

Florida Designated Paddling Trails

Hickey Creek

N

31

74

731

720

CHARLOTTE
LEE

Hickey Creek
Paddling Trail Map

GLADES
HENDRY

78

Bayshore

Caloosahatchee River

Fort Myers Shores

Alva

78

80

29

North Fort Myers

Tice

41

75

884

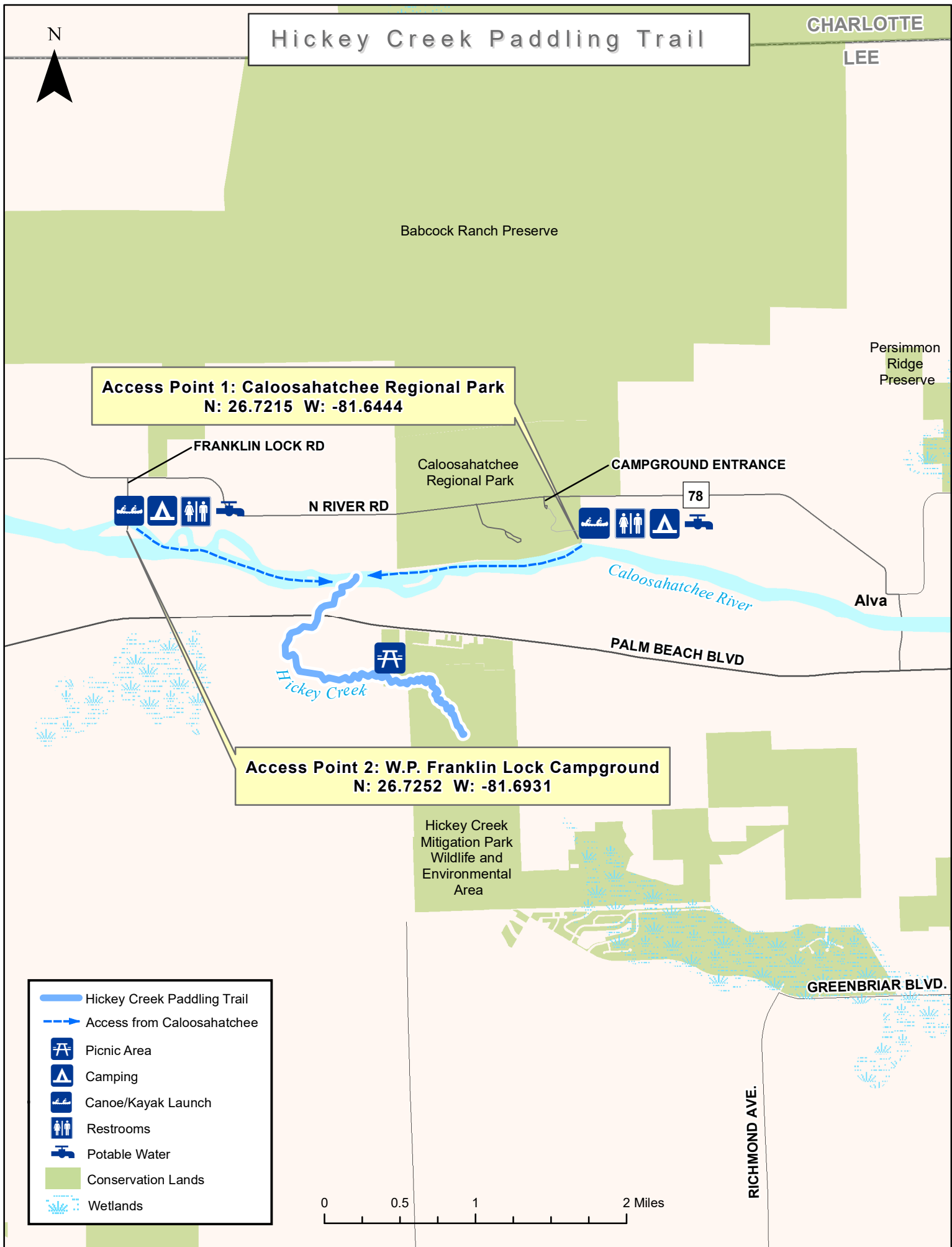
82

876

Estero

0 2 4 8 Miles

- Designated Paddling Trail
- Wetlands
- Water
- Designated Paddling Trail Index





Hickey Creek Paddling Trail Guide

The Waterway

This trail, and other nearby waterways, is part of Phase 3 of the [Great Calusa Blueway](#). The creek is a short but beautiful twisting waterway ending at [Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park](#), a site on the [Great Florida Birding Trail](#), with a picnic area, rest rooms and 5 miles of hiking trails.

The Paddling Experience

Historic Hickey's Creek is paddling excursion that can be accessed from two different points on the Caloosahatchee River, both launches offer about an 8-mile round-trip. The trip is suitable for beginner to intermediate paddlers depending on conditions. Keep in mind that wind, currents, and motor boat traffic are present on the Caloosahatchee. If the Mitigation Park is open it is possible to launch there but you must carry boat plus gear a half mile to access to the water.

Access Points

#1, Start and end of the trail, Caloosahatchee Regional Park



This launch site is about 1.5 miles upstream from Hickey's Creek. *From SR 80 West (Palm Beach Blvd), turn right (north) onto Broadway St in Alva. Cross the Caloosahatchee River, and turn left (west) onto SR 78 (N. River Rd.).*

#2, Alternate option for start and end of the trail, W.P. Franklin Locks Campground



There is a small fee to launch here for the Hickey Creek trip. *From SR 80 West (Palm Beach Blvd), turn (north) onto SR 31, cross the river, travel 3 miles and turn east onto SR78 (N. River Rd.). Drive about 4.5 miles, and turn right (south) into the campground.*

Outfitters and Shuttle Service

[Gaea Guides](#) (guided trips only, boats provided) (239) 694-5513.

[Caloosahatchee Regional Park](#) (239) 694-0398 for rental information.



Hickey Creek Paddling Trail Guide

Base Camp

There is primitive camping at [Caloosahatchee Regional Park](#) along with 20 miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails. The south side of the park also has kayak rentals, a fishing pier and floating dock.

The [W.P. Franklin Campground](#) has well developed campground for tents, RVs and overnight boat camping and is almost like an island in the Caloosahatchee River.

History

This paddling trail was likely used for travel and subsistence by the Calusa people, who lived along the coast of southwest Florida until they were finally eradicated in the late 1700s. Living and surviving on the coast caused the tribesmen to become great sailors. They defended their land against other smaller tribes and European explorers that were traveling by water. The Caloosahatchee River, which means "River of the Calusa," was their main waterway. They traveled by dugout canoes, which were made from hollowed-out cypress logs. They used these canoes to travel as far as Cuba. Explorers reported that the Calusa attacked their ships that were anchored close to shore. The Calusa were also known to sail up and down the west coast salvaging the wealth from shipwrecks. The Calusa lived on the coast and along the inner waterways. They built their homes on stilts and wove palmetto leaves to fashion roofs, but they normally didn't construct walls. The Calusa Indians did not farm like the other Indian tribes in Florida. Instead, they fished for food on the coast, bays, rivers, and waterways. The men and boys of the tribe made nets from palm tree webbing to catch mullet, pinfish, pigfish, and catfish.



Upper Hickey Creek



Caloosahatchee River, photos FWC