

Blackwater Heritage State Trail

Blackwater Heritage State Trail is the westernmost rail-trail in the state. It extends one mile south of U.S. 90 and seven miles north from the town of Milton. At its northern terminus, the trail joins the 1.5-mile Military Heritage Trail which is managed by the Whiting Field Naval Air Station and concludes at the entrance gate to the military base. Altogether, more than nine miles of paved trail make for an enjoyable trip through a quaint North Florida town and out into the countryside.

The trail follows the path of the former Florida and Alabama railroad (F&ARR), which was owned and operated by Bagdad Land and Lumber Company. Built in the early 1900s, it extended from the lumber mill in Bagdad, Florida to Alafra, Parker Springs and Whitley, in what is now known as the Conecuh National Forest in Alabama. The F&ARR supported the timber and lumber business in Bagdad from 1912 to 1939, at which time the line was closed. The southernmost 5.5 miles of F&ARR track was resurrected in 1943 by the U.S. Navy, adding 4 miles northward from Roeville in order to build and operate the flight training facilities which became Naval Air Station Whiting Field.

An unpaved equestrian trail runs adjacent to the paved trail with shared bridges. Equestrians may use the paved trail or unpaved shoulder at their discretion; equestrian use is prohibited on the Military Heritage Trail. Equestrian access is available at the parking area located at the Munson Highway Trailhead (see map). There is ample, oversized parking space here, as well as a picnic shelter and potable water.

The Visitor Center is located at 5533 Alabama Street across from the Santa Rosa County Public Library and is staffed on a part-time basis by volunteers with Blackwater Heritage Trail, Inc., a citizen support organization that assists with the management of the trail.

The trail is mostly rural, but there are several town street crossings before you pass the Milton City Hall and the trail's Visitor Center. Further north, there are piney woods, a cypress/bay gall tree swamp, areas of rare, white-topped pitcher plants and several creeks. Nine bridges cross various streams and points along the way. Trail users of all experience levels and fitness will find this an easy, pleasant trip.



Trail Safety and Etiquette

- Bicyclists and in-line skaters yield to other users; all trail users yield to equestrians.
- Obey all trail rules posted at trailheads.
- Stay to the right except when passing.
- Pass slower traffic on their left; yield to oncoming traffic when passing.
- Give a clear warning signal when passing.
- Always look ahead and behind when passing.
- Travel at a responsible speed.
- Keep pets under control on a maximum 6-foot leash; walk them along the edge of any shared-use trail.
- Do not trespass on private property.
- Move off the trail surface when stopped to allow others to pass.
- Yield to other trail users when entering and crossing the trail.
- Do not disturb wildlife. All animal and plant life is protected in Florida State Parks.
- Watch out for traffic at road crossings. Obey all traffic signals.
- Helmets are required by Florida law for cyclists and equestrians under the age of 16 and are recommended for all ages.
- Equestrians should carry a copy of the negative Coggins test. (Chapter 5C-18.010, F.A.C.). Without documentation, you could be subject to fine.

Contact Information:
Blackwater Heritage State Trail
5533 Alabama Street
Milton, Florida 32570
(850) 983-5338



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Blackwater Heritage State Trail



Nine bridges cross creeks
and streams on Florida's
westernmost rail-trail

Blackwater Heritage State Trail

Major Activities:

Walking, biking, rollerblading, horseback riding and bird watching

Trail Length/Surface:

Blackwater Heritage is 8.1 miles, paved; the Military Heritage Trail is 1.5 miles, paved; unpaved equestrian trail parallels the paved trail.

Fee: None

County: Santa Rosa

Nearby Town: Milton

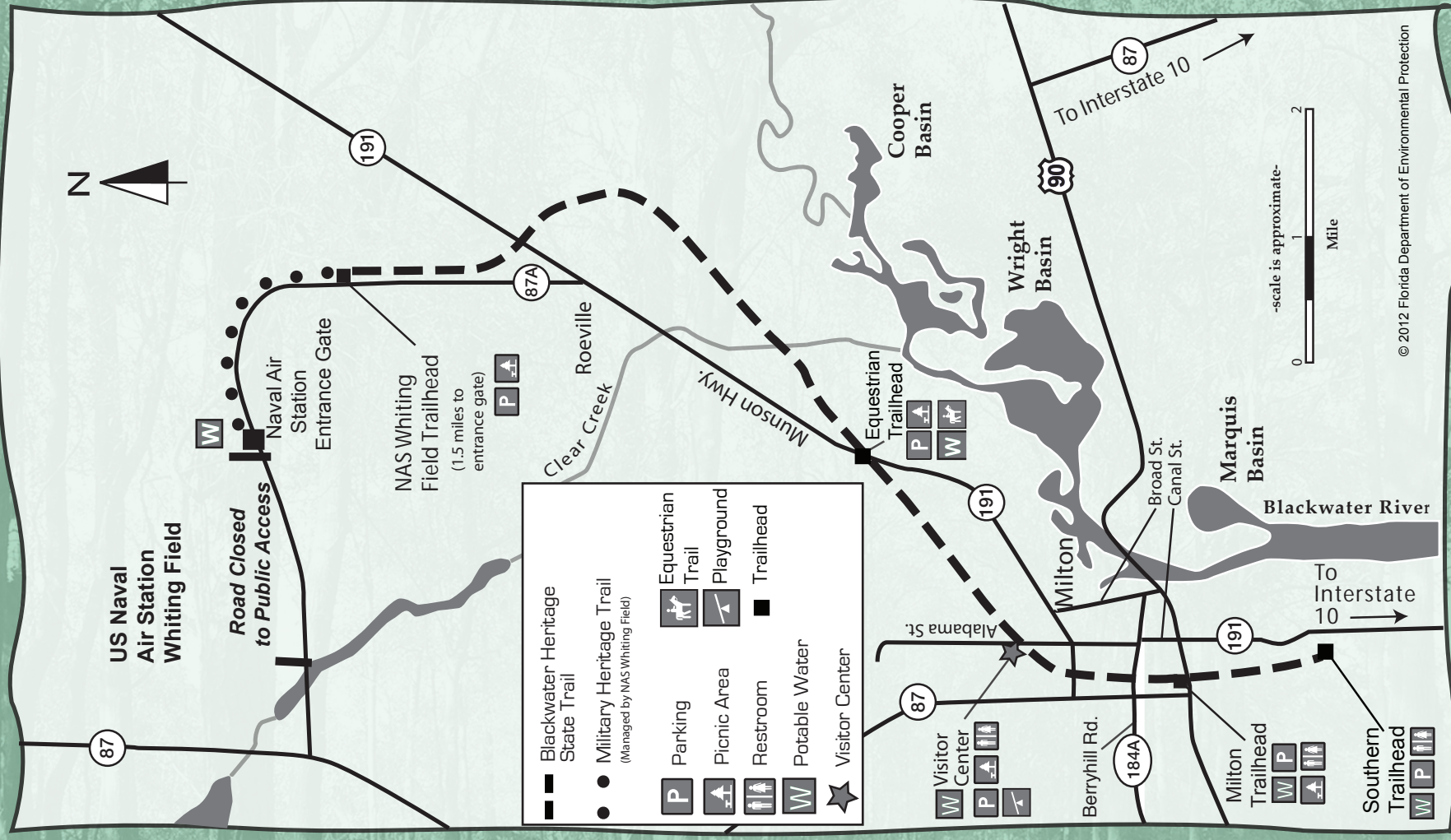
Notes:

Five trailheads with parking areas are located along the trail corridor. The Milton Trailhead contains a picnic shelter, restrooms, potable water, a bicycle rack and an interpretive kiosk. The Visitor Center features picnic tables, barbecue grills, an amphitheater, a playground and restrooms, along with a part-time snack and souvenir concession operated by the Blackwater Heritage Trail, Inc. (citizen support organization).

Benches are placed at various points along the trail and mile markers note half-mile intervals. Waterless restrooms are located at the six and eight-mile points. No potable water is available north of the Munson Highway (Equestrian) Trailhead, so trail users should carry ample water. There is parking, a covered picnic table and a waterless restroom at the eight-mile point where the Blackwater Heritage State Trail joins the Military Heritage Trail.

Motorized wheelchairs and other personal mobility devices are permitted as required; all other motorized vehicles or conveyances are strictly prohibited.

Hours: 8 a.m.-Sundown, 365 days a year.



Trailhead Locations

Southern/Old Highway 90 Trailhead

6655 Old Highway 90
Milton, FL 32570
GPS: N 30.6121 / W -87.0456

Milton Trailhead

6715 Elva Street
Milton, FL 32570
GPS: N 30.6223 / W -87.0429

Visitor Center

5533 Alabama Street
Milton, FL 32570
GPS: N 30.6358 / W -87.0400

Munson Highway (Equestrian) Trailhead

5969 Munson Highway
Milton, FL 32570
GPS: N 30.6508 / W -87.0154

Naval Air Station Whiting Field Trailhead

7050 Marry Martin Way
Milton, FL 32570
GPS: N 30.6963 / W -86.9932

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