

## Southwest Florida

# Alafia River State Park

*Beautiful and exciting recreational trails*

## Real Fun in the Real Florida

This 6,312-acre park offers equestrian and hiking trails and trails suitable for mountain bicycles. At several lakes, visitors can enjoy fishing, relaxing or bird watching. Picnic pavilions, a **playground**, **horseshoe pit** and **volleyball** area are available. For overnight stays, the park has a full-facility campground and equestrian-friendly campsites.

Day visitors will find a **picnic area** with two large picnic **pavilions**. **Equestrians** and **hikers** can explore 20 miles of trails that wind through mixed hardwood forests, pine flatwoods and rolling hills. Volunteers help build and maintain the trails. **Bird-watchers** and nature enthusiasts will delight in the abundance of wildlife along the trails. The South Prong of the Alafia River, which flows through the park, is navigable by **canoe** upstream, to Lake Hurrah.

The park offers challenging off-road **mountain bicycling** trails. Once the site of a phosphate mine, the topography offers some of the most radical elevation changes in Florida. The bicycle trails at Alafia River have the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Epic designation. The park offers a wide variety of bicycle trails, ranging from beginner to highly advanced. Pets are not allowed on the bike trails.

There are numerous small lakes where **anglers** may catch largemouth bass, bluegill and catfish. "Catch and Release" is recommended for largemouth bass. A fishing license is required.

Enjoy starlit skies while camping in the family **campground**. Campers will find water and electrical hookups at each of the 30 campsites. Clean restrooms feature solar-heated showers. There are two large picnic pavilions in the campground.

## **History & Nature**

The park is a former phosphate mine in southeastern Hillsborough County. The reclaimed mine altered the landscape and created new landforms such as several small lakes, and steep

grades popular with off-road bicyclists who enjoy challenging trails.

A bottomland forest bordering the South Prong of the Alafia River was protected from mining. This prong of the river is a blackwater stream which flows through the park. The stream, bordered by red maple, swamp tupelo and water hickory trees, is ideal for canoeing and fishing.

The park's 6,312 acres were donated to the State in 1996 by Cytec Industries. The mine was called Lonesome Mine, named after the nearby community of Fort Lonesome, a site which was a frontier outpost of the U.S. Army during the Third Seminole War.

## Directions

**I-75 North:** exit 240, turn right (east) onto State Road 674 for 15 miles, left (north) at flashing light onto County Road 39 for 5 miles, park is on the right.

**I-75 South:** exit 246, right (east) onto Big Bend Road for 1 mile, right (south) onto U.S. 301 for 1.5 miles, left (east) onto County Road 672 for 12 miles, left (north) onto County Road 39 for 1.5 miles, park is on the right.

**I-4 West:** exit 22, turn left onto Park Road for 2.5 miles, right onto County Road 39B, left onto County Road 39 (James Redman Parkway), for 15.2 miles, park is on the left.

## **Park Guidelines**

- Hours of operation are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required. Additional user fees may apply.
- The collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only and must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Fishing, boating and fires are allowed in designated areas only. Swimming is not allowed. A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited.

- Helmets are required on all bike trails.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- For camping information, contact Reserve America at (800) 326-3521 or (866) I CAMP FL or TDD (888) 433-0287 or visit ReserveAmerica.com.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the ranger station.

## Contact Information

Florida State Parks  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Recreation and Parks  
**Alafia River State Park**  
14326 South County Road 39  
Lithia, FL 33547  
(813) 672-5320  
FloridaStateParks.org