

Hernando County's Scenic Waterscapes...

Whether a seasoned Floridian, a new resident, or a visitor, the versatility of Hernando County's waterways will please any water enthusiast. From the coastal shoreline to the inland lakes and forested rivers, there is plenty of entertainment in these waters,

Salt water buffs will find the Gulf of Mexico ideal; swimming is popular at Pine Island Beach, a shallow not too salty beach where pods of dolphin are seen frequently as they feed in the rich Gulf waters. Boating can begin from several boat ramps along the coast leading you to great fishing and diving at any of the various reefs a few miles from the shoreline. World class tarpon swim the waters at Hernando Beach and the Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge.

If fresh water is more your style you will find the springfed WeekiWachee River a scenic location for canoeing, swimming, diving and boating. In contrast, the Withlacoochee River offers a very different environment, where slow moving, dark, tannic waters mirror ancient cypress with their strange protruding knees. This is interior Florida at its finest. Lakes are found in several locations throughout the county, luring anglers to try their hand at catching bass or a variety of other freshwater fish.

Relax . . . and enjoy the naturally beautiful and abundant waterways of Hernando County.



Hernando County Waterways



The Hernando County Port Authority was established in 1965 by the Florida State Legislature and signed into law by the Governor on June 24, 1965. The Hernando County Port Authority and its 5 member Board is dedicated to providing safe boating for both recreational and commercial boaters. The Port Authority holds monthly meetings the first Wednesday of every month at the Linda Pedersen Park Recreation Building, 6430 Shoal Line Blvd. Members of the public are invited and encouraged to attend. For additional information on the Port Authority, contact the Hernando County Parks & Waterways Maintenance Department at 352-754-4027 or check out their website at http://www.co.hernando.fl.us/Parks_Rec/parks/pa/portauth2.htm

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Boating Safety

Safety Equipment

It is recommended that all vessels obtain an equipment safety check at least once a year from either the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Florida Fish & Wildlife, or Hernando County Sheriff's Marine Unit. The minimum required safety equipment varies depending on the size and configuration of a vessel. As a minimum, all vessels must have one Coast Guard approved life jacket for each person on board and a sound producing device.

Children under 6 years old must wear a life jacket on vessels less than 26 feet at all times while underway on Florida waters. While outside the 9-mile state limit in the Gulf of Mexico, children under 13 years old must wear a life jacket according to federal law.

You may also be required to carry an approved throwable flotation device, and approved visual distress signals.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary offers safe boating courses that meet the requirements for the Florida Safe Boating ID Card. Contact the Coast Guard Auxiliary for additional information.

Operation of Vessel

The rules governing the operation of a vessel are governed by both the State of Florida and the U.S. Coast Guard, through the COLREGS. All vessels are required to comply with these rules.

Emergencies

Emergencies should be reported to either the U.S. Coast Guard, Florida Fish & Wildlife, or the Hernando County Sheriff's Marine Unit. When calling for help on your radio, the use of the term "MAYDAY" is reserved only for life threatening situations. Should you have a VHF Marine Radio, you can call for help on Channel 16. Remember, Channel 16 is used for emergencies and as a calling channel. It is not to be used for conversing. As a pleasure boater, you can use channels 14, 20, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74 & 78 for ship to ship conversations.

Important Phone Numbers

- U.S. Coast Guard
352-447-6900
- Coast Guard Auxiliary
352-596-6737
- FL Fish & Wildlife
888-404-FWCC (3922)
- Hernando County Sheriff
352-754-6830
- Hernando County
Parks & Waterways
352-754-4027

(www.co.hernando.fl.us)

Important Rules

Responsibility For Wake

Vessel operators are responsible for damage to any other vessel, dock, property, or injury caused by their vessel's wake due to operator negligence.

Overtaking Another Vessel

If you pass a boat from behind, you are overtaking and bear the responsibility for making a safe pass. The vessel you are overtaking is the stand-on vessel, and you need to give-way to it.

Passing Another Vessel

When two boats are approaching each other in a head on, or nearly head on situation, each vessel is to alter their course to starboard.

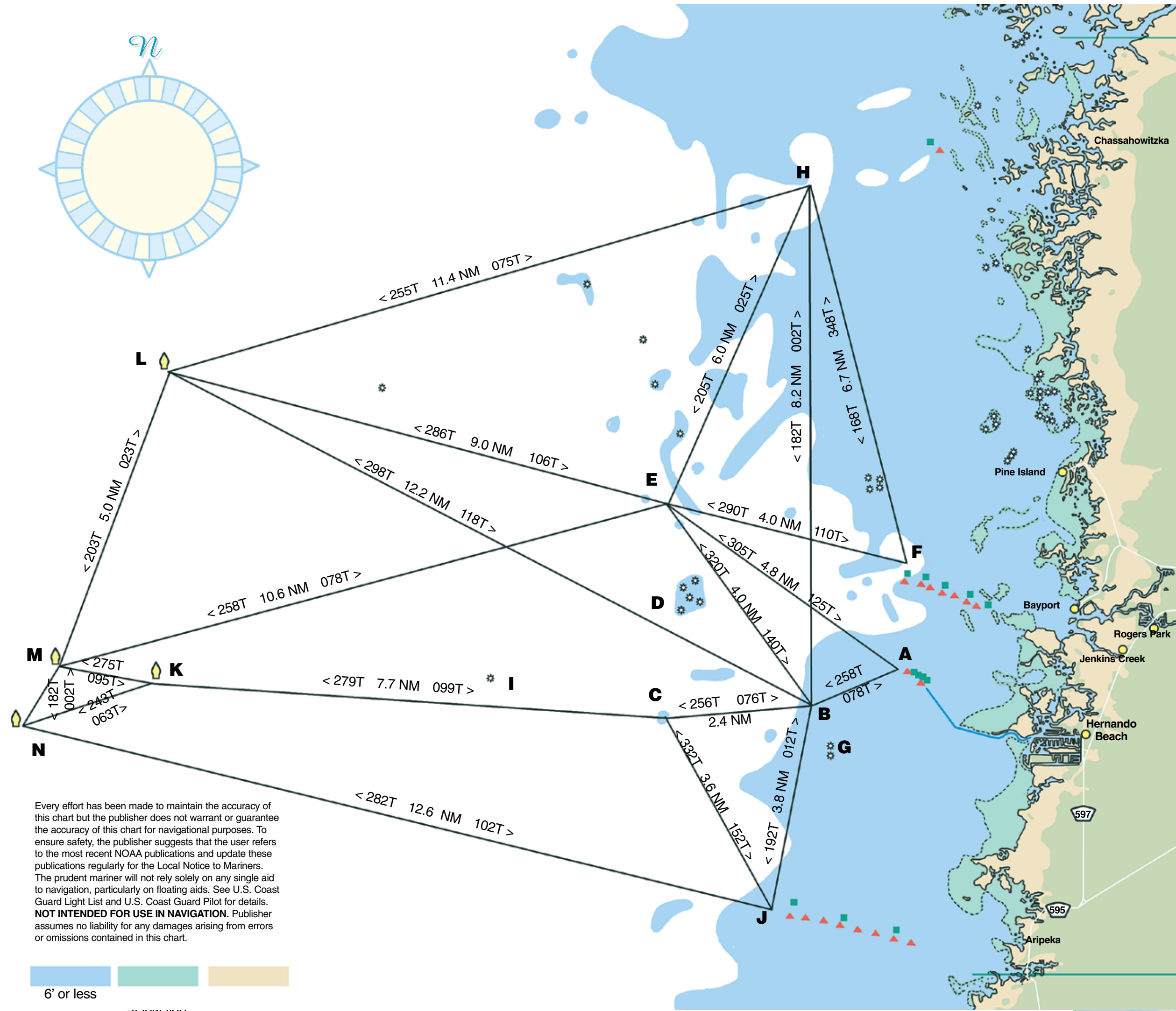
Sailing Vessels

When you approach a vessel that is less maneuverable than you (such as a sail boat or a large vessel in a narrow channel), you are usually required to give-way to the other vessel.

Anchoring

Except in the event of an emergency, it is unlawful to tie a vessel to a lawfully placed navigation aid or to create a navigational hazard by interfering with the navigation of other vessels.





Every effort has been made to maintain the accuracy of this chart but the publisher does not warrant or guarantee the accuracy of this chart for navigational purposes. To ensure safety, the publisher suggests that the user refers to the most recent NOAA publications and update these publications regularly for the Local Notice to Mariners. The prudent mariner will not rely solely on any single aid to navigation, particularly on floating aids. See U.S. Coast Guard Light List and U.S. Coast Guard Pilot for details. **NOT INTENDED FOR USE IN NAVIGATION.** Publisher assumes no liability for any damages arising from errors or omissions contained in this chart.

Navigational Markers, Rocks/Obstructions

- A. Bill Watts Tripod** (Hernando Beach Channel)
Location: 28°31.135 N 82°42.471 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
5 mile visibility. Flashing white quick flash.
Marked: "Hernando Beach Bill Watts Tripod"
- B. Hernando Beach Turn Light**
Location: 28°30.872 N 82°44.073 W
Identification: 16' high single pole.
Flashing white 3 seconds.
Marked: "HB"
- C. Billy Steele South Rack**
Location: 28°30.415 N 82°46.488 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
Danger, submerged ruins.
Flashing OC white 4 seconds.
- D. Middle Rock**
Location: 28°31.700 N 82°46.600 W
Identification: 4' X 4' sign "Danger Rocks"
Marked: "Middle Rocks"
- E. Bayport North Rack**
Location: 28°33.895 N 82°46.851 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
Danger, submerged ruins.
Flashing white ISO 6 seconds.
Marked: "North Rack"

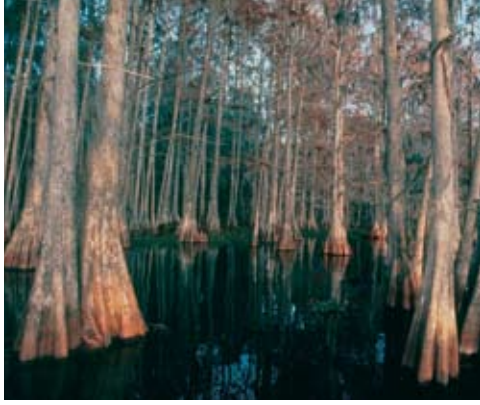
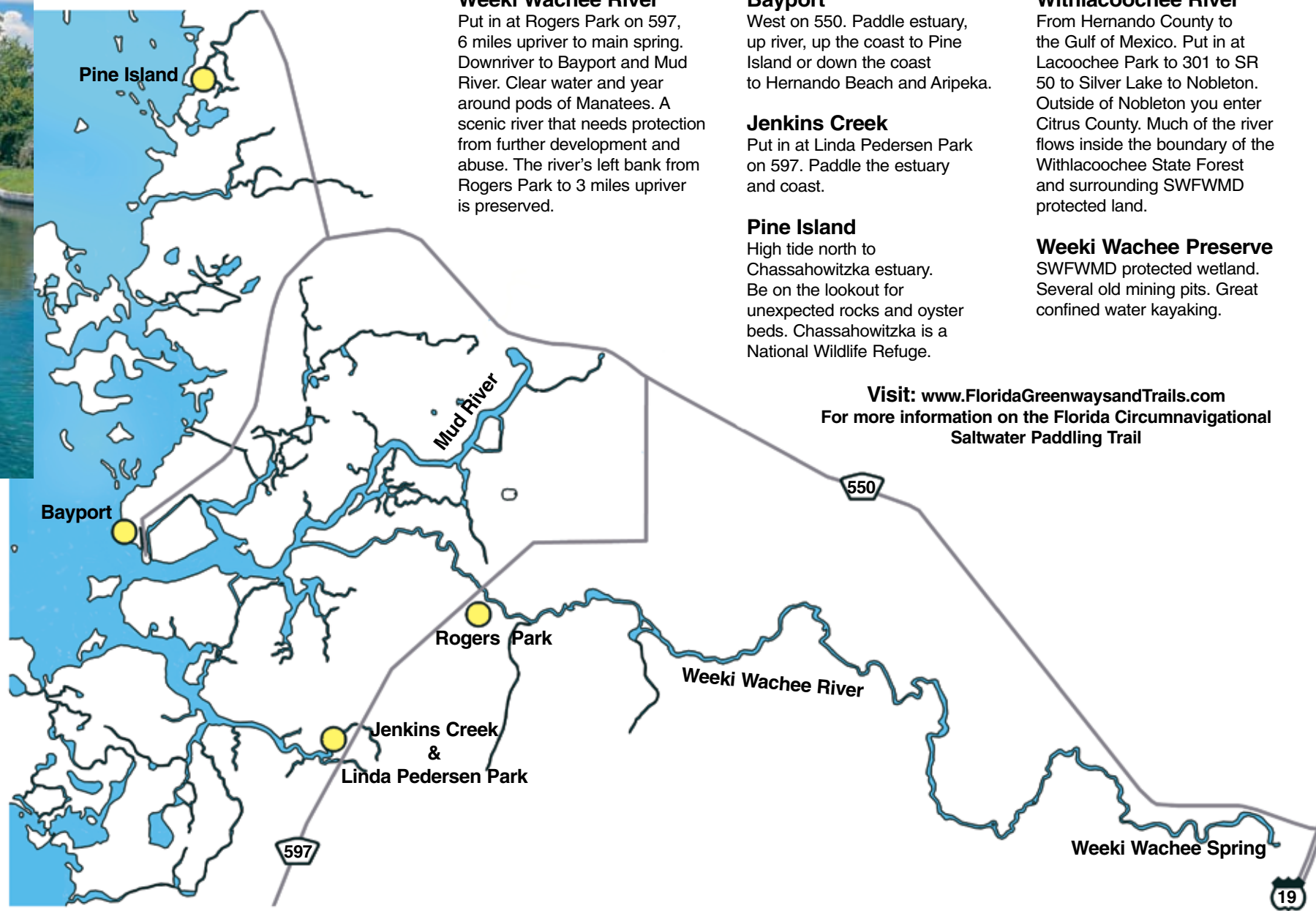
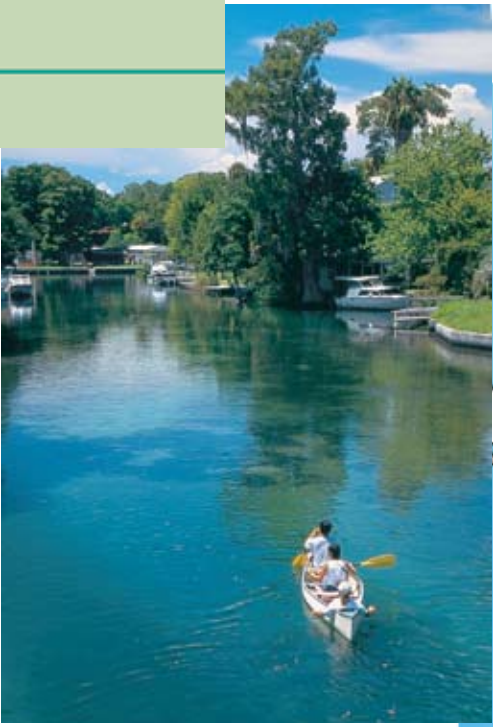
- F. Bayport Channel Entrance Light**
Location: 28°32.850 N 82°42.570 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
Flashing white 5 seconds.
Marked: "Bayport"
- G. Gomez Rocks**
Location: North Piling 28°29.840 N 82°43.680 W
South Piling 28°29.689 N 82°43.682 W
Identification: 2 poles 100 yards apart on a north-south line. 4' X 4' sign "Danger Rocks"
Marked: "Gomez Rock"
- H. Chassahowitzka Channel Entrance**
Location: 28°39.500 N 82°44.100 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
Flashing white quick flash.
Marked: "Chassahowitzka"
- I. Cutter Rock**
Location: 28°30.979 N 82°49.934 W
Identification: 16' pole. 4' X 4' sign "Danger Rocks"
Flashing white 6 seconds.
Marked: "Cutter Rock"
- J. Aripeka Channel Entrance Light**
Location: 28°27.04 N 82°44.57 W
Identification: 16' high aluminum tripod.
Flashing white 6 seconds.
Marked: "Aripeka"

Artificial Reefs - Skin & Scuba Diving

- K. Fish Haven - A.H. Richardson Reef**
LORAN Coordinates: 14325.8 45109.5
Location: 28°31.484 N 82°55.144 W
Identification: Yellow buoy marked
"Fish Haven - Richardson Reef"
Composition: Culverts and concrete bridge material, depths to 20'
- L. Fish Haven - Jim Champion Reef**
LORAN Coordinates: 14337.4 45159.2
Location: 28°36.430 N 82°56.400 W
Identification: Yellow buoy marked
"Fish Haven - Champion Reef"
Composition: Culverts and barge, depths to 20'
- M. Bendickson Tank Reef**
LORAN Coordinates: 14320.3 45139.8
Location: 28°31.761 N 82°58.362 W
Identification: Yellow buoy marked
"Bendickson Tank Reef"
Composition: 10 Army tanks in a 1/4 mile radius, depths to 25'
- N. Reef Ball Reef**
LORAN Coordinates: 14312.9 45116.1
Location: 28°30.007 N 82°58.408 W
Identification: White buoy marked "Reef Balls"
Composition: 180 concrete reef balls in a 1/4 mile radius, depths to 29'

Fresh Water Dives

- Weeki Wachee River**
Drift 20'
- Hospital Hole**
Vertical drop with sulfur layer at 80'
Adv Cave 140'
- Joe & Mary's Sinks**
Shallow craterlike surface, cavern
natural light to 30'
- Salt Spring**
Private property, vertical crevasse 70'
- Saw Grass Spring**
In salt estuary west of Mary's Fish Camp 20'
- Eagle's Nest, DiPoler, Twin D's & Wards**
Adv. Cave Deep Technical Sink Hole
Cave Systems at 230'
- Contact local dive shops for locations.



Canoeing & Kayaking

- Weeki Wachee River**
Put in at Rogers Park on 597, 6 miles upriver to main spring. Downriver to Bayport and Mud River. Clear water and year around pods of Manatees. A scenic river that needs protection from further development and abuse. The river's left bank from Rogers Park to 3 miles upriver is preserved.
- Bayport**
West on 550. Paddle estuary, up river, up the coast to Pine Island or down the coast to Hernando Beach and Aripeka.
- Jenkins Creek**
Put in at Linda Pedersen Park on 597. Paddle the estuary and coast.
- Pine Island**
High tide north to Chassahowitzka estuary. Be on the lookout for unexpected rocks and oyster beds. Chassahowitzka is a National Wildlife Refuge.
- Withlacoochee River**
From Hernando County to the Gulf of Mexico. Put in at Lacoochee Park to 301 to SR 50 to Silver Lake to Nobleton. Outside of Nobleton you enter Citrus County. Much of the river flows inside the boundary of the Withlacoochee State Forest and surrounding SWFWMD protected land.
- Weeki Wachee Preserve**
SWFWMD protected wetland. Several old mining pits. Great confined water kayaking.

Visit: www.FloridaGreenwaysandTrails.com
For more information on the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail