



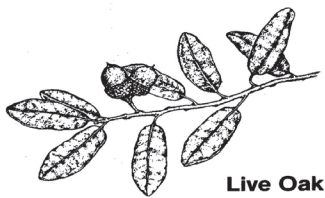
Naval Live Oaks



Reserved for the Nation

President John Adams called the U.S. Navy “Wooden Walls” and considered the Navy the first line of defense from foreign invasion. Renowned for their resistance to disease and incredible density, live oak trees provided durable wood for the construction of navy vessels. The first tree farm in the United States was established here in 1828 in order to use the live oak timber for shipbuilding. The Naval Live Oaks Area of Gulf Islands National Seashore now preserves 1,400 acres for visitors to enjoy.

Live Oaks



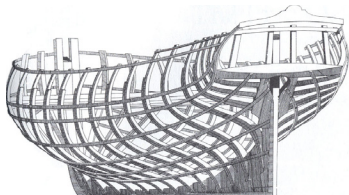
Live Oak

The oak family, which includes over 450 species, is known for its durable wood. The live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) is one of the most recognizable members of this family. From a small acorn these trees grow up to 50 feet in height and live as long as 300 years. A cubic foot of live oak can weigh as much as 75 pounds compared to a white oak that weighs 56 pounds.

Live oak leaves fall throughout the year. However, a tree never loses all of its leaves at once. This year-round or evergreen appearance gives the live oak its name.

Shipwrights, also known as *live oakers*, located and felled massive branches and trunks to provide the specific shapes needed for sections of ships. About one thousand trees were used to build just one wooden vessel.

The U.S.S. *Constitution*, the U.S. Navy’s oldest commissioned war vessel, is nicknamed “Old Ironsides” because cannon balls bounced off its oak hull in a battle during the War of 1812. Although the ship was originally constructed with live oak from Georgia, live oak from the Pensacola area was used for the ship’s 1929 restoration.



Live oak trees played a critical role in the early years of the US Navy

Naval Live Oaks Trails Guide

Brackenridge Nature Trail

Earning \$400 a year Henry Marie Brackenridge cultivated live oak trees as Superintendent of the Naval Live Oaks Reservation. Trail markers identify plants and describe how live oaks were used in shipbuilding. The trail consists of a “figure 8” path with an observation deck at the far end.

Beaver Pond Trail

The Beaver Pond Trail passes through several plant communities typical of southeastern forests. A beaver dam can be seen at the northern end of the trail. When active, the beaver dam maintains the water level even during times of drought, attracting a variety of wildlife.

Andrew Jackson Trail

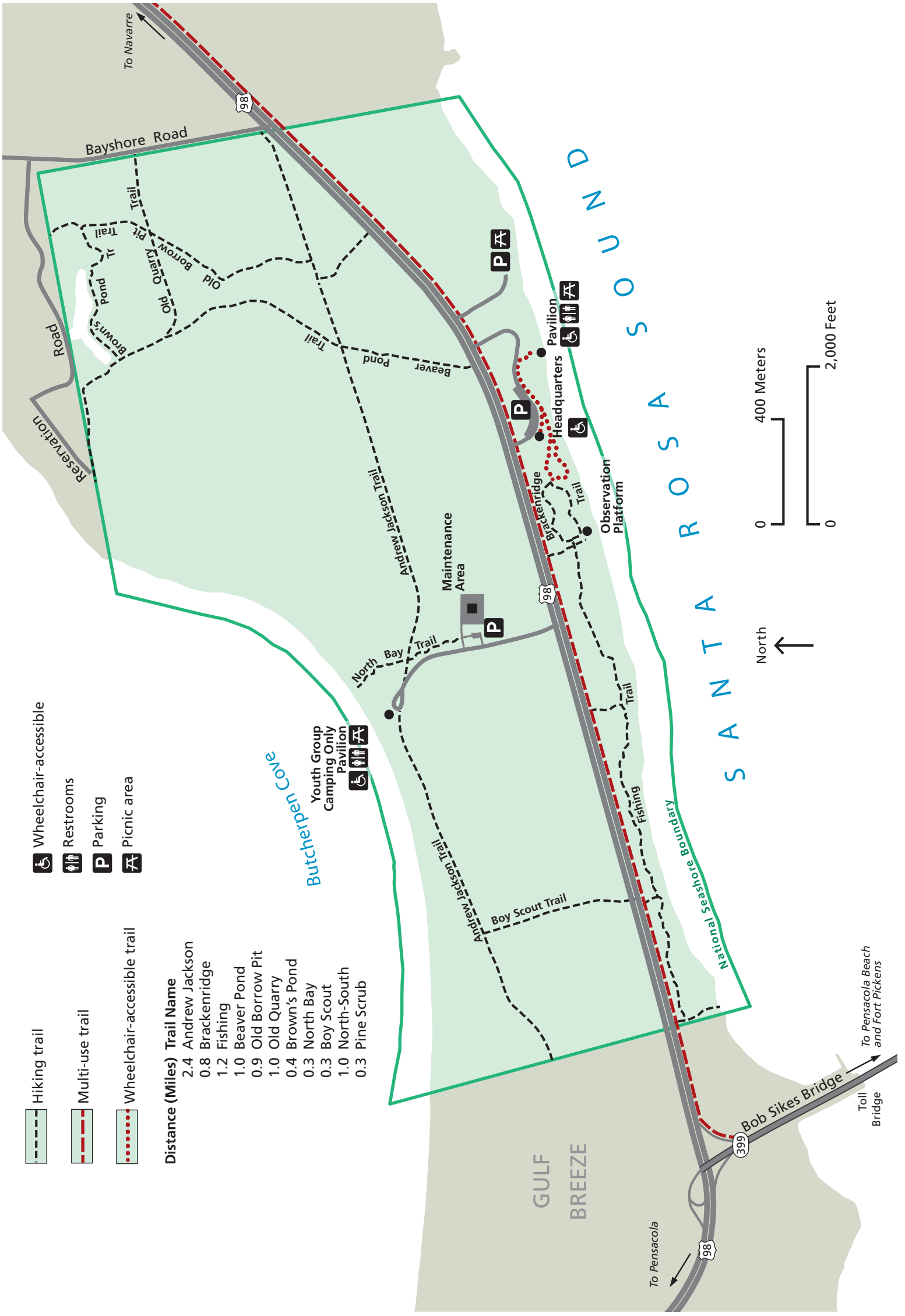
Also known as the Pensacola to St. Augustine Road, this trail was the first road connecting East Florida with West Florida. The U.S. Congress provided \$20,000 for construction of the road in 1824 when Florida was still a territory.

Old Borrow Pit Trail

Sand from the borrow pit was used for the construction of U. S. Highway 98. The trail leads through longleaf and sand pine communities. Hikers on this trail will notice the benefits of a prescribed fire that rejuvenated the forest. Prescribed burns are conducted to enhance habitat for plants and animals and to prevent wildfires by reducing fuel loads.

Secondary Trails

Several secondary trails can be used for additional hiking.



For Your Safety

The heat and humidity can be intense! Wear sun protection and drink plenty of water. Watch out for snakes, chiggers, ticks, and poison ivy.

Bug repellent is advised. Please practice Leave No Trace principles. Call 911 for emergencies.