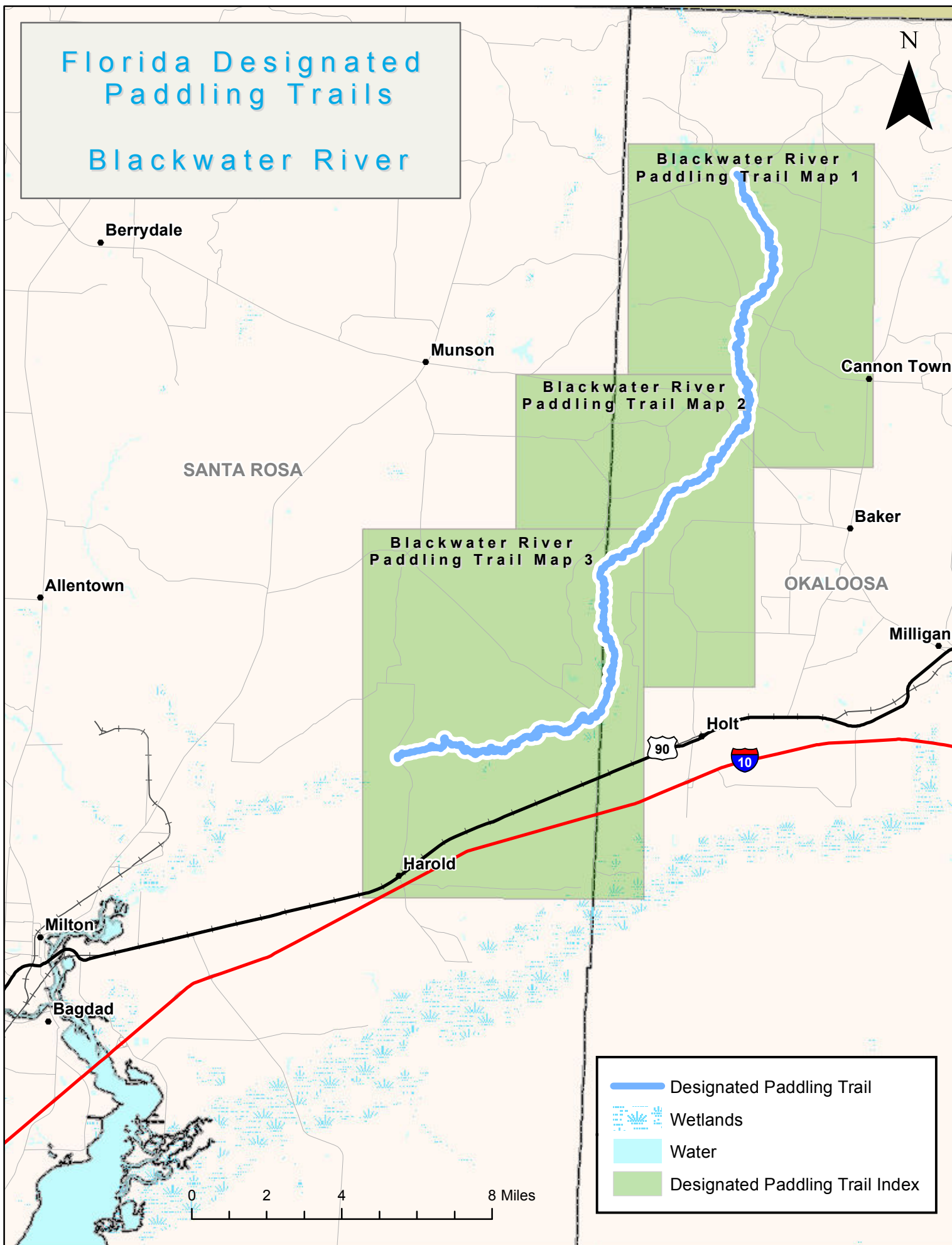


Florida Designated Paddling Trails

Blackwater River



Blackwater River Paddling Trail Map 1

N



KENNEDY BRIDGE RD

MATTIE KENNEDY RD

Access Point 1: Kennedy Bridge Launch
N: 30.9333 W: -86.7358

EADIE COTTON RD

HIGH BRIDGE RD

Blackwater River State Forest

OKALOOSA

Access Point 2: Peadon Bridge Launch
N: 30.8823 W: -86.7312

PEADON BRIDGE RD

SHERMAN KENNEDY RD

JOHN RILEY BARNHILL RD

Cannon Town

4

Access Point 3: Cotton Bridge Launch
N: 30.8336 W: -86.7336

Blackwater River
Designated Paddling Trail



Canoe/Kayak Launch



Restrooms



Potable Water



Florida Conservation Lands



Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Blackwater River Paddling Trail Map 2

N



MARTIN MILL RD

CHARLIE FOSTER RD

Access Point 3: Cotton Bridge Launch
N: 30.8336 W: -86.7336



4

CORDUROY RD

NORMAN RILEY RD

SANTA ROSA

Blackwater River State Forest

BROOKS RD

OKALOOSA

PENNY CREEK RD

LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH RD

POPLAR HEAD CHURCH RD

Blackwater River
Designated Paddling Trail



Canoe/Kayak Launch



Restrooms



Potable Water



Florida Conservation Lands



Wetlands

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Blackwater River Paddling Trail Map 3

N

PLEASANT HOME RD

BRYANT BRIDGE RD

NORMAN RILEY RD

KELLY MILL RD

Access Point 4: Bryant Bridge Launch
N: 30.7243 W: -86.7931

Blackwater River State Forest

**Access Point 6: Blackwater River State Park
(Deaton Bridge Launch)**
N: 30.7043 W: -86.8815

Blackwater River
State Park



SF J40

SANTA ROSA
OKALOOSA

BRYANT BRIDGE RD

DEATON BRIDGE RD

90

10

Milton



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

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



Blackwater River Paddling Trail Guide

The Waterway

This winding stream is suitable for beginners and flows through the unspoiled [Blackwater River State Forest](#) with trees often forming a dense, shady canopy over the river. High bluffs occur in some sections where pine and cedar trees tower above paddlers. The water is coffee colored by naturally occurring tannins, the reason why Creek Indians called the river “Oka Lusa” (“black water”). White sandbars provide plenty of options for camping or picnicking.

The Paddling Experience

The lower portion of this popular 31-mile paddling trail can become congested with people floating in tubes near the state park, especially on summer weekends and holidays. Plan a trip for weekdays or during Florida’s pleasant winter months to avoid crowds. Paddlers should check stream flow data and weather conditions before embarking on a trip. The Blackwater River can rise very quickly and make paddling difficult and conditions dangerous. Many of the access sites are remote with unsafe overnight parking; consider parking and shuttle with a local outfitter listed below. The river is not navigable below the Deaton Bridge in [Blackwater River State Park](#), be sure to exit here. Glass containers are prohibited on the river.

Access Points

#1, Start of the Trail, Kennedy Bridge. Be aware that fallen trees may occasionally block the river between Kennedy Bridge and Peaddon Bridge. Check with local outfitters for current conditions. *Directions: From Munson, take SR 4 east 2.7 miles to Hurricane Lake Road. Go north on Hurricane Lake Road, it becomes Beaver Creek Road after 3.6 miles. At 2 miles turn east on Kennedy Bridge Road and go 3.1 miles to the bridge.*

#2, Mile 5.5, Peaddon Bridge, This access is unimproved with erosion and steep banks and is not a recommended launch. It is a very remote area with limited parking and rough local roads. Peaddon Bridge is about 5 miles downstream of Kennedy Bridge. *Directions: From Baker, take SR 189 north 4 miles to Riley Barnhill Road. Go west on Riley Barnhill Road 3.2 miles until it becomes Peaddon Bridge Road and continue 0.5 mile to Peaddon Bridge.*

#3, Mile 11, Cotton Bridge, SR 2.

Access to this small county park is on the west side of the river with an improved, hand-launch only boat ramp. The gates are locked one hour before sunset so take in consideration if leaving a vehicle here. *Directions: From Baker, take SR 4 4.2 miles west to Cotton Bridge.*



Blackwater River Paddling Trail Guide

#4, Mile 22.5, Bryant Bridge, The lower river, especially between Bryant Bridge and Blackwater State Park, can become congested with paddlers, tubers and swimmers in summer and on warm weather weekends. Access is on the west side of the river, upstream from the bridge. There is ample parking but this is a very remote area so take caution if leaving a vehicle here. *Directions: Take US 90 west 14.0 miles out of Crestview. Turn north onto Kelly Mill Road for 0.6 miles, turn west onto Bryant Bridge Road and continue 1.3 miles to Bryant Bridge.*

#5, Mile 30, Forest Service Ramp, About a mile before Deaton Bridge on river right is an improved boat ramp with limited parking. It is accessed on a single lane paved road just north of the state park entrance. It is not recommended to leave a vehicle overnight here.

#6, Mile 31, End of the Trail, Deaton Bridge, Blackwater River State Park, 
Deaton Bridge is within [Blackwater River State Park](#). Be sure to end your trip here as the river is not navigable below this bridge. There are parking lots on both sides of the river, deposit park admission fee in pay stations. There is a large sandy beach on river left and the access is just downstream of the bridge on a beach, river right. A picnic area and restrooms are a short distance beyond the takeout. *Directions: Take US 90 east out of Milton 10 miles to Deaton Bridge Road. Turn north and continue 4 miles to Deaton Bridge within Blackwater River State Park.*

Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Adventures Unlimited](#)

850-623-6197

[Blackwater Canoe Rental](#)

1-800-967-6789

Base Camp

[Blackwater River State Park](#) is an excellent place to gaze at deep, starry skies and share stories around the campfire recounting the day's adventures. Several other [designated paddling trails](#) are nearby: Shoal River, Juniper Creek, Coldwater Creek, and the Yellow River. Stretch your legs and enjoy a stroll on the The Juniper Creek Trail, accessible from the park. This trail is part of the [Florida National Scenic Trail](#) and is maintained by Florida Trail volunteers. Park visitors also enjoy hiking the "Chain of Lakes Nature Trail" starting on a boardwalk on the east side of Deaton Bridge. This is one of many delightful hiking trails in the state park and takes about an hour and a half walk along the river to a river swamp, a chain of ox-bow lakes and a sandhill community of longleaf pine and turkey oak. The trail may be seasonally wet.