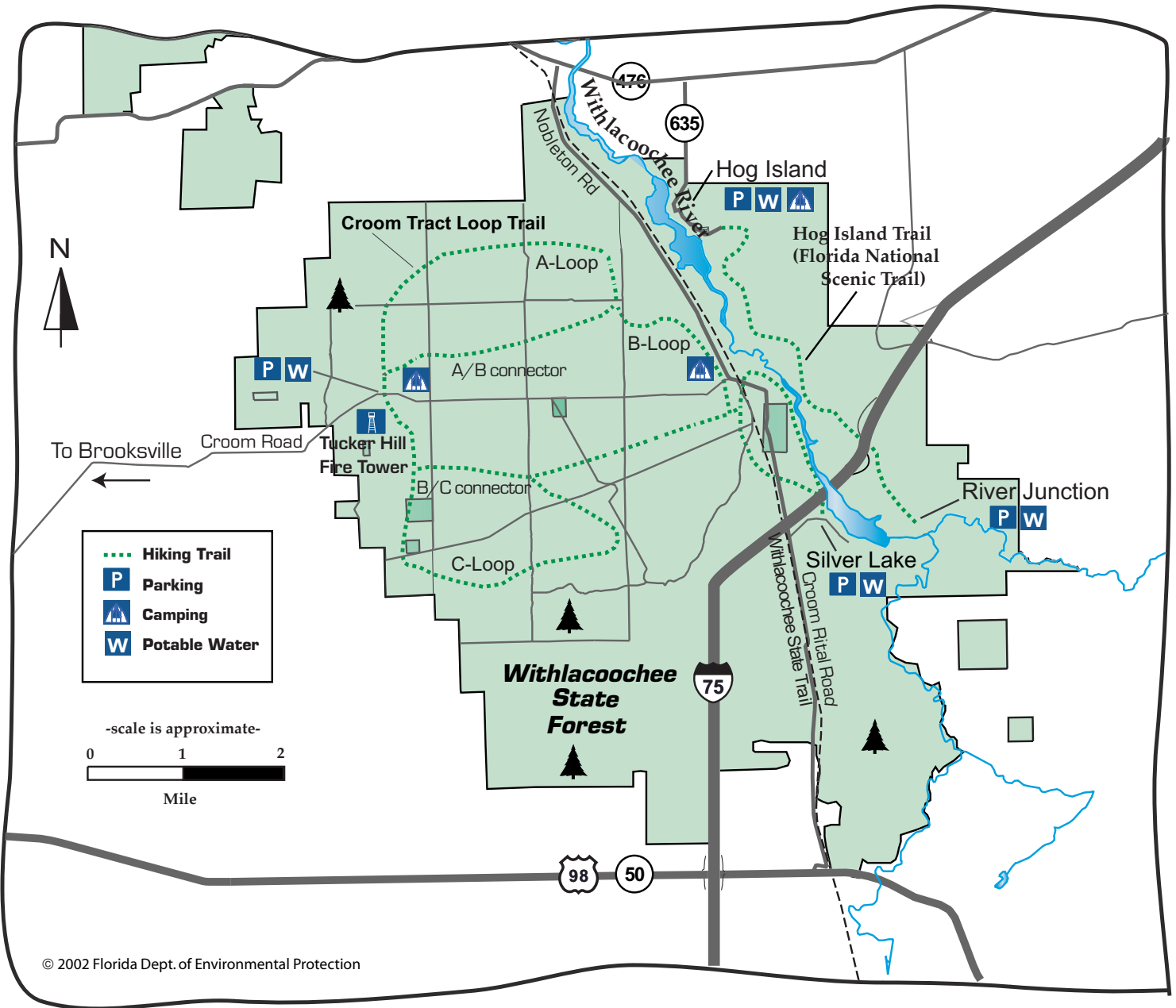


# Withlacoochee State Forest-Croom Hiking Trails

Declared as one of the "10 Coolest Places in North America" by the World Wildlife Fund, the Withlacoochee State Forest has numerous outdoor recreational opportunities available for everyone. Among the recreational amenities that make this state forest so popular are the hiking trails in the Croom Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest. The hiking trails in this area are dry to damp, all weather trails that wind through central Florida's longleaf pine and scrub oak hills, live oak thickets and hardwood hammocks, past creek bottoms and cypress ponds. Of particular interest are the area's ravines, prairies and abandoned rock mines.



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# Withlacoochee State Forest–Croom Hiking Trails

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**Major Activities:** Hiking

**Trail Length/Surface:** All trails are unpaved. The outer A/B/C Loop Trail is collectively 14.8 total miles, the A/B connector is 2.8 and the B/C connector is 1.2 miles; the Hog Island Trail is approximately 5.8 miles; and the loop trail beginning from Silver Lake is approximately 3.5 miles.

**Fee:** Contact the Withlacoochee State Forest Recreation/Visitors Center for details regarding any necessary permits or camping fees.

**County:** Hernando, Sumter

**Nearby Cities:** Brooksville

**Notes:**

The hiking trails in the Croom Tract are loop trails within the Florida Trail system. Hog Island Trail is officially certified as part of the Florida National Scenic Trail. 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](http://www.florida-trail.org).

The main hiking trails are blazed in orange; cross trails and side trails are blazed in blue. The main A, B and C Loops are marked with orange.

The A Loop Trail is part of the Division of Forestry's Trailwalker Program. This program offers recognition awards for hiking designated trails in state forests throughout Florida. For more information, contact the office below or visit the program's website ([www.fl-dof.com/Recreation/Trailwalker/index.html](http://www.fl-dof.com/Recreation/Trailwalker/index.html)).

Be aware that a network of off-road bicycle and equestrian trails are also located in this area (these maps are available under the West Central region of the trail guide), so hikers may encounter bikers or equestrians at trailheads and trail crossings. Hikers may walk on the horse or off-road bicycle trails, but please be courteous to and aware of other users.

Overnight primitive camping is permitted only within the camp zones designated by white-banded trees. These are located north of the Tucker Hill trailhead and north of Croom Road/Forest Road 6 between Forest Road 9 and Nobleton Road.

Horse, hiking and off-road biking trails are closed on the Croom Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest during the muzzleloading gun and general gun portions of the annual hunting season. For information regarding hunting seasons, and additional rules and tips regarding use of off-road biking trails and the Withlacoochee State Forest, contact the Recreation/Visitors Center.



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# Withlacoochee State Forest–Croom Hiking Trails

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## **Access/Directions:**

Croom Tract Trail - Tucker Hill Fire Tower area

From Brooksville, head north on US 41 to Croom Road (CR 480). Take a right and proceed east on Croom Road about two miles until you see the fire tower on your right. The trailhead is on your left, across from the fire tower.

## ***Croom Tract Trail - Silver Lake Recreation Area***

Take I-75 Exit 301 to US98/SR50. Turn east (away from Brooksville) and proceed about one mile until you reach the stop light at Croom Rital Road. Turn left and proceed north on Croom Rital Road. Follow signs to the Withlacoochee State Forest Silver Lake Recreation Area. Turn right onto Silver Lake Road and follow to Day Use Area and boat ramp. Look for the large FT (Florida Trail) sign near the boat ramp at the north end of the recreation area by the I-75 bridge over the Withlacoochee River. NOTE: When the river is high, the trail may not be readily accessible from this point.

## ***Hog Island Trail***

From I-75, take Exit 309 to CR 476. Head west to the intersection with CR 635. Follow south to the recreation area.

## **Contact Information:**

Withlacoochee State Forest  
Recreation/Visitors Center  
15003 Broad Street  
Brooksville, FL 34601-4201  
352-754-6896

Withlacoochee State Forest website ([www.fl-dof.com/state\\_forests/Withlacoochee.htm](http://www.fl-dof.com/state_forests/Withlacoochee.htm))



[www.floridagreenwaysandtrails.org](http://www.floridagreenwaysandtrails.org)