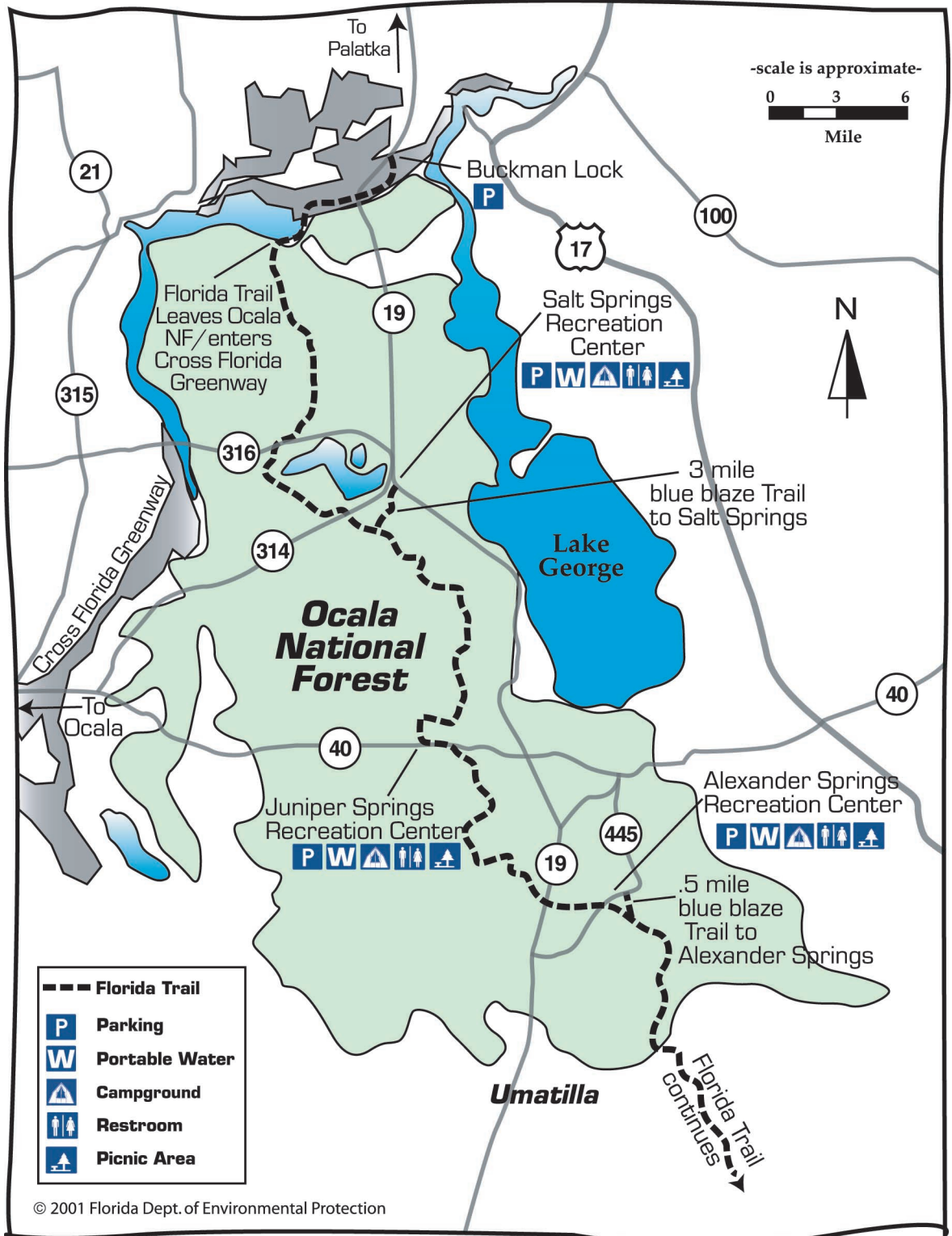
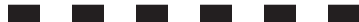


Ocala National Forest—The Florida Trail

The Florida Trail in the Ocala National Forest is certified as Florida National Scenic Trail, and has been called the “crown jewel” of the Florida Trail system. The entire length of the trail in the National Forest is also designated as part of the Florida Statewide Greenways and Trails System. The trail traverses a range of natural communities including extensive stands of longleaf pines, and scattered communities of sand pines, other short leaf pines, and hardwoods. The trail also skirts open prairies and ponds that are excellent for viewing wildlife.



Ocala National Forest–The Florida Trail

Major Activities: Hiking

Trail Length/Surface: unpaved hiking, orange blazed trail, 60.8 miles

Fee: Admission fees may apply at some locations. Contact the Forest Service for more information.

Counties: Marion, Lake, Putnam, Volusia

Nearby Cities: Ocala (west side), Palatka (north end), Umatilla (south end)

Notes:

The trail in the Ocala National Forest offers mostly level, dry hiking through pine islands and hardwood forest and along the edges of prairies and ponds. In the southern portion of the forest, the trail crosses some narrow sections of hardwood swamp.

Access to and from the trail is provided at several points, but three major locations are Salt Springs, Juniper Springs, and Alexander Springs recreation areas. These locations also provide a host of recreational amenities.

The primary Florida Trail is blazed orange. Blue blazes mark side trails to campsites, access points or places of interest. Double blazes indicate a change of direction, or that the trail is leaving an obvious path. After you spot a double blaze, watch carefully for the next blaze.

Register boxes are stationed at points along the trail. Be sure to sign in when you come to these locations. The registers provide a valuable record of trail use and are of special importance to rescue personnel.

The Florida Trail Association (FTA) produces a detailed hiking guide and segment-by-segment maps which are very useful for hiking the Florida Trail. For more information on the Florida Trail or FTA, visit their website at www.florida-trail.org.

The attached map is intended to provide an overview of the trail location within the Ocala National Forest. There are parking and camping areas along the trail and elsewhere in addition to those shown on the map. For detailed information regarding additional facilities, contact the Forest Service or obtain the Florida Trail maps from FTA.



-continue-

Ocala National Forest–The Florida Trail

Access/Directions:

Alexander Springs Recreation Area

From Umatilla, take State Road 19 north to SR 445. Take a right (heading east) and follow SR 445 to the entrance of Alexander Springs Recreation Area. Follow _ mile blue blazed trail to the main Florida Trail.

Juniper Springs Recreation Area

From Ocala, follow SR 40 into the Ocala National Forest until you reach the Juniper Springs Recreation Area.

Salt Springs Recreation Area

From Ocala, follow SR 40 to CR 314. Take a left onto CR 314 and follow this road into the forest. Proceed until you reach the Salt Springs Recreation Area, just past the intersection with SR 19.

From Palatka, take SR 19 south into the forest. Continue until you reach the Salt Springs Recreation Area.



Contact Information:

Ocala National Forest
Seminole Ranger District
40929 State Road 19
Umatilla, FL 32784
Phone: (352) 669-3153

Ocala National Forest
Lake George Ranger District
17147 East Highway 40
Silver Springs, FL 34488
Phone: (352) 625-2520

Visit the Forest Service web page (<http://www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/florida>)



www.floridagreenwaysandtrails.org