment 5, the old primitive campsite in Econfina River State Park is in the process of being relocated to a more convenient area. Until that project is completed, the best option is to arrange for camping through the park concessionaire, Econfina River Resort at 850-584-2135, or visit their store.

**Oct. 11, 2023:** Rock Island and Spring Warrior campsites are now open in segment 6. In Segment 9, the Club Bamboo South is now the Dream Inn. In Segment 12, the Bridgewater Inn and Castaways Cottages are permanently closed. In Segment 15, the Lookout Lodge is closed and the Big Pine Fishing Lodge is now the Big Pine Key Resort.

**Oct. 5, 2023:** All primitive campsites managed by FWC along the Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail are now open except for Rock Island and Spring Warrior. Check their website for updates: <https://myfwc.com/recreation/lead/big-bend/paddling-trail/>.

Businesses along the Big Bend Coast are slowly reopening, some in a partial capacity. Check local websites or call before using.

**Sept. 28, 2023:** Primitive campsites in St. Joseph Peninsula State Park (segment 3) are now open, and the park has created some new ones! See revised [segment 3 text](#) and [maps](#).

**Sept. 1, 2023:** Due to the impacts of Hurricane Idalia, please avoid most of segment 6 until damage assessments can be made in the coastal towns. Also, the FWC has closed camping reservations along the Big Bend Coast until further notice:

<https://myfwc.com/recreation/lead/big-bend/paddling-trail/>.

**August, 2023:** [The El Governor Beachfront Resort](#) and the [Driftwood Inn](#) in Mexico Beach (Segment 3) have been fully renovated since Hurricane Michael and have now reopened.

The entirety of Big Lagoon State Park has now reopened from past hurricane damage, including the primitive kayak launch and campsite. If you are a CT paddler, contact the ranger station for reserving the campsite: 850-492-1595. There is a one night limit.

**July, 2023:** It is highly recommended that you contact the Waccasassa Bay Preserve Manager (Segment 6) to find out the condition of the Hall, Kelly and Turtle Creek campsites while in your trip planning stage (352-543-5567).

Regarding the portage to Stump Hole from St. Joe Bay in Segment 4, the safest route is to use wheels and travel southeast a quarter mile down the bike trail along 30E to the beach at Stump Hole. Do not attempt to cross the high riprap!

**May, 2023:** In Segment 11, Gasparilla Island State Park has reopened but Cayo Costa State Park (also part of Segment 12) remains closed. In Segment 12, the bayside has reopened for limited use at Lover's Key State Park, but most facilities are still closed, including the launch area. In Segment 13, part of Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park has reopened for day use, including the boat ramp.

**April, 2023: Good News!** In the Segment 15-16 Alternate Route, Matheson Hammock is now open for primitive camping again. Make sure to call and reserve a campsite at least 48 hours in advance: 305-665-5475 or 305-230-3033 during operating hours 8 am to 5 pm. [Please review camping permit rules here](#). The same rules apply for Homestead Bayfront Park.

**January, 2023:** Due to damage from Hurricane Ian, the Gulf Coast Visitor Center in Everglades City is closed and drinking water is not available. There is no longer a requirement to pick up hard copy permits at the visitor centers within 24 hours. Instead, you can reserve campsites in advance online:

<https://www.recreation.gov/permits/4675314>. Make sure to print out the email confirmation and have it with you if approached by law enforcement.

**November, 2022:** Lighthouse Inn in Segment 13, day one, is closed permanently due to Hurricane Ian. The nearby Vanderbilt Beach Resort is slated to open December 15, 2022. In segments 12 and 13, paddlers should be aware that navigational markers are down, channels have shifted, and there is still hurricane debris in the water. No swimming is advised. Paddlers should use extreme caution or postpone segments 12 and 13 for a later date.

**October, 2022:** Due to damage from Hurricane Ian, several state parks in segments 11, 12 and 13 are closed. Cayo Costa, Delnor-Wiggins, Gasparilla Island and Lover's Key state parks suffered extensive damage and will likely remain closed for an extended period of time. Check <https://www.floridastateparks.org/> for the latest information. Several motels featured in these segments are also closed until further notice. Paddlers heading south should stock up on supplies around Sarasota and rely mostly on undeveloped island campsites until Marco Island and Everglades City. It is highly encouraged to register and communicate your plans with FPTA in the event Trail Angel support is needed. You can [register here](#).

The platform at the CT campsite in Econfinia River State Park in segment 6 is currently unusable. Contact the park for current status. As an alternative, the [Econfinia Resort](#) offers a hotel, condo and general store.

**August, 2022:** Thru paddlers who want to camp on Bowtie Island (Segment 12) will now need a free permit. Permit applicants should contact Calusa Blueway Coordinator Mike Hammond: [mhammond@leegov.com](mailto:mhammond@leegov.com) or call (239) 707-7981 with as much advance notice as possible. A float plan is required that shows why camping is needed on the island. Other visitors are not allowed to camp on the island.