

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 1

N



GROOM RITAL RD

Withlacoochee State Forest

98 50

Rital

Cypress Lake Preserve

HERNANDO

CORTEZ BLVD

Ridge Manor

301

50

Withlacoochee State Trail

98

**Access Point 2: CR 575 Bridge**  
N: 28.4760 W: -82.1572

575

Talisman

Dutton Still



Trilby

DURDEN RD

Lacoochee

COIT RD

COULTER RD

Moss Town

**Access Point 1: Lacoochee Park**  
N: 28.4637 W: -82.1351

PASCO



**High Bluff Primitive Campsite**  
N: 28.4481 W: -82.1441

Green Swamp

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

- Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail
- Withlacoochee State Trail
- Springs
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 2

N



**Access Point 10: Lake Townsen  
Regional Park**  
N: 28.6510 W: -82.2729

**Access Point 9: Nobleton  
Wayside Park**  
N: 28.6471 W: -82.2622

**Access Point 8: CR 476 Bridge**  
N: 28.6447 W: -82.2574

**Access Point 7: Hog Island  
Rec Area**  
N: 28.6194 W: -82.2412

**Access Point 6: Iron Bridge  
Rec Area**  
N: 28.5934 W: -82.2213

**Access Point 5: Silver Lake Rec Area**  
N: 28.5782 W: -82.2173

**Access Point 4: River Junction  
Rec Area**  
N: 28.5725 W: -82.2002

**Access Point 3: Crooked River  
Campground**  
N: 28.5650 W: -82.2057

Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail

Withlacoochee State Trail

Florida Trail



Camping



Canoe/Kayak Launch



Restrooms



Swimming



Potable Water



Florida Conservation Lands

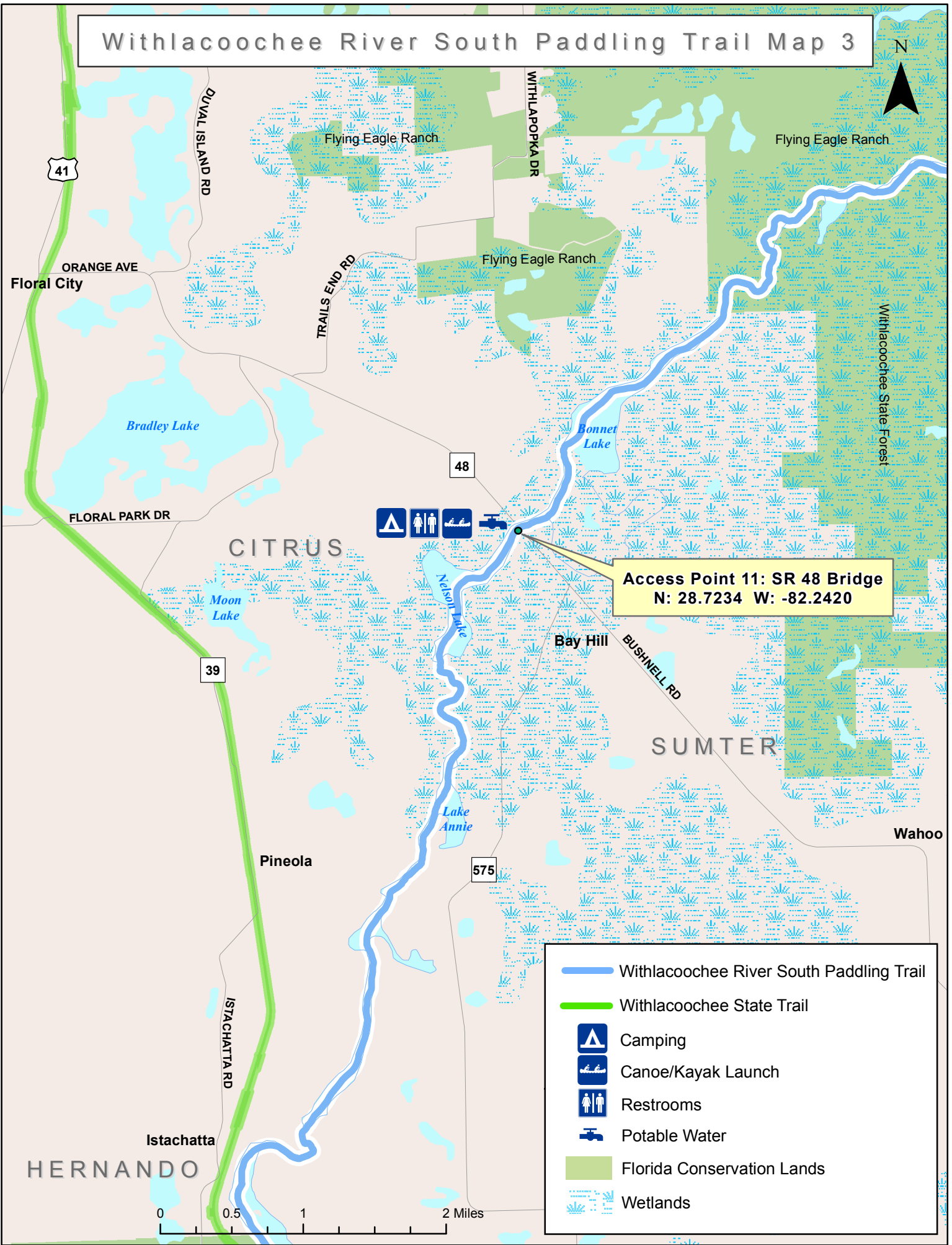


Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 3

N



Access Point 11: SR 48 Bridge  
N: 28.7234 W: -82.2420

- Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail
- Withlacoochee State Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Wetlands



# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 4

N



Rutland

**Access Point 14: Rutland Park**  
N: 28.8520 W: -82.2182

**Access Point 13: Carlson Landing/Wysong Dam**  
N: 28.8235 W: -82.1830

Carlson

**Access Point 12: Marsh Bend  
County Park**  
N: 28.8001 W: -82.1533

Lake Panasoffkee

Panacoochee  
Retreats

Lake Panasoffkee

Withlacoochee State Forest

Flying Eagle Ranch

CITRUS

SUMTER

Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail

 Springs

 Canoe/Kayak Launch

 Restrooms

 Florida Conservation Lands

 Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 5

N



FOREST TRAIL DR

TURKEY TRAIL DR

MARION

Gum Slough Conservation Easement (SWFWMD)

Gum Slough

SUMTER

Potts Preserve

CITRUS

Potts Preserve Primitive Campsite  
N: 28.9148 | W: -82.2824

Access Point 15: Turner Camp  
N: 28.9066 W: -82.2768

Half Moon Wildlife Management Area

TURNER CAMP RD

↓ Inverness

581

GOSPEL ISLAND RD

LITTLE JOHN AVE

- Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail
- Springs
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 6

N



484

Rainbow Springs State Park

← Dunnellon

Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway State Recreation & Conservation Area

MARION

Halpata Tastanaki Preserve

E WITHLACOOCHEE TRAIL



Two Mile Prairie Canoe Camp  
N: 29.0078 | W: -82.3907

39

SPRUCE DR

Withlacoochee State Forest

**Access Point 16: Spruce Park**  
N: 28.9910 W: -82.3533

200

Stokes Ferry

Gum Slough  
Conservation Easement

EAST RIVER RD

STOKES FERRY RD

FOREST TRAIL DR

TURKEY TRAIL  
DR

← Citrus Springs

Harrison

CITRUS

LECANTO HWY

41

Holder

491

Bevens

CARL G ROSE HWY

Potts Preserve

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

- Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail
- Withlacoochee State Trail
- Camping
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Florida State Parks
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Wetlands

# Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail Map 7

N



**Access Point 17:  
Centennial Park**  
N: 29.0462 W: -82.4649

MARION

Chatmire

Dunnellon

Rainbow Springs State Park

SW 180TH AVE RD

NED FOLKS HWY

Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway  
State Recreation & Conservation Area

Halpata Tastanaki Preserve

CITRUS

CITRUS SPRINGS BLVD

← Citrus Springs

41

39

484

40

488

W DUNNELLON RD

ELKCAM BLVD

E WITHLACOOCHEE TRAIL

Withlacoochee River South Paddling Trail

Withlacoochee State Trail



Springs



Canoe/Kayak Launch



Restrooms



Potable Water



Florida Conservation Lands



Florida State Parks



Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles





# Withlacoochee South Paddling Trail Guide

## The Waterway

Once a refuge for Seminole Indians during the Second Seminole War, the river emerges from the Green Swamp in west central Florida and twists and bends through scenic sandhills before entering a swampy terrain. For such an extensive river, there is minimal development. The river flows south to north with banks lined predominantly with lush cypress floodplain swamp. The intermittent lakes are rich in wildlife, offering excellent [fishing](#) opportunities and scenic vistas. Overhanging limbs form a shady, lacy canopy.

## The Paddling Experience

The 76-mile paddling trail has been divided into three logical sections and although this is a long trail, numerous access points enable paddlers to choose shorter trips. The river is generally suitable for beginners depending on conditions. During dry seasons with lower water levels, paddlers may encounter logs and hyacinth jams, especially in the upper section. The ideal water level for paddling from the put in at Lacoochee downstream to Silver Lake is 38 feet, according to the USGS [gauge](#) near Nobleton.

## Access Points for Upper Section (Lacoochee to Silver Lake, 19 miles)

*The Upper Section is characterized by relatively high banks and excellent wildlife viewing. It is a site on the [Great Florida Birding Trail](#). The river is considerably narrower than the Middle and Lower Sections, with most of it lined with oaks and cypress and occasional stands of pine. The banks are less swampy than the rest of the river and there are a number of homes along this section. When the water is low, there are places where portages and pullovers are necessary.*

### Access #1, Start of the trail, Lacoochee Park

The originally designated stretch of the Withlacoochee River begins at Lacoochee Park. However, the park is remote and overnight parking may not be secure. A better option is to launch at the [Withlacoochee River RV Resort and Canoe Rental](#), located a few miles downstream at the CR 575 bridge in Lacoochee. Or you can arrange a shuttle to the Lacoochee Park launch and then park at the RV Resort. *From SR 50, turn south onto US 301 to Lacoochee. Turn left (east) onto CR 575. Turn right (south) onto Durden Road, then left onto Coit Road (unpaved road). Follow 2.5 miles to river access.*

### Access #2, Mile 2.5, CR 575 Bridge/Withlacoochee RV Resort

There are canoe/kayak rentals here and a launch/parking fee. *From SR 50, turn south onto US 301 to Lacoochee. Turn left (east) onto CR 575. The Withlacoochee RV Resort is about 2 miles further on the southwest side of the bridge.*

### Access #3, Mile 16.5, [Crooked River Campground](#)

A reservation is required to camp here, call 352-797-4140. *From SR 50, turn north onto Croom Rital Road (1 mile east of the intersection of SR 50 and I-75). Paralleling the [Withlacoochee State Trail](#), follow this road 3.5 miles to recreation area, indicated by brown sign. From CR 476, turn south onto Edgewater Ave (unpaved), across from the Nobleton Wayside Park. Follow this road for 4 miles, the turn left onto Croom Rital Road (paved). Follow for 2 miles, cross underneath I-75, and the recreation area entrance is on the left. Follow signs to campground.*



# Withlacoochee South Paddling Trail Guide

## Access #4, Mile, 18, River Junction Recreation Area



From US 301, turn west onto CR 656. After 2 miles, turn left on FR 13 (SW 50th Blvd), indicated by a brown "River Junction Recreation Area" sign.

## Access #5, Silver Lake Recreation Area



Camping is available at [Silver Lake Recreation Area](#). Take I-75 Exit 301 to US98/SR50. Turn east (away from Brooksville) and proceed about 1 mile until you reach the stoplight at Croom Rital Road. Turn left and proceed north on Croom Rital Road. Follow signs to the Withlacoochee State Forest Silver Lake Recreation Area. Turn right onto Silver Lake Road and follow to Day Use Area and boat ramp.

## Access Points for Middle Section (Silver Lake to Spruce Park, 44 miles)

The Middle Section is characterized by undefined banks and dense cypress swamp. Due to the confluence of the Little Withlacoochee River, the river becomes much wider and straighter. Homes are few and far between, and wildlife is abundant. The river is continually changing shape between wide, open lake sections and narrow, winding sections. There are few places to stop for rest breaks. There are a few fish camps that allow camping, and one public camping area at Shell Island with a couple of primitive campsites.

## Access #5, Silver Lake Recreation Area



Camping is available at [Silver Lake Recreation Area](#). Take I-75 Exit 301 to US98/SR50. Turn east and drive about a mile to Croom Rital Road. Turn left and follow signs to the Withlacoochee State Forest Silver Lake Recreation Area. Turn right at Silver Lake Road and go to Day Use Area boat ramp.

## Access #6, Mile 20, Iron Bridge Recreation Area



From CR 476, turn south onto CR 635. After 1.5 miles, turn right onto SW 90th Ave. Follow brown signs to recreation area.

## Access #7, Mile 21.5, Hog Island Recreation Area



The [Hog Island Recreation Area](#) is located on the east bank of the Withlacoochee River near Nobleton. Explore the Hog Island Nature Trail, a part of the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#). The campground has shaded campsites and access to the Withlacoochee River. From CR 476, turn south onto CR 635. After 1.5 miles, turn right onto SW 90th Ave. Follow brown signs to recreation area. If using as a take out, the boat ramp is not on the main branch of the river and is easy to miss.

## Access #8, Mile 26, CR 476 Bridge/Nobleton Canoe Outpost



The ramp is located on the northwest side of the CR 476 Bridge on property of the [Nobleton Canoe Outpost](#)

## Access #9, Mile 27, Nobleton Wayside Park



The park is in Nobleton on CR 476, about 0.25 miles west of the Withlacoochee River bridge.

## Access #10, Mile 27.5, Lake Townsen Regional Park



The entrance is adjacent to the crossing of the [Withlacoochee State Trail](#). The park is in Nobleton on CR 476, about 1 mile west of the Withlacoochee River bridge.

## Access #11, Mile 38, SR 48 Bridge/Wynhaven RV Park



[Wynhaven RV Park](#) offers primitive camping and private ramp with a launch fee. It is on the southeast side of the SR 48 Bridge, about 8 miles west of I-75.



# Withlacoochee South Paddling Trail Guide

## Access #12, Mile 42, Marsh Bend County Park, Outlet River (side trip)



The [Marsh Bend County Park](#) is about a mile east of the Withlacoochee along the Outlet River with a ramp on the southwest side of the bridge. The Wysong Dam is about 3.2 miles downstream from this launch and must be portaged. *From SR 44, turn south onto CR 470. Follow 6 miles to bridge over Outlet River.*

## Access #13, Mile 45, Carlson Landing/Wysong Dam



There is a lock at the east side of the river or a portage option around [Wysong Dam](#). There are two boat ramps here on both sides of the lock for launching either side of the dam. No amenities or overnight parking. *From the north, take SR 44 to CR 470 and turn south. After driving 2 miles, turn right (west) onto CR 300. From the south, take CR 470 to CR 300. Park is located on west side of the road.*

## Access #14, Mile 47.5, Rutland Park



The segment above [Rutland Park](#) and Nobleton is often shallow in low water levels. *The park is on the southeast side of the SR 44 Bridge, approximately 11.5 miles from Wildwood and 6.5 miles from Inverness.*

## Access #15, Mile 53.5, [Turner Camp](#)



The property was acquired for protection of the area's groundwater recharge, as well as important surface water features and wetland habitats, part of the Floridan aquifer's recharge/discharge system. *From Inverness, traveling on US 41, turn east onto CR 581-Turner Camp Road. Travel 7 miles until the road ends at the boat ramp.*

## Access #16, Mile 63, Spruce Park



*From SR 200, turn west onto Spruce Drive, just south of the Withlacoochee Bridge. The park is 0.5 miles on the right.*

## Access Points for Lower Section (Spruce Park to US 41 Bridge, 12.5 miles)

*The Lower Section is reminiscent of the Upper Section, with defined banks and less cypress swamp. A number of sand bars suitable for camping occur along this stretch, depending on water levels. The popular crystal-clear Rainbow River feeds into the Withlacoochee about a half mile before the end of the designated trail. Spring-fed Gum Slough is also a tributary of the lower Withlacoochee and offers a delightful paddling experience.*

## Access #16, Mile 63, Spruce Park



*From SR 200, turn west onto Spruce Drive, which is just south of the Withlacoochee Bridge. The park is 0.5 mile on the right.*

## Access #17, Mile 76, End of the Trail, Centennial Park



[Centennial Park](#) is located on northwest side of US 41 Bridge in Dunnellon.

## Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Angler's Resort](#), 12189 S Williams St., Dunnellon (352) 489-2397

[Aquatic Wilderness Adventures](#), 19783 E. Pennsylvania Ave., Dunnellon (352) 643-0524

Dragonfly Watersports, 20336 E Pennsylvania Ave, Dunnellon, (352) 489-3046



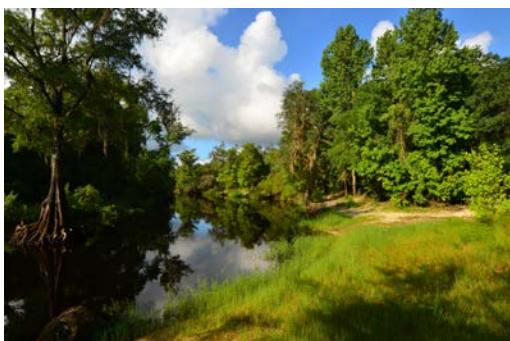


# Withlacoochee South Paddling Trail Guide

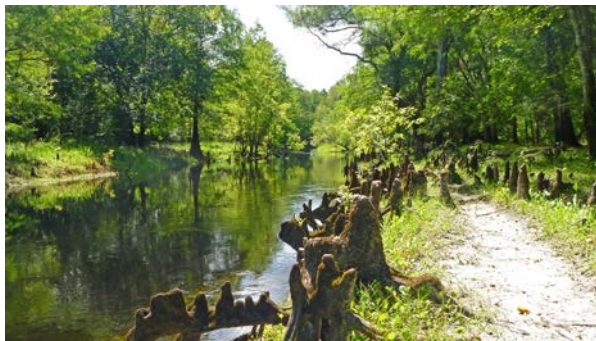
[Nobleton Canoe Rental](#) 29295 Lake Lindsey Rd., Nobelton, (352) 796-7176  
[Rainbow River Canoe and Kayak](#), 12121 River View, Dunnellon (352) 489-7854  
[Rainbow River Kayak Adventures](#), 11463 N Williams St., Dunnellon (352)-489-3046  
[Withlacoochee River RV Park](#), 39847 SR 575, Dade City (352) 583-4778

## Base Camp

There are many options for camping along the Withlacoochee River during multi-day paddling trips. For exploring more of the region, the [Rainbow Springs State Park](#) makes a wonderful base camp with a full-facility campground. Plan on paddling the Withlacoochee and popular Rainbow Rivers, as well as hiking, cycling and riding horses on public conservation lands in the area. The nearby popular 46-mile [Withlacoochee State Trail](#) is the longest paved rail-trail in Florida. Archaeological evidence indicates that people have been using Rainbow Springs for nearly 10,000 years. Rainbow Springs is Florida's fourth largest spring and, from the 1930s through the 1970s, was the site of a popular, privately-owned roadside attraction. A picnic area at the spring includes enticing paved trails winding through the beautiful gardens that were once part of the old roadside attraction. Canoes and kayaks can be rented at the headsprings. To beat summer heat, bring a tube or float and launch at the Tube Entrance, about 1.4 miles south of the Campground Entrance on SW 180th Avenue Road,. This is nine miles from the Headsprings Entrance, which is located three miles north of Dunnellon on the east side of U.S. 41.



Stefis Demetropolous



Steve Cournoyer



Middle Section



Lacoochee Ramp



Limpkins

Diane Lewis, Florida Cracker Photography