

STATE FOREST SPOTLIGHT

Sustainable Forestry Initiative®

The Florida Forest Service voluntarily participates in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative program integrates the perpetual growing and harvesting of trees with the protection of wildlife, plants, soils, and water.

Jennings State Forest is certified to the SFI forest management standards. We are proud to be part of a growing community of landowners, conservation groups and responsible companies all working towards improving forest management.



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 Jennings State Forest

- Day use is allowed 1 ½ hours before sunrise to 1 ½ hours after sunset.
- Possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- Rope swings or diving from stream banks or trees is prohibited.
- Drive on designated open roads only.
- Creating new roads or trails is prohibited.
- Off-Highway vehicles are prohibited.
- Foot traffic, bicycles and horses are welcome on designated trails.
- Take all garbage with you when leaving the forest where waste containers are not provided.
- Most primitive camping sites require a reservation purchased through Florida StateForests.ReserveAmerica.com.
- Visitors may be required to pay entrance or recreation use fees in designated areas. Annual Day Use Entrance Passes are available in the webstore at FloridaStateForests.ReserveAmerica.com.
- Fuelwood permits are available only in designated areas. Permit may be obtained at Jennings State Forest Office Monday-Friday 8a.m. – 5p.m.
- Hunting is allowed with proper permit and license in designated areas during appropriate seasons. For information on hunting or fishing, please visit www.MyFWC.com.

For more information, visit:

www.FDACS.gov/FLStateForests

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Florida Forest Service

Jennings State Forest



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Commissioner Wilton Simpson

History

In 1990 the first major acquisitions of Jennings State Forest were purchased by the State of Florida's Conservation and Recreation Lands, Preservation 2000, and the Save Our Rivers programs. The goal of these programs is to protect the North Fork of Black Creek and Yellow Water Creek, as well as the upland areas that border these outstanding waterways. The state forest was purchased from the heirs of former Florida Governor William S. Jennings, the namesake of this forest. William S. Jennings served in the Florida Legislature from 1893 to 1895, held the Office of Governor from 1901 to 1905.

In 1910, Jennings and his business partners purchased 60,000 acres of land near the North Fork of Black Creek and formed the Artesian Farm Land Company of Middleburg. The property was managed to produce forest products such as lumber and naval stores. Cattle grazing was also a major agricultural activity on the property. Today, approximately 21,000 acres of the original Artesian Farm Company make up Jennings State Forest.

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 Florida Forest Service manages more than one million acres of state forest land for multiple public uses including timber, recreation and wildlife habitat. Management practices on Jennings State Forest focus on the restoration and maintenance of natural ecosystems, sustainable forest management, wildlife habitat, recreation and the preservation of water resources.

Prescribed fire is one of the management tools used by the Florida Forest Service, mimicking natural fire regimes while reducing wildfire risk. Ecological restoration, wildlife habitat improvement and disease and pests control are benefits of prescribed fire. Timber management is a valuable tool used in the restoration and maintenance of natural communities. Timber sales follow Silvicultural Best Management Practices, generating revenue that helps offset operating costs for the forest while strengthening the local economy.



View from the Sandridge Trail



Prescribed fire ignition



Bearded Grass Pink Orchid

For more information contact:
Jennings State Forest
1337 Long Horn Road
Middleburg, FL 32068
Telephone (904)406-6384
www.FDACS.gov/FLStateForests

Natural Resources

This 25,301 acre forest is located in both northwestern Clay County and southern Duval County. Jennings State Forest has more than 15 different natural community types. Some of the communities found here include sandhills, flatwoods, seepage slopes and dome swamps. The high quality condition of these communities is exemplified by the diversity of plants and animals found within them.

Plants such as Bartram's ixia, purple honeycomb-head, tarflower and several varieties of orchids can all be found on Jennings State Forest. The flowers of these unique plants make the forest alive with color throughout the spring, summer and early fall. Some commonly observed animals include the Sherman's fox squirrel, alligator, bobcat, deer and turkey. Many birds can also be seen, especially during migrational periods. The diversity and quality of the natural resources on Jennings State Forest have been well documented and have attracted research interests from various disciplines.

Recreation

Jennings State Forest is open during daylight hours for picnicking, swimming, hiking, canoeing, horseback riding, fishing and wildlife viewing. Overnight primitive camping is allowed at two designated campgrounds with a Reservation purchased online by visiting FloridaStateForests.ReserveAmerica.com.

The Fire and Water, Pioneer, Sandridge, Dunn's Farm and Cross Cut Trails are included in the FFS Trailwalker Program. The Evans (Short and Long Loops) and Long Branch (Blue and Yellow) Equestrian Trails are included in the Trailtrotter Program. Participants in these programs are rewarded after hiking/horseback riding a number of designated trails.

Jennings State Forest is a Wildlife Management Area. Hunting permits are required for all hunts except small game hunts. We encourage all visitors to check Wildlife Management Area regulations and hunt season dates before visiting the forest. For further information on hunting visit www.MyFWC.com.