Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail

GFBWT SITE NOMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission invites nominations for new Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail sites. The nomination period extends from Oct. 3, 2022, to Feb. 28, 2023.

The GFBWT is a collection of more than 500 sites across the state which have been recognized for exceptional wildlife viewing opportunities. A 2020 study of GFBWT users showed that 92% of respondents were satisfied with the Trail, with 73% being very satisfied. To continue this strong public trust in the recommendations of the GFBWT, we must hold potential sites to a high level of quality. Nominated sites should exemplify Florida's excellent birding and other wildlife viewing opportunities.

GFBWT sites range in their "wildness." We will consider a range of sites from relatively untouched wilderness to areas with more well-developed infrastructure. Only new sites will be considered via this nomination process. If you are interested in expanding an existing GFBWT site, please contact Lauren.Ali@MyFWC.com.

Nominations must be submitted by the person primarily responsible for the site and authorized by their organization or entity to make a commitment to being a GFBWT partner. Interested community members are welcome and encouraged to contact such persons about this application opportunity and work with them to prepare application materials.

All nominations will be reviewed by FWC for the following qualifications:

- **Unique Wildlife Viewing Opportunities and Ecological Significance**
  Emphasis will be given to high-quality or significant bird and wildlife habitats and species that provide unique wildlife viewing experiences.

- **Site Resilience**
  Sites must be able to withstand public use. If there are any sensitive habitats or species present, information must be provided on how their disturbance is mitigated or prevented.

- **Educational Programing and Information**
  Sites should provide educational materials, interpretive panels, programs or events related to wildlife.

- **Physical and legal access**
  The public must be able to access all sites safely and legally.

To further ensure the quality of sites, the GFBWT may consider supporting and supplemental information provided via the application process. Such information may include but is not limited to seasonality of wildlife

viewing, hours of operation, and the impacts on wildlife viewing of other recreational activities that occur at the site.

Signage Commitment

A 2020 survey of Trail users showed that 83% of respondents had seen a GFBWT wayfinding sign that prompted or motivated them to visit the site. All sites accepted to the Trail will need road signs directing visitors to the site, including a minimum of two approach signs along the main road to the site.

Applicants are required to submit a signed commitment agreeing to seek funds for initial sign installation (typically less than $2,000), including the identification of a funding source. We encourage applicants to work with their city and county to secure sign funding or obtain a commitment that wayfinding signs can be obtained and installed. Note that applicants who have submitted the signed commitment but have not yet obtained funding will not be penalized during the selection process.

Applicants are also required to obtain a statement of support from FDOT or local public works maintenance partners who would be responsible for sign maintenance if the nomination is accepted.

Application Preparation

To prepare an application, please visit FloridaBirdingTrail.com/Site-Nominations and follow the instructions provided.

We look forward to reviewing your applications and to recognizing excellent wildlife viewing areas across the state to promote to residents and visitors alike.

Sincerely,

Lauren Ali
Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail Coordinator
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
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