

STATE FOREST SPOTLIGHT

Curtiss' Sandgrass

The unique features at Point Washington State Forest include Eastern Lake, an old growth Longleaf pine forest and an abundance of Curtiss' sandgrass. Eastern Lake sits along the southern boundary of the forest. If not for the shoaling along the beaches, Eastern Lake would be a small saltwater bay. The view across the lake provides one of the most scenic spots on the forest. The old growth Longleaf pine stand provides a demonstration of how the southern forests used to appear. Some trees show signs of cup trenching, a technique used at the early stages of the turpentine industry. They also offer shade along the Longleaf Trail System. Scattered throughout the forest is the world's largest population of Curtiss' sandgrass.

Love the state forests? So do we!

The Friends of Florida State Forests is a direct-support organization of the Florida Forest Service dedicated to ensuring Florida's state forests are available for future generations to enjoy. Make a difference by joining today to help protect Florida's forests.

Membership dues go to the forests for conservation and improvement projects. To join Friends or for more information, visit:

www.FloridaStateForests.org.



Things to Know When Visiting Florida's State Forests

In keeping with its mission to protect and manage Florida's forest resources for the present and future enjoyment of all Floridians, the Florida Forest Service has developed rules which apply to all visitors to Point Washington State Forest.

Some of the more important rules are:

- Trails are open daily from sunrise to sunset. After hour use requires a State Forest Use Permit. These permits may be obtained at the forest office.
- Unlicensed motorized vehicles and ATVs (all-terrain vehicles) are not allowed on the forest. Licensed motor vehicles are allowed on designated open forest roads only.
- The Eastern Lake Trail system and the Longleaf Greenway Trail are designed for foot and bicycle traffic only. Horses are only allowed on the McQuage Bayou Horse Trail.
- See the "Point Washington Wildlife Management Area" brochure for the hunting and fishing rules and regulations administered by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or visit www.MyFWC.com.
- Help keep the forest clean by taking all garbage with you when you leave. Do not bury it or burn it. Please report suspicious activities to the forest field office.

For more information, visit:

www.FloridaForestService.com

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Florida Forest Service

Point Washington State Forest



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

History

Point Washington State Forest was purchased under the State of Florida's Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) Program on May 19, 1992. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Florida Forest Service was assigned the lead management responsibility for 15,181 acres. Previously, St. Joe Paper Company owned the entire property for over fifty years, through 1986.

The subsequent uses by previous ownership included extensive timber harvesting and quail and deer management which modified the natural resources. Using an ecosystem management approach, the Florida Forest Service provides for multiple uses of the forest resources which include timber management, wildlife management, outdoor recreation and ecological restoration.

Forestry

The Florida Forest Service's mission is to protect and manage the forest resources of Florida, ensuring that they are available for future generations. The FFS manages over one million acres of State Forests. Point Washington State Forest is managed for multiple uses, including:

- The practice of sustainable forest management by sound timber management practices and prescribed burning.
- Provide for outdoor recreation opportunities for multiple interests.
- The restoration and protection of native ecosystems, to ensure the long-term viability of populations and species listed as endangered, threatened or rare, and other components of biological diversity including game and nongame wildlife and plants.
- The protection of known archaeological, historical, cultural and paleontological resources.
- The restoration and protection of hydrological functions, related water resources and the health of associated wetland and aquatic communities.



Eastern Lake



Prescribed burn



Eastern Lake Trail

For more information contact:
Point Washington State Forest
5865 East U.S. Highway 98
Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459
(850)267-8325
www.FloridaForestService.com

Natural Resources

Point Washington State Forest contains 10 natural communities that are intermixed throughout the forest. A significant portion of the forest is sandhill, mesic flatwoods, basin swamp/titi drains, wet prairie and cypress swamps.

Several plants and animals that are listed as endangered, threatened or species of concern are present on the Point Washington State Forest. Some of these protected and/or rare species include: American kestrel, gopher tortoise, flatwoods salamander, white-topped pitcher plant and Curtiss' sandgrass. The regional coverage of Curtiss' sandgrass, including the population found on Point Washington State Forest, is the largest in the world.

Recreation

Point Washington State Forest has several trail systems for a variety of uses. The most popular is the Eastern Lake Trail System, for hiking and biking. The Eastern Lake Trailhead includes ample parking, a restroom and several picnic tables. The total trail system is 11 miles with two alternate paths for shortened hikes. Another is the Longleaf Greenway Trail. This trail has a new trailhead located off Satinwood Road in the Blue Mountain Beach community. The trail is approximately 8 miles in length and provides users with a hike through a stand of Longleaf pines. This is not a loop trail, but a spur trail off of the Eastern Lake Trailhead.

The McQuage Bayou Horse Trail System consists of two loops, labeled east and west at the trailhead, giving users the option of a three or five mile ride.

The forest is open to regulated hunting and fishing in cooperation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. For more information, please visit MyFWC.com.