

Florida Trail Town

In January 2019, Everglades City was designated by the DEP Office of Greenways & Trails as a Florida State Trail Town. Trail Towns are recognized because they provide trail users with necessary goods and services as well as promoting healthy lifestyles. The Tamiami Trail is the only accessible link in south Florida between Naples and Miami. Everglades City is located 26 miles east of Naples and 60 miles west of Miami; it serves as the hub for seven national and state parks, including Big Cypress National Preserve and Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve. The Everglades National Park Gulf Coast Visitor Center is located one half mile from the center of the City and is the trailhead for Florida’s Circumnavigational Trail. Other paddling trails are located primarily along the western section of the Tamiami Trail.

Culture

Both the Seminole and the Miccosukee Tribes have a rich cultural heritage in southern Florida and continue to maintain their ancient customs as demonstrated in their museum and villages along the Tamiami Trail. Tribal members, as well as individuals who maintain their independent status, continue to live along US41. Among the first white settlers were the “Gladesmen” who moved here from the Deep South after the Civil War; they would hunt and fish in the Everglades. Today these early pioneers continue to spend time in the woods and hold onto their traditions and values. The town of Everglade was established in the late 1800s, becoming the county seat in 1923 when Barron Collier created his company town.

Environment and Wildlife

Preservation and restoration of the ecosystem of this unique area are of primary concern. Water in south Florida once flowed freely from the Kissimmee River to Lake Okeechobee and southward over low-lying lands to the estuaries of Biscayne Bay, the Ten Thousand Islands, and Florida Bay. By the early 1900s the drainage process to transform wetland to land for development was underway. The results would be severely damaging to the ecosystem and the species it supported; however, today there is an effort by federal and state agencies to restore the watershed to this area. In 1947 the Everglades National Park was established to conserve the natural landscape and prevent further degradation of its land, plants, and animals. Big Cypress became a National Preserve in 1974 to protect the land and the wildlife from development.

Friends of the River of Grass Greenway
Dedicated to providing a safe corridor across the Tamiami Trail with the focus on environmental education and stewardship.



Safety along the Trail

When hiking or bicycling along the Tamiami Trail, safety is of the utmost importance. The corridor between Naples to Miami can be challenging with many narrow bridges, but it is also very interesting for those who wish to experience the Everglades at a slow pace.

The Friends of the River of Grass Greenway continues to work with the Florida Department of Transportation to find ways to improve conditions with the bridges and shoulders.

The 3.5-mile section beginning at the intersection of US41 / CR951 in East Naples has bike lanes, a sidewalk, and a 10-foot shared-use pathway. For the next 2 miles (from Greenway Road to 6L Farm Road) you will need to cycle on the paved shoulder. A separated pathway is planned for the future when this section is widened to four lanes. Meanwhile, take caution while hiking or biking. From 6L Farm Road to Collier Seminole State Park at CR92 there is a 2.3-mile separated pedestrian/bicycling pathway which provides a link to the Park’s 3.5 mile off-road trail along marsh, hammock and pine flat wood.

Between CR92 and just west of Port of the Islands Resort, the shoulders have RPMs (Raised Pavement Markers). These markings were placed there by FDOT as a safety measure to notify motorists of the upcoming narrow bridges. However, they can be dangerous for cyclists so take caution in this area, especially at the narrow bridges.

The 11-mile section between Port of the Islands Resort and Everglades City (SR/CR29) was re-surfaced in 2016 by FDOT and included white striping with the audible/ vibratory markings along the edge of the shoulder and painted with durable paint instead of the “slippery” thermoplastic. Again, take caution at the narrow bridges.

Everglades City and Chokoloskee are just a few miles south of US41, both offering many amenities (hotels, restaurants, grocery store, supplies, etc.) for those paddling, biking and hiking throughout the Everglades area. It is well worth a stop to visit or stay for a few days. For more information, visit website www.swflgo.com.

The Everglades City to Shark Valley section is beautiful with many vistas, more birds and alligators. The road shoulder is in better condition; however, there are raised pavement markers in the shoulders just west of the Miccosukee Indian Village so be cautious.

Between Shark Valley and Krome Avenue there are three bridges with 10-foot wide shoulders. A new 8.5 mile separated pathway has been constructed along with widening of Krome Avenue south of US41. Construction work on the road continues south to Homestead.

Visit our website www.evergladesrogg.org for updates on road improvements along the Tamiami Trail.

Trails along U.S. 41

There are many interesting opportunities for hiking / bicycling / paddling through the various state and national parks.

Collier-Seminole State Park

An original stand of native royal palm trees, coexisting with one of the largest mangrove swamps in the world, distinguishes this 7,271-acre park established by Barron Gift Collier. The park is also the site of the historic Tamiami Trail “Walking Dredge” used to build the Tamiami Trail. <http://alturl.com/s6nof>



Ten Thousand Islands NWR

Established in 1996, this 35,000-acre refuge protects important mangrove and marsh habitats and is the ultimate interface where land gradually gives way to the sea ... where freshwater flows interchange with tidal saltwater. <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/ezsm>



Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park

Host of a wide array of habitats: swamps, prairies, tropical hardwood hammocks and pine rock lands with royal palms and bald cypress trees sharing the forest canopy. There are also 44 native orchids and 14 native bromeliad species. <http://alturl.com/j9ckk>



Big Cypress National Preserve

Protecting over 729,000 acres of this truly vast swamp, Big Cypress National Preserve contains a mixture of tropical and temperate plant communities that harbor many protected species, including the elusive Florida panther. “Big” Cypress refers to the abundance, not the size, of cypress trees. *Click on “Things to Do” on website:* <http://alturl.com/ma366>



Everglades National Park

This National Park is dominated by the world renowned and unparalleled “River of Grass” freshwater prairies, stippled with tree islands, and home to many rare and endangered species. This is a focus area for one of the largest environmental restoration projects on the planet. *Click on “Things to Do” on website:* <http://alturl.com/n2q73>



Hiking/Cycling and Paddling the Everglades



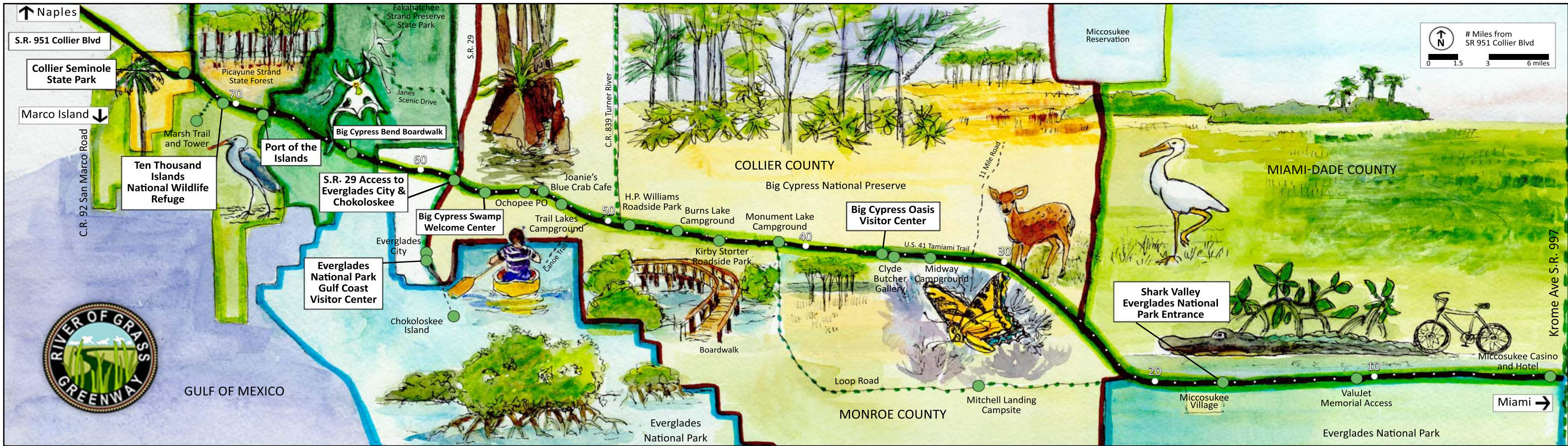
Amenities along the Tamiami Trail

U.S. 41 between Naples and Miami



For more information, visit website
Friends of the River of Grass Greenway
<https://www.evergladesROGG.org>

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Miles from Collier Blvd (SR951)	public Toilet	drinking Water	Food	Nature viewing	Hiking	Overnight facility	Canoe/kayaking	Information	Parking	FACILITY	Miles from Krome Ave (SR997)	DOT Mile Marker (signs only between SR29 & Krome)
										as of 9/1/18		
0.0	T	W	F						P	Collier Blvd (SR951); Convenience Store	82.0	101
2.4		W	F							Grocery / Convenience Store (north side)	79.6	98.6
4.2										Marketplace (closed)	77.8	96.8
5.0										Gas Station / Convenience Store (closed)	77.0	96
6.5										Collier-Seminole State Park Boundary	75.5	94.5
7.3					H				P	Off-Road Trail Access (hiking/bicycling)	74.7	93.7
7.9		W	F						P	CR 92; Gas Station; Restaurant; access to Marco Island	74.1	93
8.0	T	W		N	H	O	C	I	P	Collier-Seminole State Park (Entrance Fee) camp sites; canoe launch & rentals; hiking / biking trails; historic site	74.0	93
8.9									P	Picnic Tables	73.1	92
9.3										Corey Billie Airboat Rides	72.7	91.7
11.0				N	H		C		P	10,000 Islands Nat'l Refuge / Marsh Trail	71.0	90
14.0	T	W	F			O	C	I	P	Port of the Islands Hotel, Restaurant, Resort, Marina	68.0	87
17.0	T			N	H				P	Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk; Seminole Gift Shop	65.0	84
19.0							C		P	Picnic Tables and East River canoe launch 1/4 mile east	63.0	82
23.5				N						Everglades Private Airboat Rides	58.5	77.5
24.0				N						Jungle Erv's airboat rides	58.0	77
24.8	T	W	F				C	I	P	SR 29; Gas Station; access to Everglades City / Chokoloskee / Everglades Nat'l Park	57.2	76
26.8		W	F							Wooten's Airboat Rides	55.2	74
27.5	T	W		N			C	I	P	Big Cypress Swamp Visitor Center Restrooms, drinking water, exhibits	54.5	73.5
28.5									P	Wildlife Creek Campground	53.5	72.5
29.0									P	Ochopee Post Office Historical Site	53.0	72
29.2		W	F							Joanie's Blue Crab Café Restaurant	52.8	72
29.5	T	W	F	N	H	O	C	I	P	Trail Lakes Campground	52.5	71.5
31.0	T			N			C		P	Turner River Canoe Launch (picnic table)	51.0	70
31.7	T	W		N					P	H.P. Williams Roadside Park (picnic tables; boardwalk)	50.3	69
33.5	T			N		O	C		P	Burns Lake Campground (seasonal; primitive camping)	48.5	67.5

Miles from Collier Blvd (SR951)	public Toilet	drinking Water	Food	Nature viewing	Hiking	Overnight facility	Canoe/kayaking	Information	Parking	FACILITY	Miles from Krome Ave (SR997)	DOT Mile Marker (signs only between SR29 & Krome)
37.0				N	H				P	Skillet Strand North	45.0	64
38.6	T	W		N	H				P	Kirby Storter Roadside Park (boardwalk)	43.4	62.5
41.0	T	W				O			P	Monument Lake Campground (seasonal)	41.0	60
42.0	T	W		N	H				P	Site of Historic Monroe Station (Loop Rd west terminus)	40.0	59
46.0	T	W		N	H			I	P	Big Cypress Oasis Visitor Center (Florida Trail access) restrooms; drinking water; exhibits	36.0	55
46.8		W		N	H			I		Clyde Butcher's Big Cypress Photography Gallery	35.2	54
48.9	T	W				O			P	Midway Campground	33.1	52
56.0									P	Collier / Dade County Line	26.0	45
60.6				N	H					Loop Road (east terminus)	21.4	40.4
61.0	T			N	H		C		P	Levee "L-28" access bridge (levee trail)	21.0	40
62.0				N						Eco-Tour Airboat Rides	20.0	39
62.0		W	F				C		P	Tippy's Outpost Convenience Store / Big Cypress Grill	20.0	39
63.5	T	W	F	N				I	P	Miccosukee Indian Village; Museum; Airboat Rides	18.5	37.4
63.8			F					I		Miccosukee General Store / Gas Station	18.2	37.2
63.9		W	F					I	P	Miccosukee Restaurant / Visitor Center	18.1	37.1
64.0	T	W	F	N	H			I	P	Shark Valley Visitor Center (Entrance Fee) (tram tours; bicycle rental)	18.0	37
65.4				N						Tigertail Airboat Rides	16.6	35.6
67.5		W	F	N						Osceola Gift Shop	14.5	33.5
70.2				N						Buffalo Tiger Airboat Rides	11.5	30.5
71.0					H		C		P	Levee "L-29" access bridge;Valujet Memorial; levee trail	11.0	30
73.0		W	F	N						Everglades Safari Park Airboat Rides	9.0	28
75.8		W	F	N						Gator Park Airboat Rides	6.2	25.2
77.0										Coopertown Airboat Rides	5.0	24
80.7					H		C		P	Levee "L-29" access bridge; levee trail	1.3	20.3
82.0	T	W	F			O		I	P	Krome Avenue (SR997) south has multi-use pathway Four Corners Gas Station Miccosukee Resort & Casino	0	19*
										*Mile 0 starts at US1 in Miami-Dade County		
										CAUTION: Narrow Bridges throughout corridor		



For more information,
Visit the Friends of the River of Grass
Greenway website
<http://www.evergladesROGG.org>

