



Trail Tales

The Newsletter of
RAILS TO TRAILS OF THE WITHLACOOCHEE, INC.
The Citizen Support Organization for the Withlacoochee State Trail (WST)
The Friendliest Trail in the Country

Membership Meeting

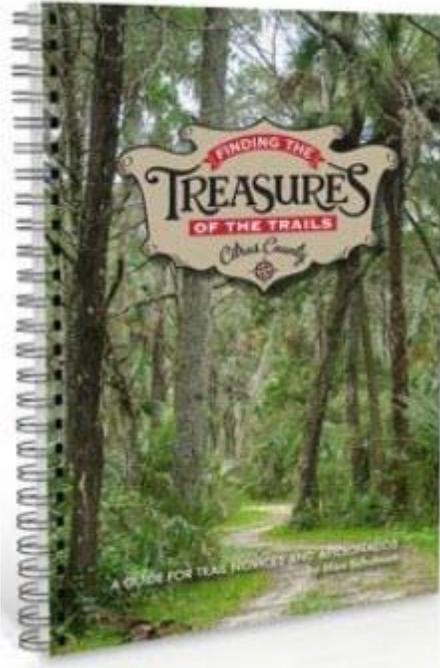
The Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee Citizens Support Organization (RTW CSO) is an all-volunteer group that helps develop, maintain and promote the Withlacoochee State Trail.

The group meets quarterly, in September, November, February, and April.

The Membership Meeting is hosted on the third Thursday of the listed months at the Lakes Region Library, 1511 Druid Road, Inverness, at 5:30 p.m.

The Board of Directors meets on the second Thursday of the listed months at the Fort Copper State Park Recreation Hall, 3100 Old Floral City Road, Inverness, at 4:30 p.m.

On November 16, the RTW CSO will host graphic artist, Tom Craig, and author, Max Schulman at the membership meeting. Tom and Max will present the book *Finding the Treasures of the Trails – Citrus County*.



The duo will explain the process by which they created the “glove-box gazetteer” complete with 27 cartographic products and short site descriptions to aid hikers of all skill levels. The book was designed with the goal of enabling residents and tourists to fully enjoy the natural beauty of Citrus County. The presentation will showcase some of their favorite photos of those included in the book.

All are invited to attend this presentation.



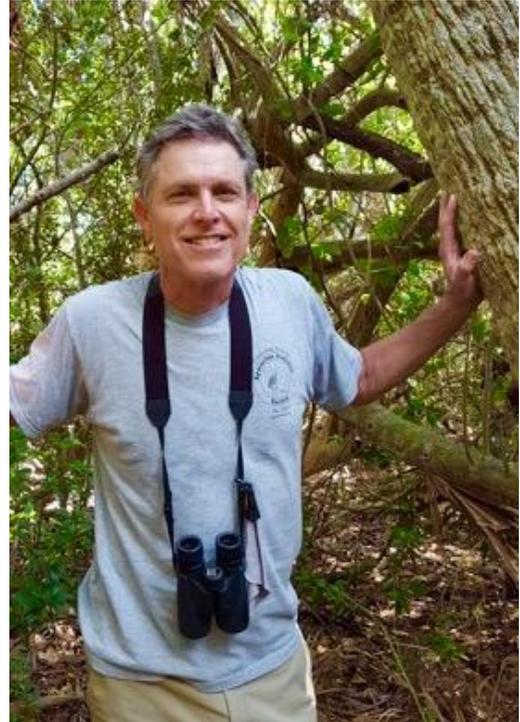
DEP Announces Key Land and Recreation Leadership

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Noah Valenstein announced on Thursday, November 2 three key appointments to DEP's leadership team, as part of its continued focus on the protection of Florida's prized properties through the management of Florida's world-renowned state park system and land acquisition and conservation. Because The Withlacoochee State Trail is part of the State Park System, of most importance to us is the appointment of Eric Draper, who will join the DEP team as the Director of Florida State Parks, effective Nov. 28.

As Florida State Parks Director, Draper will join more than 1,000 park rangers, managers, biologists, planners and other staff to oversee the management of Florida's award-winning state park system.

Secretary Valenstein said, "Eric Draper has dedicated his career to the protection of Florida's environment and his passion for our state's natural resources make him an ideal fit to join our world-caliber parks team."

A Florida native, Draper most recently served as Executive Director at . He is a career conservationist and is recognized as a longtime and leading advocate for Everglades restoration, water resource protection and land conservation. Previously, he was National Audubon's Senior Vice President for Policy and led The Nature Conservancy's Florida government relations program.



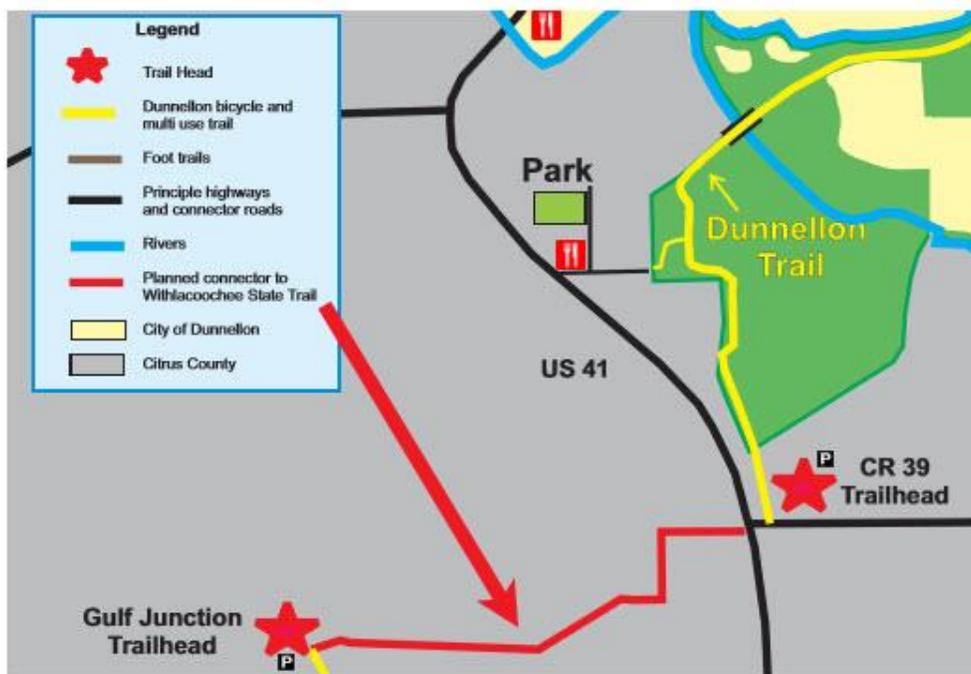


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WST-Dunnellon Connector Trail

\$5.9 million has been included in the 2018-19 proposed transportation bill to complete a paved trail and a pedestrian overpass at US Hwy 41 just south of Dunnellon. This trail would connect the end of the Withlacoochee State Trail at Gulf Junction to the Dunnellon Trail at County 39. The extension/connector will be enable Withlacoochee State Trail riders to safely ride to the Rainbow River and into Dunnellon.

The plans are contingent upon Governor Scott signing the transportation bill in the next legislative session.



New Mural Coming Soon!

The tin shed at the Inverness Trailhead will be getting a fresh coat of paint in preparation for the new mural. The 8' x 16' mural is bright and colorful featuring some of the native beauty found along our popular trail.

The mural committee (Heather Nagy, Linda Reiland and Candace McLean) have worked many hours over the last several months researching products, durability, costs and perfecting the final design.

In addition to the large mural at Apopka, a smaller version will be displayed at the second most used trailhead, Ridge Manor.

The Mural Committee is excited to see this public art project welcome every trail user and become a part of the most popular trail in Florida.



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Florida: #15 on New Bicycle-Friendly State Ranking

Florida held steady in ranking for Bicycle-friendliness. The ranking, compiled by The League of American Bicyclists, is based on four public data sources and a survey answered by each state's Department of Transportation.

For further information, see <http://bikeleague.org/content/ranking>

National Go For A Ride Day: November 22

Did you know that November 22 is National Go for a Ride Day?

I didn't until I stumbled on the news while looking for items for this month's newsletter.

I'm marking my calendar now to make sure I hit the trail that day!

Special Thanks

Quick shout-out to Linda Reiland for her help with material for this month's newsletter. I greatly appreciate it!

I Need to Hear from You!

Have a story for the newsletter? Have an idea for one? Send it along to me, the editor, at njnkeefe@yahoo.com

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