

Northwest Florida

Falling Waters State Park

Florida's Tallest Waterfall

Real Fun in the Real Florida

One of Florida's hidden treasures, a 73-foot waterfall, awaits visitors at Falling Waters State Park. Fern-covered sinkholes line the boardwalk that leads visitors to Florida's highest **waterfall**.

This park has something for everyone, so visitors can leave the busy world behind and explore nature at its finest. Nature lovers can walk the other **trails** in the park and see what Florida looked like over 400 years ago when the Spaniards first arrived in *La Florida*.

Visitors can **picnic** among the towering pines or reserve one of two pavilions with wheelchair accessible restrooms, playgrounds, picnic tables and grills. They can take a **cool dip** in the two-acre lake or work on a tan on the **white sand beach**. **Fishing** is also permitted with a Florida freshwater fishing license.

Campers can spend the night on one of the highest hills in Florida. Situated in a pine forest 324 feet above sea level, it is one of the nicest campgrounds anywhere. Twenty-four campsites equipped with water, electricity, picnic tables and ground grills are available. Pets are welcome with proof of vaccination. The restrooms are well-maintained, as are other amenities found throughout the park.

Fireside chats with a park ranger are offered seasonally on Saturdays. Campers may reserve a **youth camping** area set aside for organizations and youth groups.

History and Nature

During the 1778 British occupation of Florida, Native Americans were still living on Falling Waters Hill and the surrounding area. Though they left no written records, artifacts are often found whenever a field is tilled for a new crop.

Two industries operated near the waterfall. A gristmill, powered by the waterfall, ground corn into grits and cornmeal during the Civil War period. In 1891, a legal whiskey distillery furnished spirits to a wine shop established to meet the

demands of men working at the frontier railway construction site.

In 1919, one of the first oil wells in Florida was drilled at Falling Waters. Indian legends and a wildcat stock promoter's claim of oil helped get the project going. A tall, wooden derrick and steam-driven rig were used to drill for oil, but the drillers had little luck. When a depth of 3,900 feet was reached, a blow of gas released from the drill site temporarily excited area residents with a false report of a gusher. Promoters continued to drill the oil well to a final depth of 4,912 feet. When all was said and done, no oil of commercial quantity was ever found. The well was capped in 1921.

At Falling Waters State Park visitors will find one of the most significant geological features in Florida. Climb down the wooden stairway into the mouth of a 100-foot deep, 20-foot wide cylindrical sinkhole and gaze up to see a waterfall cascade 73 feet, then disappear into a cave at the bottom of the sinkhole.

Directions

Falling Waters State Park is located 3 miles south of Chipley, Florida. From I-10 take the Chipley exit south on State Road 77 for 1 mile, then go east on State Park Road and follow the signs to the park.

Park Guidelines

- Hours are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year.
- An entrance fee is required. Additional user fees may apply.
- All plants, animals and park property are protected. Collection, destruction or disturbance is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.
- Fishing, boating, swimming and fires are allowed in designated areas only. A Florida fishing license may be required.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited.

- 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
Falling Waters State Park
1130 State Park Road
Chipley, FL 32428
(850)638-6130
FloridaStateParks.org