

Florida Designated Paddling Trails Upper Manatee River

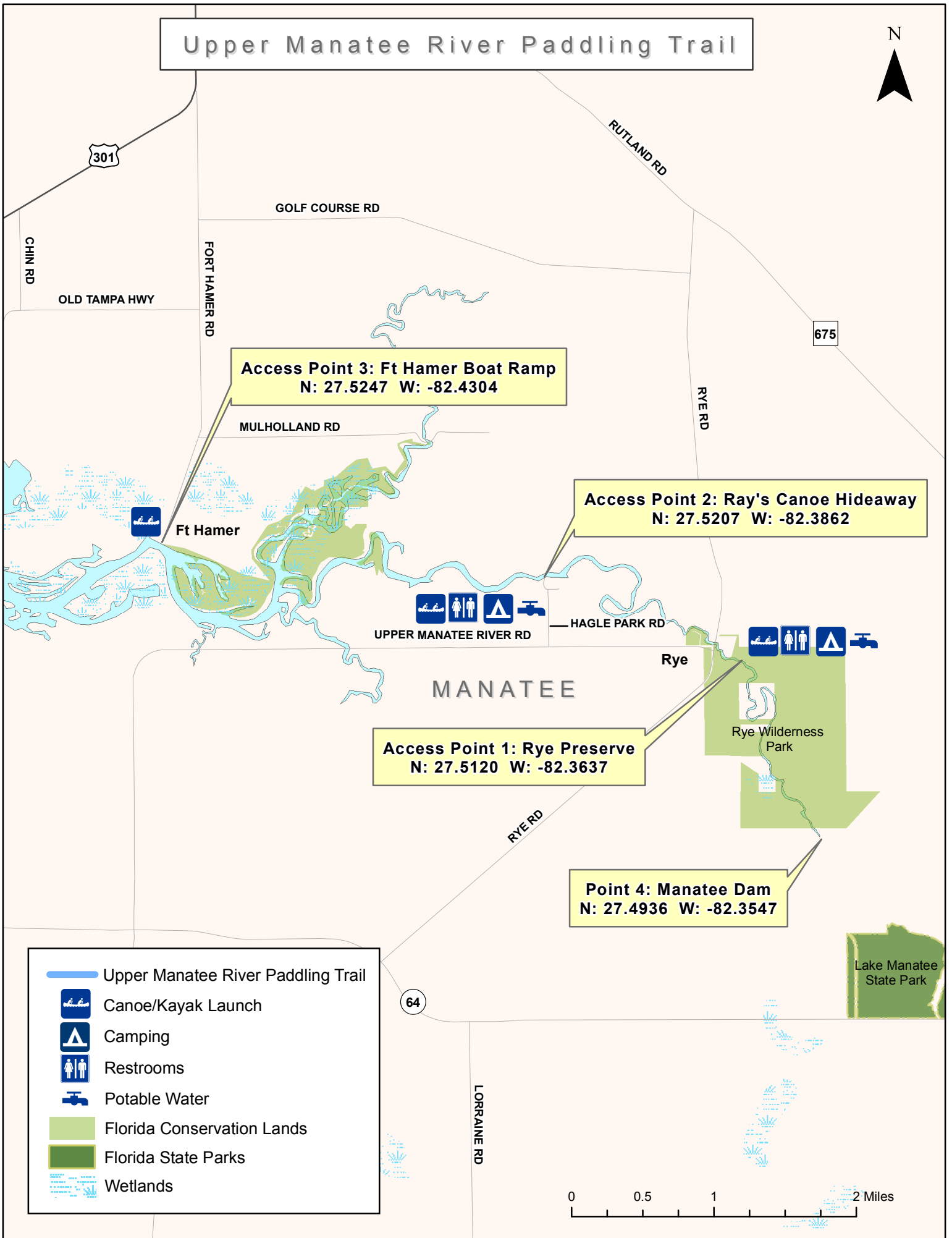


- Designated Paddling Trail
- Wetlands
- Water
- Designated Paddling Trail Index

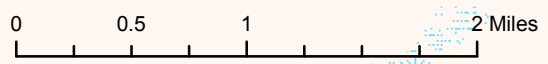
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Upper Manatee River Paddling Trail

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- Upper Manatee River Paddling Trail
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Camping
- Restrooms
- Potable Water
- Florida Conservation Lands
- Florida State Parks
- Wetlands





Upper Manatee River Paddling Trail Guide

The Waterway

Subtropical vegetation lines the banks of this gently winding trail. Water levels and flows vary with releases from Lake Manatee Dam. Across from the take-out point is the historic site of Fort Hamer. The fort was built 1849-1850 to defend Tampa settlers during skirmishes with indians.

The Paddling Experience

The Upper Manatee River is suitable for beginners. The river is a segment of the [Manatee County Blueways](#), a 75-mile matrix of paddling trails. Launching at the [Rye Preserve](#), it is an easy 6.5 miles downstream to the Fort Hamer Boat Ramp. Another scenic trip option is to paddle upstream from the Rye Preserve to the Manatee Dam and back, a total round trip of 6 miles.

Access Points

#1, Start of the Trail, Rye Preserve



[Rye Preserve](#) is home to a piece of Manatee County's early pioneer history. Within the preserve visitors can view the Rye Family Cemetery, the last remaining reminder of the old Rye river community. The reserve features camping, nature trails, horseback trails, picnic areas, a playground and a canoe/kayak launch.

Directions: From I-75: Exit at the SR 64 (Manatee Avenue) east exit. Continue on SR 64 to Rye Road. Turn left onto Rye Road and continue north. After crossing the Rye Bridge, make an immediate right and drive into Rye Preserve.

#2, Mile 2.5, Ray's Canoe Hideaway

[Ray's Canoe Hideaway](#) is an outfitter with access to the Upper Manatee River. *From I-75 (exit 42), travel 2.5 miles east on SR 64. Turn north at the traffic light onto Upper Manatee River Road and go 4.5 miles to Hagle Park Road. Turn north and follow signs a half mile to Ray's Canoe Hideaway.*

#3, Mile 6.5, End of the Trail, Ft Hamer



[Ft. Hamer Park](#) offers restrooms, picnic pavilions, kayak launch and a fishing pier. *From Rye Preserve go north 2.5 miles on Rye Road to Golf Course Road. Go west 3.5 miles on Golf Course Road to Fort Hamer Road, then south on Fort Hamer Road 2.5 miles to the boat ramp.*



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Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Ray's Canoe Hideaway](#), 941-747-3909

Base Camp

Rye Preserve is a 145 acre property located just northwest of the Lake Manatee Dam. The preserve features nature trails, horseback trails, picnic areas, a playground and a canoe/kayak launch. The preserve's trail system leads visitors through four distinctive ecosystems, including sand pine scrub, xeric oak scrub, oak hammocks and the river community. A variety of interesting creatures can be seen in these areas including the rare gopher tortoise and Florida scrub-jay. Rye Preserve is home to a piece of Manatee County's early pioneer history. Within the preserve visitors can view the Rye Family Cemetery, the last remaining reminder of the old Rye river community. Camping is available at the Rye Preserve on a first-come-first-serve basis by checking in at the Ranger Station from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.



Upper Manatee, FWC



Putting and Paddling, FWC



Rye Branch, FWC



Paddle Manatee sign, FWC



Approaching Ft Hamer boat ramp, FWC