

**BIG CYPRESS  
to SHARK VALLEY  
Cycle Tour  
OASIS VISITOR CENTER**



The Big Cypress Oasis Center has a history that is worth mentioning. Many people driving along the Tamiami Trail remember the airplane mounted to the top of the building that was completed in the 1960s and served a private airport with a hanger and restaurant. Before it was a visitor center, it was a service station, complete with a Lockheed Constellation on top (shown above in 1973). Eventually, it was purchased by the National Park Service in the 1980s and today the building serves as the Big Cypress Oasis Visitor Center. Inside, there are exhibits related to the natural and cultural history of the preserve, educational materials, sales items, and an introductory film. The NPS staff is available to assist visitors with information about available activities in the area. The Oasis Visitor Center is 21 miles east of Everglades City and 36 miles from Krome Avenue in Miami-Dade.

To begin this cycle tour park at the Oasis Visitor Center and head east towards Miami. Bike along the shoulders of the Tamiami Trail (US41)

and be very cautious of the traffic, especially when approaching the narrow bridges. Just under a mile on the right you will reach Clyde Butcher's Big Cypress Gallery, a definite "must see" for any lover of the Everglades. Clyde is considered to be the Ansel Adams of the Everglades. His large black-and-white photographs portray Florida's turbulent cloud structures, its beautiful cypress forests and infinite prairies. Other photographers are also exhibited in the gallery and gift shop. For more information, visit <https://clydebutcher.com/>.

Back on the Tamiami Trail you'll pass Midway Campground in two miles, then the Collier / Dade County Line an additional eight miles. There are limited amenities along this section so be prepared to bring water. In 1928 the Tamiami Trail was completed connecting the two counties.

In another four miles you'll come upon the east terminus of Loop Road (another FROGG Cycle Tour) at a bend in the road. Then Tippy's Outpost Convenience Store will be just another 1½ mile on the left; you will be entering the Miccosukee Tribe Reservation with several interesting sites, including their Indian Village which is open to the public. The history of the Miccosukee Tribe is provided by native guides as well as narrated in their museum. You will learn how the Miccosukee Indian Tribe survived and still exists in the Everglades. Alligator wrestling is also demonstrated and airboat rides are available for visitors. For more information, visit website: <http://www.miccosukee.com/indian-village/>.

As you leave the Village, cycle east over the bridge where there is a general store, a visitor center and the Miccosukee Restaurant serving catfish, frog legs and fry bread as well as a wide selection of salads and sandwiches.

**SHARK VALLEY  
EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK**

The entrance to Shark Valley is located across the street and just a block east of the Miccosukee Restaurant. The history of this area goes back to 1946 when Humble Oil Company constructed the loop road to drill for oil. In 1947 the Everglades National Park was established and in 1952 a steel frame fire tower was installed. This was replaced by the concrete observation tower which was designed by the prominent South Florida architect Edward M. Ghezzi. Shark Valley was opened to the public in 1966 with tram service in 1972.

Cyclists from all over the world come to experience the Everglades on this paved road. Every month when there is a full moon, a group of cyclists will ride around the 15-mile loop in the evening light. During the day a guided tram tour is available if you decide not to cycle this loop. For more information about Shark Valley, visit: <https://www.nps.gov/ever/planyourvisit/upload/SV-Bike-2.pdf>.

If you decide to stay in Everglades City, it is only a half hour drive from East Naples or Marco Island with a wide range of accommodations and restaurants ([www.evergladesmulletrapper.com](http://www.evergladesmulletrapper.com)).

Today, over one million people explore Big Cypress National Preserve. Cycling the Everglades is the best way to truly enjoy the beauty, the wildlife, and the serenity of this area -- both on and off road.

For more information about hiking and cycling in the Everglades, visit the Friends of the River of Grass Greenway website and download a list of facilities and map at <https://evergladesrogg.org/tamiami-trail/>.

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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/j9ckk>

### 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>

## Oasis Visitor Center to Shark Valley Cycle Tour

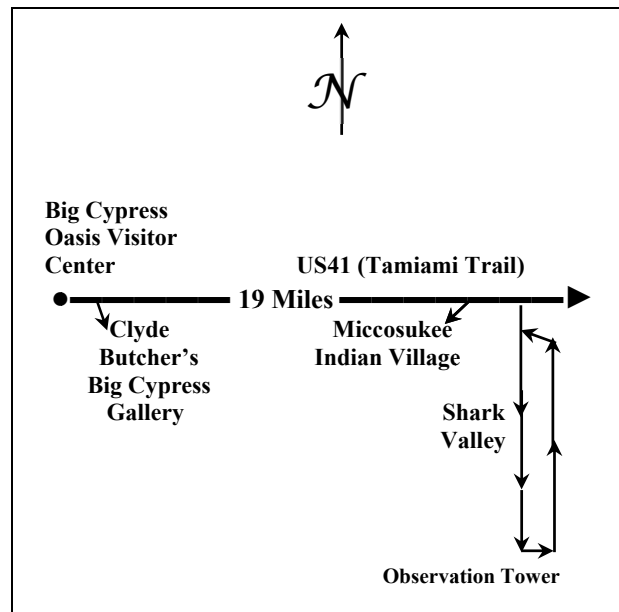
Distance: 38 miles round trip  
(additional 15 miles in Shark Valley)

Bicycle Type: road or hybrid

Road Conditions: paved road  
with shoulders

**CAUTION: narrow bridges on US41**

**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](http://www.evergladesrogg.org)

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