

state has an officially established outdoor recreation program. In some counties, user-oriented recreation programming is limited, but resource-based facilities such as roadside picnic areas or boat ramps are common amenities. In some counties, user-oriented facilities may be available only at public schools and municipal parks. More than half of Florida's counties, however, have undertaken sophisticated recreation programs involving the administration of numerous and diverse parks, facilities and program activities.

Counties are primarily concerned with the local outdoor recreation needs generated by extra-municipal populations and as a rule are the ideal level of government to provide regional or large community parks. Unlike cities, the larger acreage of counties provides a wider range of resources and a greater variety of outdoor recreation venues. As a result, the typical county outdoor recreation program in Florida may offer a combination of resource-based and user-oriented activities. Beaches, swimming areas, boating access sites, picnic sites, scenic areas and, occasionally, campgrounds are among the more popular types of resource-based areas and facilities provided.

### **Municipal Roles**

Virtually all of Florida's 412 municipalities have recreation programs and facilities of one type or another. Many cities have developed park and recreation programs with trained staff involved in the administration of parks, facilities and programs. Smaller cities may have only limited facilities and rely on the county government, local school system, private organizations or non-profit groups to carry out athletic programs.

Because of population densities and the lack of large open space areas that support resource-based recreation opportunities, municipal recreation systems tend to concentrate on providing more intensive user-oriented facilities that require relatively little space. Typical municipal outdoor recreation facilities include playgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields,

tennis courts and golf courses. Because of the near total reliance on user-oriented facilities, municipal programs have only a limited bearing on the statewide resource-based outdoor recreation program. There are some exceptions, however, especially in the cases of cities located on bodies of water. For example, Atlantic and Gulf coastal communities provide many excellent public beach facilities, while those located on navigable waters (coastal or inland) operate marinas, boat ramps, mooring fields and other boating facilities.

Although little in the way of resource-based outdoor recreation facilities is provided by the typical municipal outdoor recreation program, municipal programs play a primary role in the provision of user-oriented recreation opportunities in Florida. The importance of the role of municipal programs will grow as increased public emphasis is placed on close-to-home recreation. Since municipal recreation agencies are the recreation system closest to the people, they are usually the first to feel the pressures to establish programs for meeting the added demands of new residents.

### **NON-GOVERNMENT ROLES**

In addition to the more conventional forms of outdoor recreation provided by all levels of government, a wide array of recreational opportunities is afforded by the private sector. Private programs range from for-profit recreational enterprises such as campgrounds, golf courses, marinas and attractions of all kinds to non-profit conservation organizations. Industries with extensive land holdings, notably the forest products industry in Florida, provide vast recreation resources and excellent facilities on their lands for the use of the public often at only a nominal fee. However, this resource is quickly disappearing in many parts of the state as timber lands are being converted to private access leases or developed for residential and commercial purposes.

Private outdoor recreation, because of its size, complexity and the fact that it undergoes rapid and frequent change, is extremely difficult to inventory in a comprehensive manner.

## Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities by Category of Provider, Statewide 2012

Facilities	Federal	State	County	Municipal	Non-Government	Total
<b>Outdoor Recreation Areas</b>	70	715	4,000	5,424	3,105	13,314
Land (in Acres)	4,600,730	4,697,593	422,331	113,022	410,594	10,244,270
Water (in Acres)	855,076	2,805,714	50,580	7,278	24,385	3,743,033
<b>Acres TOTAL</b>	5,455,806	7,503,307	472,911	120,300	434,979	13,987,303
<b>Cabins</b>	37	240	103	14	3,136	3,530
<b>Tent Campsites</b>	1,026	1,087	1,223	195	4,768	8,299
<b>RV Campsites</b>	2,138	4,778	3,531	1,451	118,750	130,648
<b>Historic Sites</b>	390	1,182	239	188	190	2,189
<b>Commemorative Structures</b>	9	26	33	148	38	254
<b>Museums</b>	25	103	136	116	163	543
<b>Picnic Tables</b>	1,966	9,345	26,375	24,060	56,373	118,119
<b>Hunting Areas (Acres)</b>	2,065,648	3,324,594	15,002	0	22,952	5,428,196
<b>Bike Trails (Miles Paved)</b>	73.5	358.5	600.8	439.6	63.5	1,536
<b>Bike Trails (Miles Unpaved)</b>	144	2,512.4	816.1	232.3	49.7	3,755
<b>Canoe Trails (Miles)</b>	517	997.6	247.6	136.6	309	2,208
<b>Hiking Trails (Miles)</b>	974	4,460.9	2,834.9	353.9	282.8	8,907
<b>Equestrian Trails (Miles)</b>	120.7	2,291.9	642.9	156.9	169.4	3,382
<b>Jogging Trails (Miles)</b>	71.4	312.1	638.3	263.7	71.3	1,357
<b>OHV Trails (Miles)</b>	401	286	0.2	0.7	0	688
<b>Nature Trails (Miles)</b>	310	278.5	707.5	375.9	208.2	1,880
<b>Freshwater Beach (Miles)</b>	0.7	4.1	17.4	6.7	9.3	38
<b>Freshwater Boat Ramps</b>	89	266	614	297	366	1,632
<b>Freshwater Boat Ramps (Lanes)</b>	98	288	756	362	417	1,921
<b>Freshwater Catwalks</b>	12	2,839	205	244	231	3,531
<b>Freshwater Catwalks (Feet)</b>	907	28,229	193,958	60,385	25,507	308,986
<b>Freshwater Jetties</b>	120	120	3,849	75,125	1,306	80,520
<b>Freshwater Marinas</b>	6	17	7	18	297	345
<b>Freshwater Marinas (Slips)</b>	51	86	234	682	10,218	11,271
<b>Freshwater Piers</b>	27	72	256	276	86	717
<b>Freshwater Piers (Feet)</b>	4,515	4,388	18,998	27,938	41,452	97,291
<b>Saltwater Beach (Miles)</b>	139	125	93.8	80.5	36.7	475
<b>Saltwater Boat Ramps</b>	35	45	278	258	314	930
<b>Saltwater Boat Ramps (Lanes)</b>	52	59	455	359	351	1,276
<b>Saltwater Catwalks</b>	53	52	363	192	145	805
<b>Saltwater Catwalks (Feet)</b>	23,044	20,541	72,542	54,857	42,161	213,145
<b>Saltwater Jetties</b>	10,120	11,603	14,389	26,769	9,964	72,845
<b>Saltwater Marinas</b>	11	32	22	65	618	748
<b>Saltwater Marinas (Slips)</b>	698	401	1,311	5,409	36,601	44,420
<b>Saltwater Piers</b>	17	41	148	155	102	463
<b>Saltwater Piers (Feet)</b>	7,506	20,032	37,509	50,905	19,703	135,655
<b>Baseball Fields</b>	51	66	2,609	2,804	181	5,711
<b>Basketball Goals</b>	55	103	3,791	3,507	647	8,103
<b>Equipped Play Areas</b>	52	92	1,889	2,746	449	5,228
<b>Football Fields</b>	18	48	1,043	936	91	2,136
<b>Golf Courses, 18-Hole</b>	8	3	14	63	800	888
<b>Golf Courses, 9-Hole</b>	5	2	13	20	138	178
<b>Golf Courses, Executive</b>	1	1	3	11	190	206
<b>Golf Holes Total</b>	207	75	399	1,459	16,884	19,024
<b>Multi-Use Courts</b>	6	12	406	375	159	958
<b>Multi-Use Fields</b>	9	56	980	810	235	2,090
<b>Outdoor Swimming Pools</b>	15	27	157	324	1,505	2,028
<b>Racquetball Courts</b>	19	187	644	733	265	1,848
<b>Shuffleboard Courts</b>	6	13	365	1,710	2,353	4,447
<b>Tennis Courts</b>	78	331	1,777	2,767	4,216	9,169
<b>Volleyball Courts</b>	1	50	355	331	46	783

Table 3.1

Local Agency Outdoor Recreation Resources				
Region	# of Recreation Areas	Land (in Acres)	Water (in Acres)	Acres Total
Northwest	875	9,505	962	10,467
North Central	709	31,710	1,663	33,373
Northeast	934	43,700	475	44,175
Central West	1,406	115,508	2,582	118,090
Central	1,407	55,717	34,947	90,664
Central East	1,283	65,561	9,914	75,475
Southwest	1,017	138,044	3,208	141,252
Southeast	2,032	75,539	3,618	79,157
<b>Statewide</b>	9,663	535,284	57,369	592,653

Table 3.4

Navigation districts in the state play a particularly important role in outdoor recreation. The Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) and the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) provide assistance programs that develop waterway access projects such as boat ramps, marinas, boardwalks, fishing piers, waterfront parks, navigation channels, shoreline stabilization and environmental restoration projects. FIND is the state sponsor of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway from the Georgia border to the southern end of Miami-Dade County. WCIND stretches from the northern border of Manatee County to the southern border of Lee County and contains the 152 mile long Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDERS**

Besides being the main provider of user-oriented recreation facilities and programs, local governments are pursuing opportunities to acquire open space and conservation areas for their communities, often in partnerships with state agencies or non-profit conservation groups. Although the size of the properties acquired under these programs may not be as large as the properties acquired for conservation by state and federal agencies, they can be critically important in achieving

a community’s goals for environmental preservation, recreation and open space, or growth management.

Much of the success of the state’s land acquisition programs is the result of the cooperative partnerships between federal, state and local governments and national and local land trusts. Many of the projects have been sponsored jointly by partnering arrangements and such partnerships with local governments have increased in recent years. Of Florida’s 67 counties, 29 have implemented land acquisition programs as have several cities and regional authorities. Such programs have generated nearly \$2 billion to acquire conservation and recreation lands.

*County Roles*

Florida’s counties vary in character from densely populated metropolitan areas such as Miami-Dade and Pinellas, to sparsely populated rural areas like Glades and Liberty. County governments are key components of Florida’s recreation and park system. All counties do not have the same outdoor recreation needs nor have they all been able to fund responsive programs to the same degree, but every county in the