

Pithlachascotee River Paddling Trail



Pithlachascotee River Trip Planning

Counties: Pasco **Nearest towns:** New Port Richey

Trip length: 4-6 Miles

Difficulty: Easy - Moderate

Skill level: Beginner - Intermediate

Mileage:

- Mile 0—James E. Grey Preserve
- Mile 1.5—Francis Ave City Park
- Mile 3—Sims City Park
- Mile 6—Nick's Park

**The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mi) and shouldn't be relied upon for navigation.

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Access Point 1 Put-in: James E. Grey Preserve (the original designated trail began at Rowan Ave bridge but it is no longer a viable put-in point).

Miles from put-in/take-out: In town, New Port Richey.

Directions to James E. Grey Preserve: From US 19, turn east onto Main St. and drive ~0.6 miles. Following blue canoe signs, turn right (south) onto Madison St. and drive ~0.5 miles. Turn left (east) onto Louisiana Ave. and drive 0.8 miles. Turn right (south) onto Carpel Dr. and continue for ~0.1 miles. Turn right (south), onto Baker Rd. and drive ~0.2 miles. Finally, turn left (east) onto Plathe Rd (unpaved). Grey Preserve parking area and trailhead are ~0.2 miles on the right. The launch is about 20 yards from the parking area. Launch steps can be slippery.

Other take-out points: Frances Avenue Park, Sims City Park, Nick's Park

Nearest town: New Port Richey

Miles from put-in/take-out: In town

Access Point 2 Directions to Frances Avenue Park: From US 19, turn east onto Main St. and drive ~0.6 miles. Following blue canoe signs, turn right (south) onto Madison St. and drive ~0.5 miles. Turn left (east) onto Louisiana Ave. and drive ~0.1 miles. The park entrance is on the right. Boats must be carried ~100 yards to the launch.

Access Point 3 Directions to Sims City Park: From US 19, turn east (left) on Main Street and go two blocks to Sims Park. The boat ramp is behind the Chamber of Commerce building on the northwest side of the bridge. Parking is free.

Access Point 4 Directions to Nick's Park: Park is northwest of the US 19 bridge over the river.

Topo maps: Elfers, Port Richey

Gazeteer page: 82

Outfitters within 20 miles of trail:

Mad Paddlers (727)944-4542 (Tarpon Springs) <http://www.madpaddlers.com/>

Wind-N-WaterSports.com (727) 736-8663 (New Port Richey) <http://www.wind-n-watersports.com/>

Shuttle service offered: Contact outfitters

Water level info: Check local tide charts or this website:

<http://tbone.biol.sc.edu/tide/tideshow.cgi?site=New+Port+Richey%2C+Pithlachascotee+River%2C+Florida>

USGS link: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?02310300>

Break / Lunch areas: James E. Grey Preserve, Frances Avenue City Park, Sims City Park, Nick's Park

Camping options: None

Other lodging: Numerous hotels in the area.

Food/Beverage restrictions: No alcohol in parks

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Expect on the river:

Tidal influence: Moderate to heavy

Pull-overs: Expect a few pull-overs above Grey Preserve at low tide and low river levels.

Low branches: Above Rowan Bridge.

Narrow water: River narrows upstream from the Grey Preserve.

Shallow water: Unlikely unless at extreme low tide or prolonged drought.

Strong currents: Depends on water levels, not likely on upper stretch.

Rocks: None

Houses: Residential area from Sims Park to the border of James E. Grey Preserve, also a few residents upstream from the Preserve.

Shoals: None

Tight turns: Upstream from Grey Preserve the river begins to narrow and bend frequently with some tight turns.

Open water: River widens as it nears the Gulf, expect wind and waves, tidal currents.

Springs: None

Wildlife: Blue heron, pelicans, alligators, turtles, wood storks

Natural communities: Tidal marsh, brackish marsh, maritime hammock, mangroves.

Portages: Possible at pullovers

Swimming: At your own risk

Motorboats: Yes, especially in lower section. Motorboats are unlikely upstream of James Grey due to pullovers.

Expect at parking / access points:

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Frances Ave Park, Sims Park, Nick's Park, and Grey Preserve
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** None
- **Crowds:** Few
- **Boat Ramp:** At Sims Park, Nick's Park.
- **Potable water source:** Grey Preserve, Frances Ave Park, Sims Park
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** Frances Ave Park, Grey Preserve

Cultural and historical features along the trail:

No remarkable historical features noted.

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Notes:

Rowan Avenue bridge is no longer a viable put-in point although it is listed on the original designated canoe trail. Launch instead at the James Grey Preserve and paddle upstream 0.5 miles to the Rowan Bridge and return; the river narrows and becomes blocked by deadfall beyond this point. There are multiple options for take-out points listed above or launch and return to the Preserve.

The wildest and most scenic section of the river is a mile above and about a half mile below the Grey Preserve. Below the preserve, the river flows through the town of New Port Richey and it is more of an urban paddling trail. Weekends and holidays in this lower section can be busy with boat traffic.

Submerged logs are the biggest hazard for swimmers and paddlers since the water is dark.