

Marco Island to Everglades City Cycle Tour



Marco Island Cycle Tour to Everglades City starts at the intersection of CR92 and US41. Take time to visit Goodland and Marco Island before starting your tour with its good restaurants, beautiful beaches, and hotels. Marco Island is bicycle friendly with a well-developed bicycle pathway plan. For information about the Islands and the bike paths, visit www.cityofmarcoisland.com. US41 is 9 miles from Marco Island and 6.5 miles from Goodland. Please be aware that there are no shoulders on CR92 from Marco Island to US41.

Just east of the intersection at US41/CR92 is the Collier-Seminole State Park with camping facilities and one of the largest mangrove swamps in the world. The park was established by Barron Collier and is the site of the historic Bay City Walking Dredge used to build the Tamiami Trail (www.floridastateparks.org/park/Collier-Seminole). Less than a mile from Collier-Seminole is a rest stop with picnic tables and another ½ mile is an airboat ride facility. Cycle for 1½ miles east to the biking/hiking Marsh Trail, a 2.5 mile round-trip off-road spur located in 10,000 Islands National Wildlife Refuge with an observation tower and many migratory birds to photograph (www.fws.gov/refuges/profiles/index.cfm?id=41555).

Along this route, you will be traveling on shoulders but be cautious around the narrow bridges. Between Collier-Seminole and Port of the Islands the shoulders have RPMs (raised pavement markers) which were placed there as a safety measure to notify motorists of the upcoming narrow bridges. However, they are a hazard to cyclists so take care. After Port of the Islands the road has been resurfaced so cycling on a smooth surface is much easier.

Continue cycling another 3 miles east on US41 to reach Port of the Islands and enjoy a pleasant lunch overlooking the garden and swimming pool. The expansive hotel lobby is worth a visit. Throughout the community, on both the north and south side, are many paved roads. The Marina has access to the coastal waters and is a destination for eco-tours of the Everglades with one of Florida's largest concentrations of wild manatees.

Port of the Islands Resort was an odd Florida real estate project started in 1963 called Remuda Ranch, used by Gulf American Corporation to promote Golden Gate Estates. Around 1980 it was purchased by Bill Ray of California and renamed Port of the Islands. In 1984 he began a multi-million dollar redevelopment that included residential living to the community. In 1994, his family auctioned off the remaining property to private individuals and developers. Since that time, the completion of dozens of new homes has taken place as well as renovation of the hotel and marina.

Continue cycling east for 3 miles to one of the most popular hikes along the Tamiami Trail - the Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk in the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park. An Indian Village with Native American crafts is located at the entrance to the Boardwalk and is well worth a visit.

Cycling is not allowed on the Boardwalk, but take time to hike through the cypress trees to the alligator pond at the end. You may see wildlife along the way with an eagle's nest high in the cypress dome. The area is a bird-watcher's paradise with red-bellied and pileated woodpeckers, catbirds, osprey, red-shouldered hawks, swallow-tailed kites, blue heron, egrets and wood storks. Future plans include an expansion of the Boardwalk with a new parking area, an interpretative center, shell pathways and an elevated walkway. For more information visit <http://orchidswamp.org/plan-your-visit/the-boardwalk>.

Back on US41, cycle east for 2 miles east to rest at the picnic tables before riding back the final 5 miles to the entrance of Everglades City at SR29 in Carnestown. Along the way you will ride past two airboat facilities.

As you cycle towards Carnestown, enjoy the open prairie land with its nesting birds. Culverts under the road have provided more water to the south side of the Tamiami Trail, allowing for wading birds to return to the area, including roseate spoonbills, egrets, wood stork, ibis and herons.

Turn right at SR29 to cycle the 4 miles to Everglades City with a wide range of restaurants and facilities. This historic coastal Florida town is the home of the original Collier County Court House, Museum of the Everglades, Rod & Gun Club, and the Smallwood Store in Chokoloskee. With little traffic it is a great place to cycle.

For a more detailed map and list of amenities along this route, download a map/brochure on our FROGG website <https://evergladesrogg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/FROGG-Map-April-2017.pdf>.

Trails along U.S. 41

There are many on and off-road options for hiking and bicycling through the various state and national parks.

Collier-Seminole State Park

An original stand of native royal palm trees, coexisting with one of the world's largest mangrove swamps, distinguishes this park; it is also the site of the historic Tamiami Trail "Walking Dredge".

<http://alturl.com/s6nof>

Ten Thousand Islands NWR

Established in 1996, this refuge protects important mangrove and marsh habitats and is the ultimate interface where land gradually gives way to the sea.

<http://alturl.com/dncvm>

Picayune Strand State Forest

Comprised of 78,000 acres, this is Florida's 4th largest state forest and named after the largest of several cypress strands that once occupied its eastern portion.

<http://alturl.com/ezsm8>

Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park

Swamps, prairies, tropical hardwood hammocks and pine rock lands with royal palms and bald cypress trees share the forest canopy with native orchids and bromeliad species. <http://alturl.com/j9cck>

Big Cypress National Preserve

Big Cypress contains a mixture of tropical and temperate plant communities that harbor many protected species, including the elusive Florida panther.

<http://alturl.com/ma366>

Everglades National Park

The Park is dominated by the world renowned "River of Grass" freshwater prairies, tree islands, and many rare and endangered species.

<http://alturl.com/n2q73>

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Distance: 29 miles one way

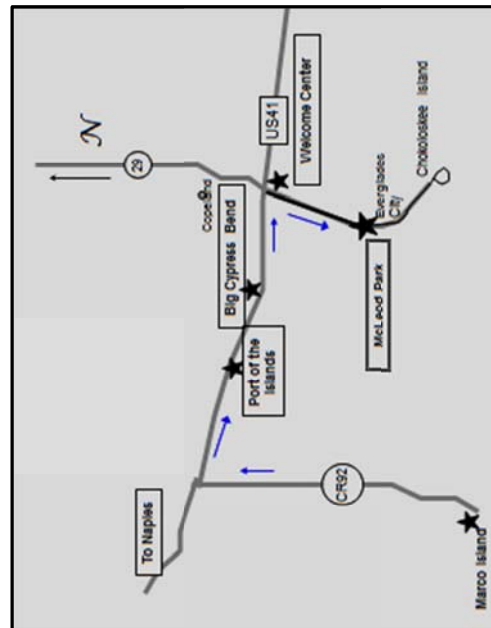
Bicycle Type: road or hybrid

Road Conditions: paved road

with shoulders and raised pavement markers
to Port of the Islands

CAUTION: narrow bridges

Level: experience with heavy traffic



This map illustrates a bike route (along the Tamiami Trail) through the Everglades area. While every effort is made to provide accurate and timely information, keep in mind the bike routes are intended for informational purposes only. No guarantee is made regarding the bike route safety because conditions change. In addition, we cannot guarantee anyone's safety by conforming to safety tips. Please use good judgment and be responsible for your own safety at all times.

6/1/2017

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Friends of the River of Grass Greenway

FROGG, a non-profit organization, is committed to establishing the safe use by the general public of US41 across the Everglades between Naples and Miami, focusing on safety and environmental education and stewardship for those hiking, walking, and cycling through south Florida and the Everglades.

www.evergladesrogg.org

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