

Dixie County

Driving Distance: 81 Miles

From the Suwannee to the Steinhatchee, with the unique Dixie Mainline Trail, tidal flats, and coastal marshes in between



A (6M) Suwannee River, Nature Coast Trail State Park, City of Hawkinsville Underwater Archeological Park

From US 19 north, cross from Levy into Dixie County at the historic Suwannee River. Steamer traffic began in the 1830s and continued into the early 1920s. Flat-bottomed paddlewheel boats, some 200 feet long and wood-fired, were common along the river, now designated an Outstanding Florida Water. At Old Town, turn north (R) on CR 349, and next right at Hall Charles Rd. to parking lot at Fire Station. The Nature Coast Trail State Park, a 32-mile paved multi-use trail

through diverse ecosystems, is adjacent to the parking area.

- 4.3 mile, easy-access corridor spans the Suwannee on a restored railway trestle bridge with a dramatic view.
- Trail options include Levy County, Chiefland, Wilcox Junction, Trenton, or north in Dixie County to Cross City.
- City of Hawkinsville Underwater Archeological Park, one of four underwater parks in Florida, is near the railroad trestle.
- Accessible by boat, and you can tie to one of two mooring buoys.
- 141-foot paddlewheel boat lying intact in the shallows of the Suwannee provides experienced divers a glimpse into the river's romantic 19th century steamboat era.

B (33M) Town of Suwannee, Dixie Mainline Trail, Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge

Head south on CR 349, passing US 19, to the Town of Suwannee.

- Scenic views of river flowing through town to the Gulf.

Return on CR 349 and turn north (L) onto Dixie Mainline Trail, a narrow limerock road originally constructed in the 1920s as a tram road (narrow gauge railroad) to transport timber out of the swamps and forests. First opened to the public in 1998, the trail runs through the heart of the Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge. Though not paved, this route is a must, and can be driven, hiked, or biked.

- Numbered stops, boat launches, boardwalk, turn-outs for parking.
- Short walk at Salt Creek, a tidally influenced creek curving through pine forests, salt marsh, and adjacent ponds.

C (42M) Shired Island, Fishbone Creek, Steinhatchee River

From Dixie Mainline Trail turn west (L) at CR 357, across tidal creeks to reach Shired Island. Spectacular views of vast salt marshes, cabbage palms, and oak-lined banks on the Gulf of Mexico.

- Fishing on bridges, boat ramp, canoe access.
- Gulf-side picnic tables, swimming, and camping.

Return east on CR 357 to turn-off to Fishbone Creek, a narrow passage through a beautiful oak hammock before meeting a tidal creek.

- Observation tower, picnic area.

Continue on CR 357, turn north (L) on CR 351 and left on CR 351A to US 19.

Continue north on US 19 to CR 358, turn west (L) to Jena. Turn north (R) on CR 361, crossing into Taylor County at the Steinhatchee River.

