



Se7en Wetlands

The City of Lakeland will celebrate the grand opening of Se7en Wetlands Park on **Saturday, April 14th at 10 AM**. The grand opening of Se7en Wetlands Park will feature an Audubon Society bird hike, a nature photography seminar and hay rides for those that want to experience the park without walking. The celebration will take place at the Gopher Tortoise Trailhead which features a 2.9-mile loop that can be entered through Loyce Harp Park. Phase One of the project features 8.5 miles of trail with two main access points that have restroom accommodations.. The Wood Stork Gate features a 2.4 mile loop that can be entered through Lakeland Highlands Scrub, 551 acres of untouched habitat at the southern dead end of Lakeland Highlands Road.

TRAIL ENTRANCE:
 ENTER THROUGH LOYCE
 HARPE PARK
 500 W. CARTER ROAD,
 MULBERRY, FL 33860

PARKING COORDINATES:
 N 27° 56.08 W 081°57.891”



TREK TEN CACHE COORDINATES:
 N 27° 55.386 W 081° 56.466”

NO PETS, NO BIKES



BE PREPARED:

The trails have no shade, so wear a hat, sunscreen and protective clothing. Carry plenty of water. Drinking water is only available near the Gopher Tortoise and Wood Stork gates.

Maintain a safe distance from alligators and other wildlife.

FIND THE CACHE WITHOUT GPS

From the parking area, head to the Gopher Tortoise Gate and educational kiosk at the trailhead. Take a photo of the trail map or load it to your phone with the QR Code on the kiosk. Follow the trail signs: 2A, 2B, 2D, 1A, 1B to the Influent at 1C. You will see a large pine tree across the trail from the boardwalk. The cache is at the base of the pine tree.

HIKE IS APPROXIMATELY 3.0 MILES ROUND TRIP

THINGS TO SEE:

The park was once a portion of the Bonny Lake Mine, a phosphate mining operation that began in 1947. The mine closed in 1984 and a few years later was purchased by the City of Lakeland for use as a Wetland Treatment System. Changes and upgrades to the site included changes to clay settling area berm elevations and slopes, installation of water control structures and pipes and the planting of wetland and upland vegetation. The wetland treatment system became operational in 1987. The new park is part of a 1,600-acre area comprised of marshes, swamps, and open water lakes designed to help naturally clean already treated wastewater as it meanders through the retention areas. Once completely treated in the wetlands, the water is either released to the Alafia River or used by Tampa Electric’s Polk Power Station as a cooling agent. In addition to the treatment provided, the Wetland offers outstanding habitat for a diverse community of plant and animal species including birds, alligators, turtles, otters, bobcats, gopher tortoises and other animals.