

HEARTLINE

No. 4

Oct. – Dec., 2012

**Heartland Chapter, Florida Trail Association,
Serving Polk, Hardee, Highlands and De Soto Counties**

FROM THE CHAIR:

September is proving to be an important month for the Florida Trail Association. At the beginning of the month the US Forest Service released the FNST Route Proposal, which shows a single path for the FNST. They have explained the reasoning behind this route selection and while it appears to make sense from a dollars and cents point of view, there is much emotion involved with the apparent “loss” of the Western Corridor. But after meeting with them on September 8th, while the Western Corridor is currently not on the route proposal, it doesn’t mean it will be lost or that the current route proposal will win out in the long run. The Western Corridor travels through 5 different chapters and we are all united in the preservation of this corridor. And although the official public meetings end on October 4th, that won’t be the end of the public comment period nor the absolute deadline for members of the Florida Trail Association or the public to voice their opinion about the proposed route. As the US Forest Service staff stated at the meeting there are still several years of planning to go. They are looking to be able to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the FNST by showing the public that there is a continuous trail with few or no dreaded road walks and show they have met a significant amount of the Comprehensive Plan that was enacted in 1986.

As for our chapter, we are going to have a busy fall/winter with many activities planned including our first ever Backpacking 101 class and overnight backpacking trip afterwards. Check our Meetup page for details and to sign up for any of our activities we have planned. Hiking season is upon us and we will definitely be out on the trails. But as we have done for the past several years, we will be manning a booth at the Polk Nature Fest – Water, Wings and Wild Things on November 3rd at Circle B Bar Reserve. Come out and join us in sharing information about the Florida Trail Association with the public. We will also be manning a booth at the 27th Annual CCC Festival at Highlands Hammock State Park on the same day. Talk about being busy!! We will need everyone’s help for both events.

<http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA>

I look forward to seeing everyone out on the trail!!

David Waldrop
Heartland Chapter Chair

Melissa Bruneau
Heartland Chapter Co-Chair



CONTACT PERSONS: (Area Code 863 unless listed)

Chair: David Waldrop 605-3587 or david_lwfl@yahoo.com

Co-Chair: Melissa Bruneau 407-460-1388 or ftamelissa@gmail.com

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Newsletter Editor: Teresa Newgent 813-882-9558 or newgt@msn.com or newgt7@yahoo.com

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Section Leader/Kissimmee River: David Waldrop 605-3587 or david_lwfl@yahoo.com

Section Leader/Willingham: Bob Hummel 471-1814

Section Leader/Green Swamp East: Bob Yost 644-5448 or bobalinks3@yahoo.com

Section Leader/Southern End of Western Loop of the FNST: Janice Scroggie Anderson 813-245-1609 or scroggie@aol.com

ACTIVITIES: (If you have trouble reaching the contact person listed in the activity description, please contact Maureen Jones. If you can't reach her, please contact David Waldrop. Contact information for both is listed above.)

Date: October 6, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Trail Maintenance

Location: **Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (WMA)**

Located east of Avon Park in Polk County 5 miles south of Frostproof and is part of the Lake Wales Ridge State Forest which was purchased by the state to protect numerous rare and endangered plants and animals. Meet at north gate entrance.

Bring: Hiking shoes, brimmed hat, water, snacks, lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Rose or Jim Kellermann at 863-676-2889 for meeting time, location and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: October 11, 2012 Thursday

Activity: Trail Maintenance

Location: **Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (WMA)**

Located east of Avon Park in Polk County 5 miles south of Frostproof and is part of the Lake Wales Ridge State Forest which was purchased by the state to protect numerous rare and endangered plants and animals. Meet at north gate entrance.

Bring: Hiking shoes, brimmed hat, water, snacks, lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Rose or Jim Kellermann at 863-676-2889 for meeting time, location and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: October 13, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Day Hike, approx. 4 miles, dogs on leashes are welcome, but must be poop-scooped.

Location: **Tenoroc Fish Management Area, Lakeland, FL**

Description: For this event Florida State Senator, Paula Dockery, will be at Tenoroc to hike the trail with us.

Bring: Hiking shoes, hat, water, snacks, lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Monika Hoerl at 863-858-3106 for meeting time and to RSVP your attendance. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Activities, Cont.

Date: October 20, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Off-road Bike Ride or Trail Hike

Location: **Gator Creek Reserve** -- **U.S. 98 north of Lakeland.**

Entrance is located on U.S. 98 north of Lakeland. Proceed one mile past where U.S. 98 changes from four lanes to two lanes, and the entrance is on the right.

Description: Part of the Green Swamp, one of Central Florida's most crucial natural resources. Despite the name, however, most of it is not underwater. Instead, it's a mosaic of cypress domes amid pine flatwoods, sandhills, and scrub, and a recharge area for the Floridian Aquifer covering over 860 square miles to the north of Lakeland.

Bring: Walking shoes or hiking boots for the hike, water, snacks, sun and bug protection. For the bike ride, off-road bicycle, helmet, water, snacks, sun and bug protection. According to State law, children must wear helmets while riding bicycles.

Contact: Bike ride: Brett Stoltz at 863-800-0743 or email: brett.stoltz@gmail.com for meeting time and other details. Hike: Eileen Valachovic at home at 863-956-2145 or cell 757-636-9450 or eileenv3@gmail.com for meeting time and other information. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: October 21, 2012 Sunday

Activity: Nature Walk

Location: **Circle B Bar Reserve and Nature Center, SR 540 (Winter Lake Road), Lakeland**

Description: Approx. 3 mile walk to view birds and other wildlife at this scenic wildlife preserve which is home to an oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp and lake shore, a tremendous bird population, including a variety of wading birds, waterfowl, ospreys and bald eagles. Alligators inhabit Lake Hancock and may be observed from a distance. Pets are not allowed.

Bring: Walking or hiking shoes, water, snacks, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Liane Plumhoff 646-2398 or lplum@verizon.net. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: October 27, 2012 Sat.

Activity: Chapter Meeting, nature walk and potluck lunch.

Location: **Circle B Bar Reserve and Nature Center, SR 540 (Winter Lake Road), Lakeland**

Entrance south side of SR 540 (Winter Lake Road) between US 98 and Thornhill Road

Description: Oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp and lake shore. Tremendous bird population, including a variety of wading birds, waterfowl, ospreys and bald eagles. Alligators inhabit Lake Hancock and may be observed from a distance. Pets are not allowed.

Bring: Water, insect repellent, sun protection, and a drink for lunch and a dish to bring based on last names beginning with A-H Dessert, I-Q Salad, R-Z Main Dish.

Contact: RSVP David Waldrop at 863-605-3587 for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: November 3, 2012 Saturday

Activity: "WATER, WINGS AND WILD THINGS", outdoor festival with exhibits and hiking trails.

Location: **Circle B Bar Reserve and Nature Center, SR 540 (Winter Lake Road), Lakeland**

Entrance on south side of SR 540 (Winter Lake Road) between US 98 and Thornhill Road

Description: Oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp and lake shore, a tremendous bird population, including a variety of wading birds, waterfowl, ospreys and bald eagles. Alligators inhabit Lake Hancock and may be observed from a distance. Pets are not allowed.

Bring: water, lunch, snacks, (or money to purchase at concessions), and insect repellent and sun protection.

Contacts: David Waldrop at 863-605-3587, or email: david_lwfl@yahoo.com for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Activities, Cont.

Date: November 3, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Annual CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) Reunion

Location: **Highlands Hammock State Park - Off US 27 on SR 634 (also known as Hammock Road), four miles west of Sebring.**

Description: In addition to this CCC event, there are nine trails; and an elevated boardwalk traverses an old-growth cypress swamp. CCC history: Just prior to World War II, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) developed the park's facilities and a botanical garden.

Bring: Comfortable shoes or hiking boots for hiking the trails, water, snacks, lunch or money to purchase lunch at the cafeteria, sun and bug protection.

Contact: Bob Hummel by phone at 863-471-1814 details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: Nov. 9, 10, & 11, 2012 Friday thru Sunday nights

Activity: Weekend Camping Trip

Location: **Rainbow Springs State Park**

Description: On Sat. we will carpool to Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park in Homosassa. Among other things, there are animals to see in their natural habitats and an underwater observatory where you can see fish and manatees, if they're around while you're down there. On Sun. we'll paddle the Rainbow River, where the water is clear, disposables are not allowed and the river is patrolled. As usual, we'll have a group dinner on Sat. You will make your own reservations at Reserve America at <http://www.reserveamerica.com/campgroundDirectoryList.do?contractCode=fl> for camping as many nights as you like.

Contact: Contact: Teresa Newgent at (813) 882-9558 or email newgt@msn.com.

Date: November 17, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Bicycle Maintenance Workshop

Location: **Home of Jim Aldridge, Lakeland, FL**

Description: Learn riding skills and how to perform basic maintenance and repairs.

Bring: snacks, water and your bicycle.

Contact: Jim Aldridge at 863-409-5996 for meeting time, address, directions, and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: November 17, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Day Hike

Location: **Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (WMA)**

Description: Located east of Avon Park in Polk County 5 miles south of Frostproof and is part of the Lake Wales Ridge State Forest which was purchased by the state to protect numerous rare and endangered plants and animals. Meet at north gate entrance.

Bring: Hiking shoes, hat, water, snacks, lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Rose or Jim Kellermann at 863-676-2889 for meeting time, location and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Activities, Cont.

Date: November 18, 2012 Sunday

Activity: Nature Walk

Location: **Circle B Bar Reserve and Nature Center, SR 540 (Winter Lake Road), Lakeland**

Description: Approx. 3 mile walk to view birds and other wildlife at this scenic wildlife preserve which is home to an oak hammock, freshwater marsh, hardwood swamp and lake shore, a tremendous bird population, including a variety of wading birds, waterfowl, ospreys and bald eagles. Alligators inhabit Lake Hancock and may be observed from a distance. Pets are not allowed.

Bring: Walking or hiking shoes, water, snacks, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Liane Plumhoff 646-2398 or lplum@verizon.net for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: November 20, 2012 Tuesday

Activity: Trail Maintenance

Location: **Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (WMA)**

Located east of Avon Park in Polk County 5 miles south of Frostproof and is part of the Lake Wales Ridge State Forest which was purchased by the state to protect numerous rare and endangered plants and animals. Meet at north gate entrance.

Bring: Hiking shoes, brimmed hat, water, snacks, lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Rose or Jim Kellermann at 863-676-2889 for meeting time, location and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: November 25, 2012 Sunday

Activity: Nature Walk, approx. 3 miles, dogs on leashes are welcome, and must be poop-scooped.

Location: **Saddle Creek Nature Trail, on US 92 east from Lakeland or west from Auburndale**

Description: This trail is very broad and is well maintained and is an easy hike that will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

Bring: Sturdy walking shoes, water, snacks, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Maureen Jones 863-293-5036 or email mjones206@tampabay.rr.com for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: December 1, 2012 Saturday

Activity: Backpacking 101 Course (Training)

Location: **Circle B Bar Reserve, SR 540 (Winter Lake Road), Lakeland**

Description: Learn the essentials necessary to go on any type of backpacking trip, from day hike, overnight, or multi-day trips.

Bring: Notebook, pen, and any backpacking equipment you want to review with the instructor, David Waldrop.

Contact: David Waldrop at 863-605-3587 or email him at david_lwfl@yahoo.com for what time to meet and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: December 8, 2012, Saturday

Activity: Christmas Walking Tour

Location: **Downtown Lakeland**

Description: Meet for dinner or sandwich at *The Chop Shop* (restaurant) and walking tour of downtown Lakeland's Christmas decorations and historic sites and information.

Bring: Comfortable shoes, dress according to the weather, and money to purchase dinner.

Contact: Ken Williams at 863-602-5185 or email dec1966@aol.com for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Activities, Cont.

Date: December 15, 2012 Saturday or December 14 and 15, Friday and Saturday nights

Activity: Day Hike (or camp in the park's campground Fri. and Sat. nights by reserving your own site)

Location: **Lake Kissimmee State Park**

Description: A beautiful park with a cow camp where old-time relics are on display and an old timer to tell stories of years gone by and an observation tower on the lake.

Bring: For the hike only, water, snacks and/or lunch, sun and insect protection.

Contact: Betty Piper at 863-293-3053 or bpiper2005@aol.com for more information re: the hike Sat. a.m. If camping, make your own reservation at www.reserveamerica.com and notify Betty that you will be camping.

For our group dinner on Sat. evening, contact Teresa Newgent at 813-882-9558 or newgt@msn.com. Teresa will notify those attending the group dinner what the main dish will be and will suggest side items to bring to contribute to dinner. We will also have a gag gift exchange Sat. evening, so bring one if you want to participate. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: December 29 & 30, 2012 Friday & Saturday nights

Activity: Overnight backpacking trip

Location: **Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area (WMA)**

Description: This is a follow-up to the Backpacking 101 Course held on Dec. 1, 2012, and is only for those who have completed the course on Dec. 1 or those who have had previous backpacking experience. The trail leads through moderately rolling hills with pine forests, prairies, wetlands, scrub, and marshy lakeshore along the west side of Lake Arbuckle.

Bring: Backpacking equipment, hiking shoes, brimmed hat, water and food for the trip, and sun and insect protection.

Contact: David Waldrop at 863-605-3587 or david_lwfl@yahoo.com for what time to meet and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: January 1, 2013, Tuesday

Activity: New Year's Day Hike, approx. 7 miles

Location: **Tenoroc Fish Management Area, Lakeland, FL**

Description: This former phosphate mining area consists of lakes, marshes, grasslands and wooded hills, and is an important refuge for wildlife.

Bring: Hiking shoes, brimmed hat, water, snacks and/or lunch, and sun and insect protection.

Contact: Eileen Valachovic at 863-956-2145 for meeting time and other details. Also, please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

Date: January 5, 2012, Saturday

Activity: Chapter Meeting, Nature Walk, and Pot Luck Lunch

Location: **Mosaic Peace River Park, on CR 640 (Homeland-Garfield Rd., off of US 17, Homeland, South of Bartow)**

Description: A nature walk on the boardwalk along the Peace River, followed by our chapter meeting at the picnic pavilion, pot luck lunch, and planning session to schedule upcoming activities.

Bring: a drink for lunch and a dish to share for the pot luck lunch based on last names beginning with A-H salad, I-Q main dish, and R-Z dessert, along with an outdoor folding chair and sun and insect protection.

Contact David Waldrop at 863-605-3587 or email at david_lwfl@yahoo.com or Melissa Bruneau at 407-460-1388 for meeting time and other details. Also please RSVP to the chapter online Meet-up page at <http://www.meetup.com/Heartland-FTA/calendar>.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!!

The officers and current members of the Heartland Chapter of the Florida Trail Association are pleased to welcome the following new members, who are listed in alphabetical order by last name(s):

James Austin, Auburndale

Andrew Davis, Lakeland

All members are appreciated and we thank you for your membership.

OUR CHAPTER’S WEBSITE ADDRESS, ETC.

Our chapter’s new website address is <http://heartland.floridatrail.org> and our chapter’s online photo gallery can be found at <http://fta-heartland.smugmug.com>. For directions for submitting photos to smugmug, please email David Waldrop at david_lwfl@yahoo.com.

WHAT TO BRING ON A DAY HIKE

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|--|----------------------|
| Water or other beverage (at least 2 quarts) | Sunglasses and hat |
| Insect repellent | Sunscreen |
| Small first aid kit | Personal ID |
| Snacks and/or lunch, depending on length of hike | Rain gear, if needed |
| Sit upon or folding stool for lunch on the trail | |
| Plastic bag & at least 1 glove, if desired, to pick up & bring trash out | |

Be sure to tell someone at home where you are going and when you expect to return!

Florida Trail Association
Mission Statement

The Florida Trail Association develops, maintains, protects and promotes a network of hiking trails throughout the state, including the unique Florida National Scenic Trail. Together with our partners we provide opportunities for the public to hike, engage in outdoor recreation, participate in environmental education and contribute to meaningful volunteer work.

RISK ASSUMPTION:

There are certain risks, which are inherent in any hike or other Florida Trail Association Activity. Each FTA member, guest, or non-member hiker agrees to accept personal responsibility for his or her safety and the safety of minors accompanying such persons. The Association cannot ensure the safety of any participant on hikes or activities. When participating in Association activities, each person agrees to hold harmless and free from all blame the activity leaders and the Florida Trail Association... it’s officers and members... for any accident, injury or illness, which may be sustained from participating in Association activities.