



Blackwater River State Forest Area

Real Florida Guide

Note: numbers correspond with numbers on map. GPS coordinates are in decimal-degrees. **Red** = Introduction, **Blue** = Day 1, **Green** = Day 2 and **Yellow** = Day 3.

Choose from the options below to plan your own day-long adventure or make the Blackwater River State Forest area a comfortable home base for a three-day stay or longer. As a reference point, directions will be from the Blackwater River State Forest Headquarters (**1**) (N30.8544 W86.8747) 19 miles north of Milton on CR 191 and a block southeast of the SR 4 intersection; 11650 Munson Highway.

Overnight Lodging and Camping Options: [Blackwater River State Forest](#), [Blackwater River State Park](#), [Milton area motels](#)

Day One, Choose from the following:



Hike or bike around [Bear Lake](#) (**2**) in the Blackwater State Forest. The Bear Lake Loop Hiking Trail is 4 miles long while the mountain bike trail is 6 miles long. Canoe rentals are available for paddling the lake. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters go north on Munson Highway then head east 2 miles on SR 4. Turn left at the Bear Lake Recreation Area sign and proceed about a half mile to the Bear Lake trailhead (N30.8603

W86.8334).

- Canoe or kayak the [Blackwater River Paddling Trail](#) (**3**), a gold-tinted river well known for its high banks and numerous sandbars. You can divide the trip into 5-10



mile segments. The lower part of the river through the state park is the busiest, especially on warm weather weekends. The guide lists directions to put-in and take-out points from the nearest towns along with nearby outfitters. The lower river is also popular for tubing.



Day Two, Choose from the following:

- Canoe or kayak the [Coldwater Creek Paddling Trail \(4\)](#), known for its cool, spring-fed waters and sometimes swift current. The entire trail is 19 miles, although you can divide up the distance into several segments. The guide lists directions to put-in and take-out points from the nearest towns along with nearby outfitters. The lower river is also popular for tubing.
- Horseback ride some of the 46 miles of marked riding trails through the [Coldwater Recreation Area \(5\)](#) in the Blackwater River State Forest, following the Coldwater Horse Trails. Open vistas of longleaf pine woods make it some of the most scenic woodlands in Florida. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters, head south on C.R. 191 and follow 2.6 miles. Turn right onto Coldwater Horse Trail Road and head west about 5 miles to the Coldwater Recreation Area (N30.8459 W86.9814). Country Adventure in Milton offers guided rides in the region (850-623-2094).
- Bike the 8.1-mile [Blackwater Heritage State Trail \(6\)](#). This is a paved multi-use trail that connects to the Navy's 1.5 mile Military Heritage Trail. Horseback riding is allowed on or parallel to the state trail. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters, head south on CR 191 and drive 15 miles to 87A. Turn right and proceed north 1.3 miles to the NAS Whiting Field Trailhead (N30.6963 W86.9932).

Day Three, Choose from the following:

- Kayak or canoe the [Juniper Creek Paddling Trail \(7\)](#). This is a scenic 6-mile trail through undeveloped forest lands that is ideal for beginners. Mountain laurel blooms along the shores in spring. The guide lists directions to put-in and take-out points from the nearest towns along with nearby outfitters. Information in the guide also describes how one can paddle the river and hike back to your vehicle via the Florida National Scenic Trail, which runs parallel to the river.
- Hike the [Blackwater River State Park \(8\)](#) nature trails. These follow along the Blackwater River and traverse undisturbed longleaf pine forests. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters, follow CR 191 less than a half mile south and turn left onto Sandy Forest Road. Follow almost 9 miles and turn left onto Bob Pitts Road. Follow three quarters of a mile and turn right onto Deaton Bridge Road and follow 2 miles to the state park (N30.7052 W86.8828).
- Explore the [Milton Historic District \(9\)](#). This covers 117 buildings of historical interest, built between 1840 and 1930. Styles include Vernacular, Colonial Revival and Bungalow. Other notable sites include the Mt. Pilgrim African Baptist Church and a 6-mile section of brick highway parallel to U.S. 90 that was built in 1921 as part of a planned coast-to-coast highway. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters, drive south on C.R. 191 about 19 miles to the town of Milton (N30.6333 W87.0397).

Other options in the area:

- Kayak or canoe part of the 54-mile [Yellow River Paddling Trail \(10\)](#). The current, especially in the upper portion, tends to be faster than most area rivers and there are numerous high banks. The guide lists directions to put-in and take-out points from the nearest towns along with nearby outfitters.
- Take a [zipline canopy tour \(11\)](#) at Adventures Unlimited Outdoor Center's Cold-





water Creek Headquarters near Milton. **Directions:** From the forest headquarters, turn left onto SR 4 and head west about 10 miles. Turn left onto SR 87 and follow 7 miles south and turn left at Adventures Unlimited sign. Follow signs for about 4.5 miles.

- Several [other recreation areas](#) dot the Blackwater River State Forest, offering a variety of swimming, hiking, biking, paddling, geocaching, fishing, hunting and equestrian opportunities. Off-highway vehicle riding opportunities will soon be available at the Clear Creek OHV Riding Area on the forest.



