



Recreational Trail & Volunteer Project Updates

**Recreational Forum
March 16, 2020**

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SFWMD, Land Stewardship Section



ARM Loxahatchee NW Refuge Trail Levee / Access Project

- The Refuge is currently moving forward with the implementation of their Visitor Services Plan.
- District working with Refuge staff to install several new levee access walk-thru gates to accommodate horseback riding, hiking, and biking.
 - Engineers currently permitting
 - District FS staff to install

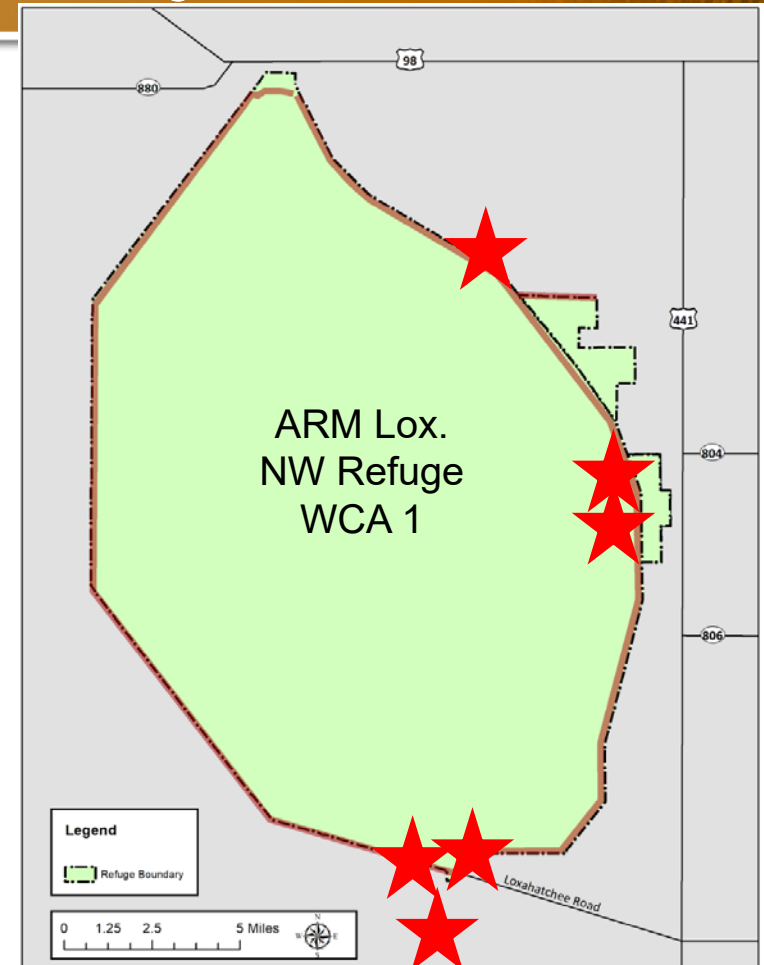


Example of walk-thru gates



ARM Loxahatchee NW Refuge Trail Levee / Access Project

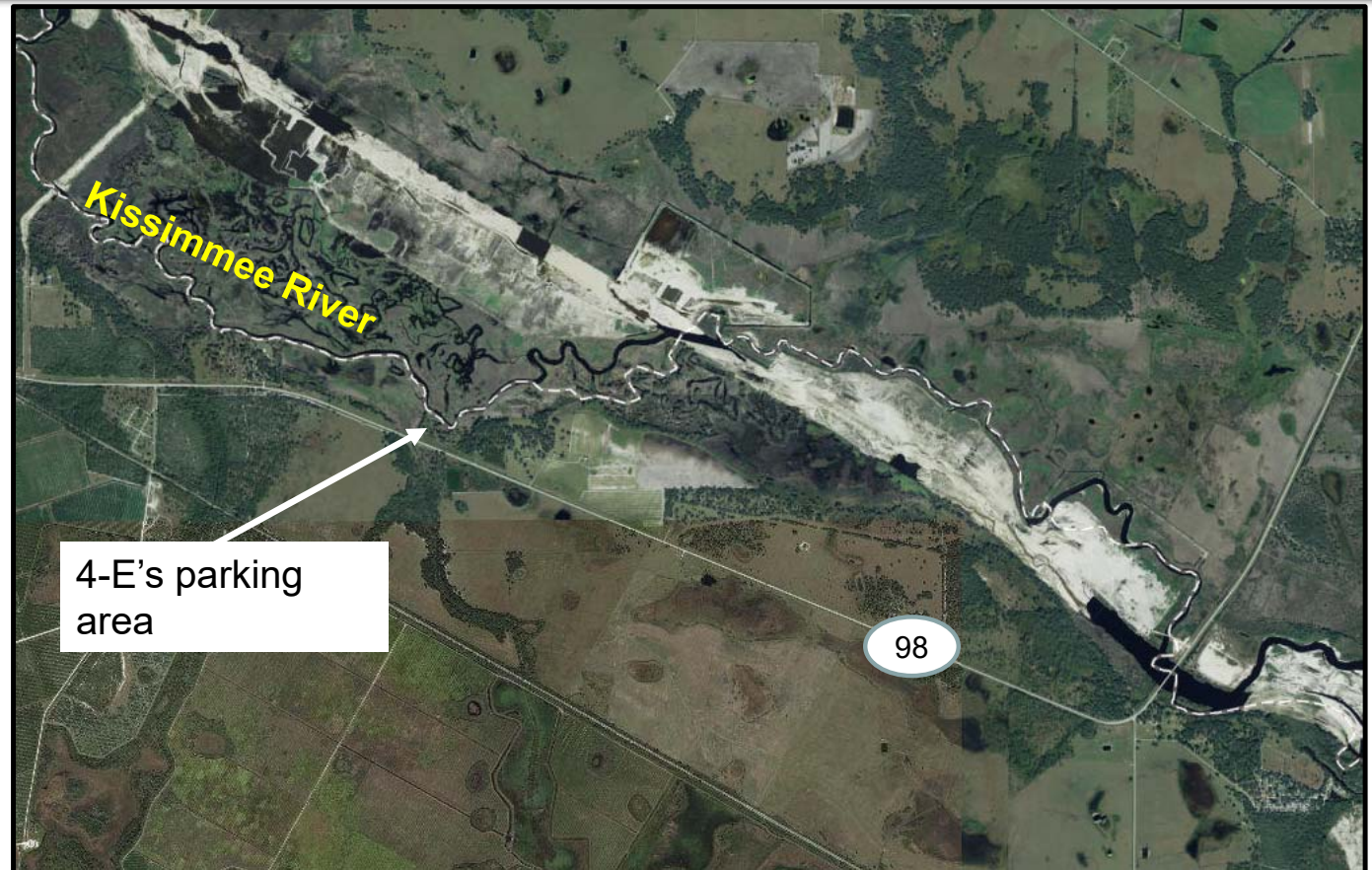
- The location of proposed new access gates: ★
- 1 gate from west side of Wellington area.
 - 2 gates at levee adjacent to Refuge Headquarters area, heading north & south along L-40.
 - 2 gates on levee at Lox Road area, heading north L-40 & west L-39.
 - 1 gate on levee south of Refuge along L-36, heading south.





Kissimmee River Access Project

- The District's 4-E's parking area is located in Highlands County off Hwy. 98 on the west side of the Kissimmee River.

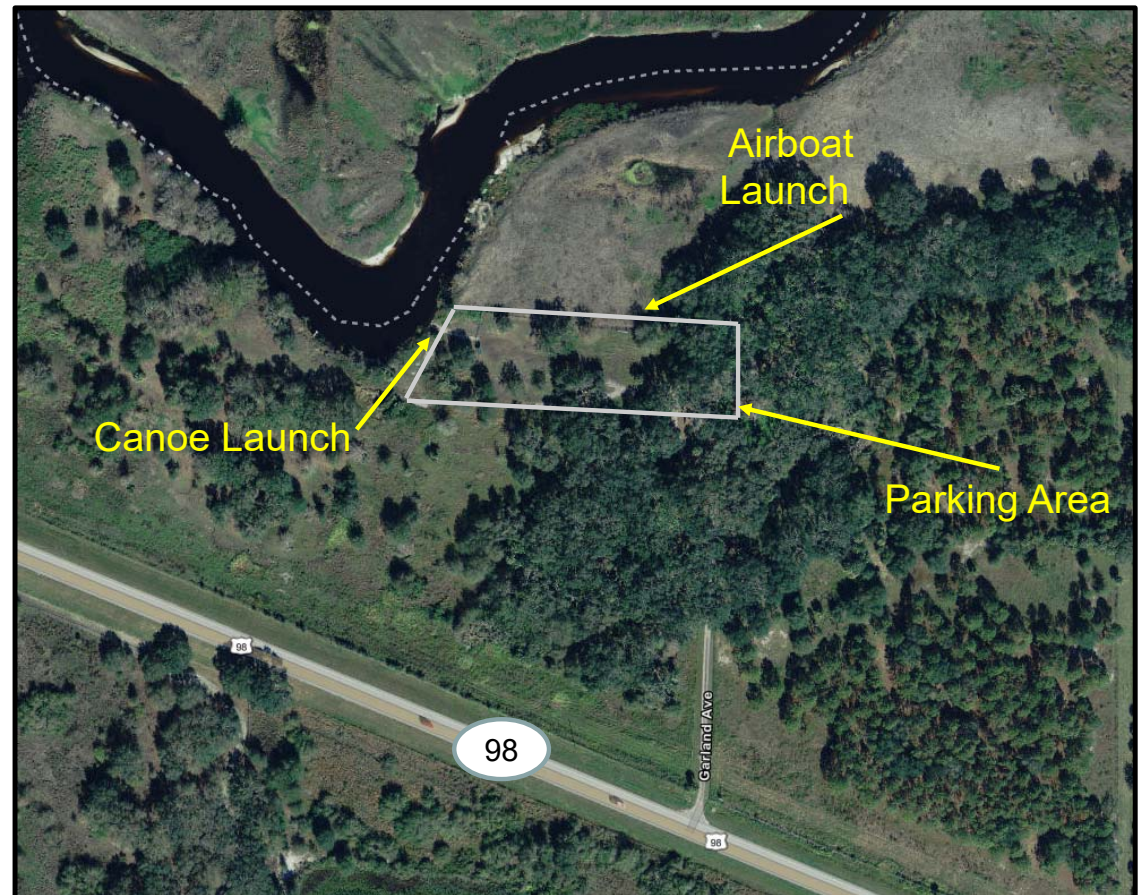




Kissimmee River Access Project

➤ The 4-E's parking area:

- Maintain existing canoe launch area.
- Minor improvements completed to provide additional airboat launch area.





Kissimmee River Access Project

- The District's 4-E's parking expansion and airboat launch area completed.





Site 1 Access Project

- Site 1 is located in south western Palm Beach County just north of Lox Road:
 - Propose to install grass parking area to provide access into the area.
 - Area has been popular for hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing.





Site 1 Access Project

➤ Site 1:

- Proposed parking area to provide access into the area.
- Gates, signage, and site preparation needs to be completed.





Trail Updates

- Allapattah located in Martin County, off Fox Brown Road:
 - Equestrian trail has temporary closure point due to culvert failure.
 - Reviewing to have a re-route developed soon.



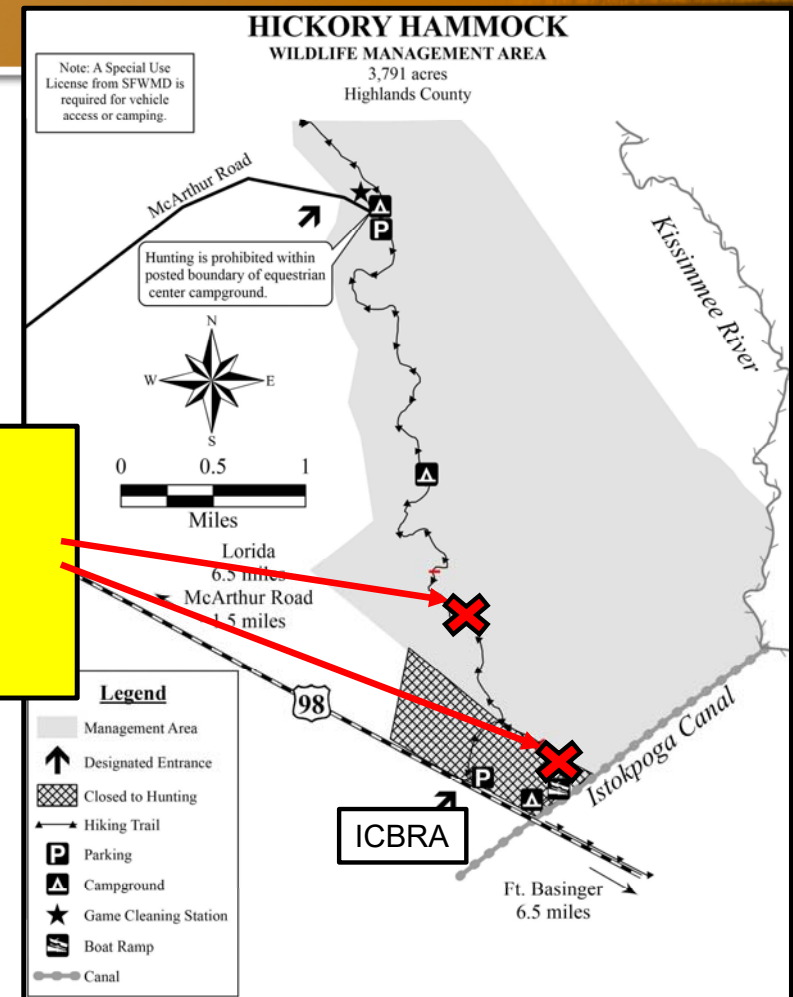
Trail Updates



➤ Hickory Hammock (HH) / Istokpoga Canal Boat Ramp (ICBRA) located in Highlands County:

- Trail connection has two temporary closure points due to culvert failures.

Trail temporarily closed at this point





Lake O Navigation Lock Closure Update

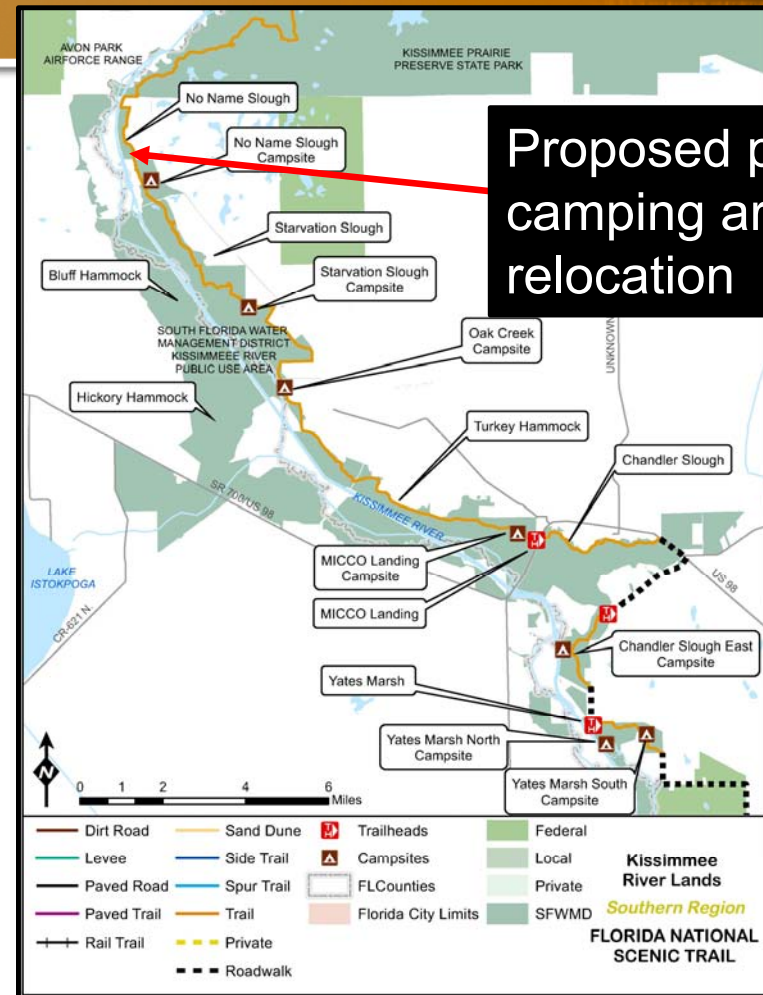
➤ Lake Okeechobee Conditions May Require Temporary Navigational Lock Closures to Protect Public Safety

- The following north shore locks are required to close temporarily for safety reasons when the lake falls below 12 feet NGVD:
 - Martin County: S-135 boat lock, J&S Fish Camp
 - Okeechobee County: G-36 boat lock, Henry Creek
 - Glades County: S-127 boat lock, Buckhead Ridge
 - Glades County: S-131 boat lock, Lakeport
 - The S-193 at Taylor Creek in Okeechobee County will be reduced timeframe (5:30am-10:30pm) to weekends only if falls below 12'. Will close if below 11'.
- (see press release on District's website for more details)

Kissimmee River Trail Campsite



- Proposed relocation of existing backpack campsite (No Name Slough or referred as Starvation Slough North) area further north:
 - Primitive camping area is primarily used by thru-hikers along the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) and maintained by the Florida Trail Association (FTA).
 - Relocation would be located closer to a water source.



Proposed primitive camping area relocation



FTA Volunteer Trail Event

- Florida Trail Association (FTA) will offer 3rd Annual MICCO Landing Hike on March 28th:
- Hike from MICCO Landing to Oak Creek located along east side of Kissimmee River in Okeechobee County.
 - Interpretive hike offered.
 - Shuttles offered back from Oak Creek to MICCO Landing.





Earth Day Volunteer Project

➤ On Saturday April 25th FSCA will host an Earth Day volunteer event at Blanket Bay Marsh just south of St. Rd. 60 on the east side of the Kissimmee River in Osceola County:

- Install signage to designate airboat use area.
- Remove old fence post and debris within the area.



Pulling up old fence posts



Installing signs



Lake Okeechobee Prescribed Burning

- On March 4th and 5th SFWMD, FWC, Florida Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted two prescribed burns on the southwest shore of the Lake Okeechobee.
- Approx. 20,000 acres were burned.
 - Prescribed burning is part of an integrated management approach on Lake Okeechobee.
 - Ecologically responsible prescribed burns reduce the threat of wildfire and help improve habitat for fish, waterfowl, wading birds, the Everglades snail kite and other wildlife populations.





Lake Okeechobee Prescribed Burning



Lake Okeechobee Prescribed Burn



Burn planning



Multi-agency Burn Team

