



Blueway Trails

**A Guide for the
Canoe/Kayak Enthusiast**

How to Use This Guide

This guide provides information on the excellent paddling opportunities in and around the Charlotte County. Charlotte County's shoreline is divided into the following three regions: West County, Mid-County, and East County. Each section of trail is shown on the map based on their level of difficulty and are numbered to correspond with the information provided in the table. Launch areas are depicted to correspond to the letters in the information table.

Explanation of Classifications

These guidelines are for educational purposes only and are not intended to provide a basis for evidence of responsibility or negligence in any legal action. All uses of the outlined trails are at the users' own risk. Factors that can change the classification of a trail include weather, time of year, time of day, group and individuals needs.

BEGINNER: Involves gentle paddling in lakes, deltas, creeks and embayments, in inhabited, non-challenging, protected waterways exposed to slight currents or tides. Trips will generally require less than two (2) hours of paddling; on-board water is recommended.

INTERMEDIATE: Involves exposure to open water subject to moderate currents, tides, and wind. Landing areas may be unavailable for up to five miles. Moderate hazards may exist such as bottom conditions and unrestricted motorboat traffic. Trips will generally require less than six (6) hours; on-board food and water is required.

EXPERT: Involves exposure to broad reaches of open water with potential for heavy currents, tides, wind, and surf. Areas may be remote with assistance more than four hours away and landing areas are not predictable. Uncharted hazards and conditions may exist. Trips may require exceed eight (8) hours; on-board food and water required. Thorough knowledge of trail route and conditions required.

Charlotte County Blueway Trails

Numb	Trail Name	Region	Length	Difficulty	Access	Scenic	Overall Rating
1	Bird Key Trail	West County	.8 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild 9	8
2	Boca Grande Trail	West County	3 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild/Dev 8	7
3	Boggess Hole Trail	West County	3.4 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 8	9
4	Buck Creek Trail	West County	2 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 8	9
5	Bull Bay Bypass	West County	4.9 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
6	Bull Bay Trail	West County	3.3 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
7	Gallagher Trail	West County	3.6 miles	Novice	Good 6	Wild 9	7
8	Catfish Creek Trail	West County	1.6 miles	Beginner	Good 8	Wild 8	8
9	Cattle Dock Trail	West County	1.3 miles	Intermediate	Good 6	Open 7	6
10	Grande Tour Trail	West County	2.8 miles	Beginner	Very Good 9	Dev 6	7
11	Coral Creek Trail	West County	1.6 miles	Beginner	Very Good 9	Dev 6	8
12	Inter Coastal Trail	West County	18.3 miles	Novice	Fair 4	Open/Dev 6	6
13	Little Gasparilla Trail	West County	1.1 miles	Novice	Good 7	Dev 6	7
14	Cayo Palau Trail	West County	7 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild/Dev 7	7
15	Oyster Creek Trail	West County	1.7 miles	Beginner	Fair 4	Wild/Dev 6	5
16	Rock Creek Trail	West County	1.3 miles	Beginner	Good 6	Wild/Dev 5	5
17	Santa Fe Trail	West County	11 miles	Beginner	Poor 5	Wild/Dev 7	6
18	Shallow Water Trail	West County	2.9 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
19	Sister Ponds Trail	West County	2.7 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
20	Tour Trail	West County	2.2 miles	Beginner	Very Good 8	Very Good 8	8
21	Trout Creek Trail	West County	1.7 miles	Intermediate	Good 8	Wild 8	7
22	Turtle Bay Trail	West County	4.5 miles	Novice	Very Good 9	Very Good 9	9
23	West Wall Trail	West County	12.7 miles	Expert	Good 6	Wild 9	8
24	Whidden Trail	West County	3.9 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild/Dev 8	9
25	Widden Creek Trail	West County	3.9 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
26	Woolverton Trail	West County	3.2 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
27	Arapahoe Trail	Mid County	5.2 miles	Beginner	Good 5	Wild/Dev 8	6
28	Deep Creek Trail	Mid County	1.9 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 9	9
29	East Spring Lake Trail	Mid County	1.5 miles	Beginner	Very Good 9	Wild/Dev 8	8
30	Ghost Point Trail	Mid County	1.6 miles	Novice	Good 6	Dev 9	7
31	Gulf Cove Trail	Mid County	3 miles	Intermediate	Good 7	Open/Dev 6	6
32	Harbor Heights Trail	Mid County	8.7 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild/Dev 9	8
33	Lewis Creek Trail	Mid County	.7 miles	Novice	Good 6	Wild 8	6
34	Long Lake Trail	Mid County	8.9 miles	Novice	Good 5	Wild/Dev 8	9
35	Muddy Cove Cut	Mid County	1 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild 7	7
36	Muddy Cove Trail	Mid County	1.1 miles	Novice	Good 6	Dev 9	7
37	Myakka Cut Off	Mid County	8 miles	Intermediate	Good 8	Wild 8	8
38	Myakka River Trail	Mid County	14.3 miles	Intermediate	Poor 5	Dev 7	6
39	Sasha's Trail	Mid County	2.7 miles	Novice	Good 6	Wild 8	8
40	Spring Lake Trail	Mid County	.9 miles	Beginner	Very Good 8	Dev 7	7
41	Three Lakes Trail	Mid County	1.2 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 5	8
42	Tippecanoe Trail	Mid County	2.8 miles	Novice	Fair 5	Wild 9	8
43	Tranquility Island Trail	Mid County	10.3 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild/Dev 7	7
44	West Spring Lake Trail	Mid County	2.3 miles	Beginner	Very Good 9	Wild/Dev 8	8
45	Alligator Creek Trail	East County	4.8 miles	Novice	Fair 6	Wild/Dev 9	7
46	Barge Canal Trail	East County	.6 miles	Intermediate	Very Good 9	Wild 8	8
47	Dead Lake Trail	East County	3.1 miles	Intermediate	Very Good 9	Open/Dev 6	7
48	East Wall Trail	East County	8.3 miles	Expert	Poor 4	Wild 9	7
49	Explorer Trail	East County	2.4 miles	Intermediate	Poor 6	Wild/Dev 7	7
50	Gaspar Trail	East County	.7 miles	Intermediate	Poor 4	Wild 9	7
51	Mosquito Trail	East County	1.2 miles	Intermediate	Poor 4	Wild 9	7
52	North Fork Trail	East County	1.9 miles	Novice	Fair 5	Wild/Dev 6	7
53	Outer Shell Creek Trail	East County	7.4 miles	Novice	Good 8	Wild 8	8
54	Prairie Creek Trail	East County	6.1 miles	Novice	Good 7	Wild 9	8
55	Shell Creek Trail	East County	4.1 miles	Intermediate	Good 8	Wild 9	8
56	Spider Trail	East County	3.4 miles	Intermediate	Poor 4	Wild 9	7
57	Upper Shell Creek Trail	East County	2.2 miles	Intermediate	Good 8	Wild 9	9

Charlotte County Blueway Trail System Trailhead Access Points

ID	Facility	Access Type	Condition	Food	Water	Restrooms	Parking Fee	Launch Fee
A	Middle Beach Manasota Key Dr.; Englewood	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	No	No
B	Indian Mound Park 210 Winson Ave.; Englewood	Beach	Good	No	No	Yes	No	No
C	Lemon Bay Sunrise Rotary Park 1000 SMcCall Rd.; Englewood	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
D	Ainger Creek Park 2025 Placida Rd.; Englewood	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
E	Oyster Creek Environmental Park 2333 Placida Rd.; Englewood	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
F	Stump Pass State Park Manasota Key Rd.; Englewood	Beach	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
G	Bill Coy Preserve 5400 Placida Rd.; Englewood	Muck	Fair	No	No	No	No	No
H	Thorton Key Englewood	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
I	Placida Park 6499 Gasparilla Rd.; Placida	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
J	Uncle Henry's Marina 5800 Gasparilla Rd.; Boca Grande	Ramp	Fair	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
K	Boca Grande Fishing Pier 5810 Gasparilla Rd.; Placida	Sand	Fair	No	No	Yes	No	No
L	South Gulf Cove Park 10150 Amicola St.; Port Charlotte	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
M	El Jobean Boat Ramp 4224 El Jobean Rd.; El Jobean	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
N	Tippecanoe Environmental Park 2300 El Jobean Rd.; Port Charlotte	Grass	Good	No	No	No	No	No
O	Spring Lake Park 20080 Edgewater Dr.; Port Charlotte	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
P	Sunrise Park 20499 Edgewater Dr.; Port Charlotte	Sand	Good	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Q	Port Charlotte Beach Park 4500 Harbor Blvd.; Port Charlotte	Beach	Good	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
R	Bayshore Live Oak Park 22976 Bayshore Rd.; Charlotte Harbor	Sand	Fair	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
S	Chester Roberts Park 5084 Melbourne St.; Port Charlotte	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
T	Harbor Heights Park 27420 Voyageur Dr.; Harbor Heights	Ramp	Good	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
U	Nav-a- Gator Grill 9700 SW Riverview Ct.; Arcadia	Ramp	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes
V	Prairie Creek Preserve East of U.S.17 North of Washingotn Loop Rd.; Punta Gorda	Sand	Good	No	No	No	No	No
W	Hathaway Park 35461 Washington Loop Rd.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
X	Riverside Park 8320 Riverside Dr.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
Y	Darst Park 537 Darst Ave.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
Z	Laishely Park 100 Nesbit St.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
AA	Ponce de Leon Park 4000 W. Marion Ave.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
BB	Allapatchee Shores Park 3100 Hickory Ct.; Punta Gorda	Ramp	Good	No	No	No	No	No
CC	Taylor Rd. Access Taylor Rd.; Punta Gorda	Roadside	Poor	No	No	No	No	No
DD	Don Pedro State Park 8450 Placida Rd.; Cape Haze	Sand	Good	No	No	No	Yes	No



CHARLOTTE COUNTY Blueway Trails

Charlotte County Mission Statement:
To be the energy in making Charlotte County a beautiful and enriching place to live



Legend

- Caution: Trail Obstruction
- Boat Ramp
- Blueway Trail Identifier
- Access Point Identifier

Blueway Trails Site

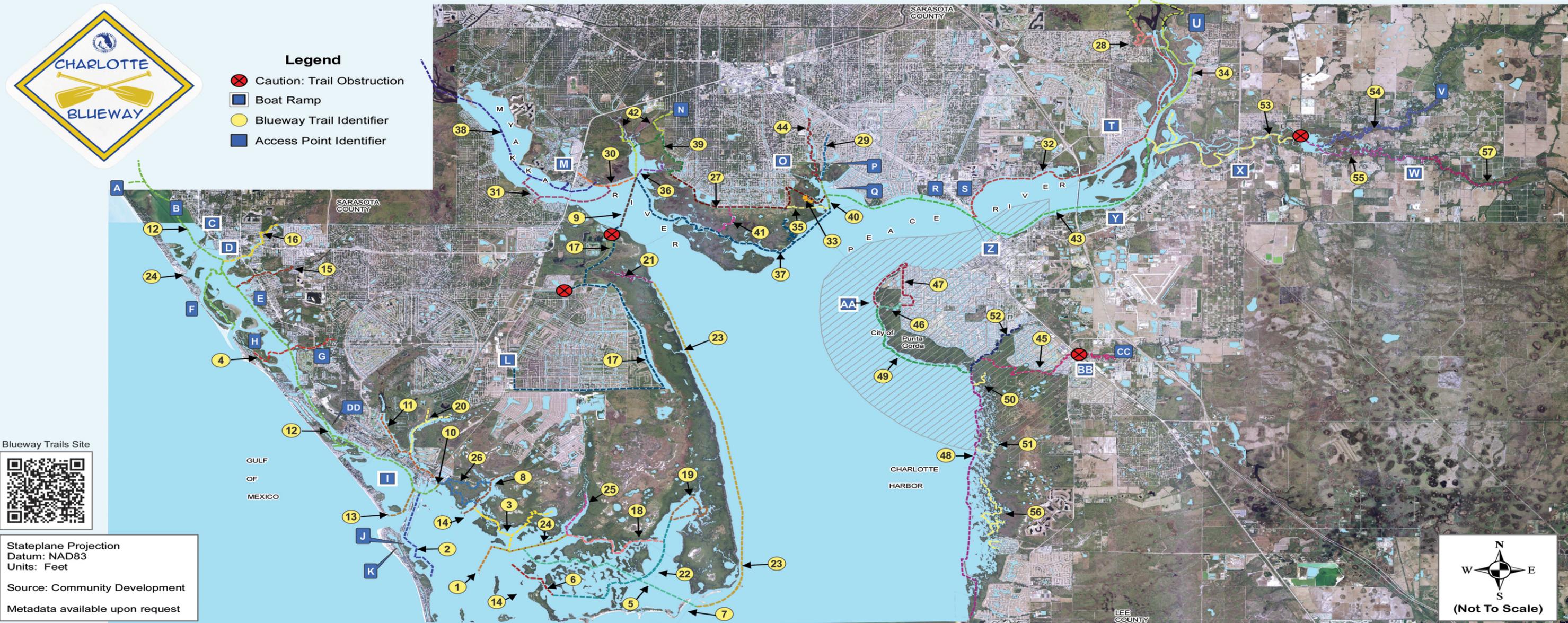


Stateplane Projection
Datum: NAD83
Units: Feet

Source: Community Development

Metadata available upon request

This map is a representation of compiled public information. It is believed to be an accurate and true depiction for the stated purpose, but Charlotte County and its employees make no guaranties, implied or otherwise, to the accuracy, or completeness. We therefore do not accept any responsibilities as to its use. This is not a survey or is it to be used for design. Reflected Dimensions are for informational purposes only and may have been rounded to the nearest tenth. For precise dimensions, please refer to recorded plats and related documents.



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Area Description

The Charlotte County Blueway Trails are filled with unique opportunities to observe Southwest Florida's native flora and fauna. With approximately 219 miles of coastline to explore, paddlers can get away from the hurried pace of day-to-day life. Along the western county boundary the Gulf of Mexico connects to an extensive estuarine system including barrier islands, tidal creeks, estuary bays, and Charlotte Harbor. Paddlers can expect to see a variety of coastal habitats including Seagrasses, Salt Marshes, Mangrove Forests, and Riverine communities. Seagrasses are underwater flowering plants found in protected bays and lagoons where water is clear and wave action is moderate. Seagrass beds are of vital importance to the health of the estuarine waterways by providing lifelong shelter for many species of small fish and invertebrates. Recreational marine fish species are dependent upon seagrass during their life cycles and seagrasses help to improve water quality by stabilizing bottom sediments. Salt marshes are tidal wetlands that occur along low-energy coastlines and river shorelines; they are characterized as expanses of grasses, rushes, and sedges found in the zone between low and high tide. Salt marshes are one of the most biologically productive ecosystems providing food for many species of animals, forming the base of the marsh food web and serving as a nursery for several species of fish, crabs, and shellfish. Salt marshes also buffer upland areas from storm surge, helping to protect homes and upland development. Mangrove forests, or mangrove swamps, inhabit low energy shorelines in coastal areas and are specially adapted to salt- and brackish-water environments. Mangrove forests are very high in ecological value and contribute to both the health of our waterways and the local economy by stabilizing shoreline areas, buffering storm surge, preventing erosion, as well as providing nesting sites for shorebirds, and habitat and nursery grounds for many species of fish and invertebrates.

History of the Area

- The archeological record of Charlotte Harbor dates back some 3,000 years.
- The area's first inhabitants were mound builders, who constructed numerous shell mounds and established camps along the harbor.
- The first European to visit the area was probably Ponce de Leon in the early 1500s.
- Hernando de Soto is believed by some historians to have ventured here in 1539, followed by Pedro Menendez D'Aviles in 1556.
- In 1774, English explorer Bernard Romans surveyed the area and named it Charlotte Harbor in honor of Queen Charlotte Sophia, wife of King George III. The United States took possession of Florida in 1819.
- In 1862, rangers Joel and Jesse Knight constructed a cattle dock on the northern shore of Charlotte Harbor.
- The dock was used by local cattlemen to load their shipments, sold primarily to the Confederate Army.
- A holding pen, general store, and homes were constructed in the area surrounding the dock.
- This first settlement, which predated Punta Gorda and Englewood, was known as Live Oak Point, Hickory Bluff, and eventually Charlotte Harbor.

Paddling Safety Tips and Regulations

Safety equipment to have before hitting the water:

- Flotation gear; Florida Law requires a Coast Guard approved, readily accessible and wearable personal flotation device (PFD) for each occupant of the vessel.
- All occupants under age 6 must wear PFDs.
- Sound-producing device, such as a whistle, horn or bell.
- First aid kit; include sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Extra paddle, bow and stern lines, and extra rope.
- Hat and sunglasses.
- Cellular/mobile phone if available.

Plan route and allow for enough time:

- Let someone know where you are going and how long you expect to be on the water.
- Allow for a minimum of two miles per hour paddling time under normal water conditions for route area.
- Check recent and predicted weather conditions. Thunderstorms with extreme gusty winds can form quickly in the summer months.
- Paddling against the tidal flow can be difficult and will exhaust a person's energy reserves; most of Charlotte County's waters are tidally influenced.
- Wind direction and speed can also be a factor when paddling, especially on wide or coastal rivers.
- Rivers in south Florida are usually low in the spring and normal to high in the summer and fall months.

On the water:

- Paddle in a group or with a buddy.
- Watch for motorboats, wave runners, and jet skis. Stay to the right and turn your bow into the wake.
- Place food and gear in a water tight container and secure them tightly to your canoe or kayak.
- Bring plenty of drinking water for the trip.
- Wear your life jacket.

The Charlotte County Blueway Trails system is incorporated into the extensive Statewide Florida Greenways and Trails System providing for connectivity through an inclusive interconnected network of greenways, trails, and waterways. Come and experience the beauty of the barrier islands, tidal creeks, estuary bays, and of course Charlotte Harbor. Explore the excitement of the wonders the Blueway Trails has to offer.



Parking Passes

Don't forget to make sure you have a parking pass when you visit Port Charlotte Beach, Englewood Beach and all Charlotte County operated public boat ramps.

Passes may be purchased by mail or by visiting any of the following locations:

Charlotte County Tax Collector, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte (in person only)

Mid-County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte

Tringali Recreation Center, 3460 N. Access Road, Englewood

Harold Avenue Recreation Center, 23400 Harold Avenue, Port Charlotte

South County Regional Park, 670 Cooper Street, Punta Gorda

Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center, 4500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte

Ann Dever Regional Park Pool, 6791 San Casa Drive, Englewood

Passes are now available in three forms!

Annual \$50.00 (plus \$3.50 tax) = \$53.50

6 Month \$35.00 (plus \$2.45 tax) = \$37.45

3 Month \$25.00 (plus \$1.75 tax) = \$26.75

If you are interested in placing your ad in Blueways Trails, or if you are an individual, or a group interested, in supporting this publication by making a donation, please contact Charlotte County Community Services.

For more information on environmental parks and upcoming programs in Charlotte County please contact:

Charlotte County Community Services

2300 El Jobean Road, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

941. 625.PLAY (7529)

www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov