



Natural Trails Field Guide 2013

www.harmonyfl.com

Overview

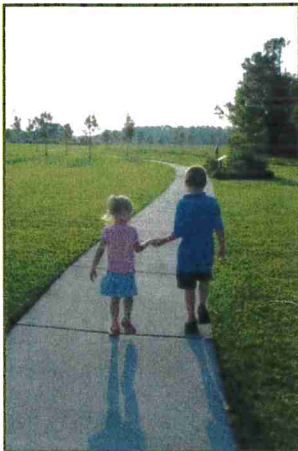
Harmony believes that people live better and healthier when they live in regular contact with animals and nature. To promote that, the community has a target of keeping 70% of its 11,000 acres as accessible open space and bringing viable habitat and natural experiences to each neighborhood.

Harmony's trails and walkways create an opportunity for every resident to be able to walk comfortably from his front door to developed commercial, educational and recreational uses, as well as into very natural, almost wilderness environments, all the while having the potential to see wildlife as varied as armadillos, songbirds, herons or alligators; or just meet someone walking the family dog.

Harmony already has over 13 miles of natural trails. Added to that are opportunities for canoeing and electric boating along the 3.5 mile shoreline of Buck Lake and just walking around the neighborhood.

This guide provides information on the less developed trails that can take you into the more natural portions of Harmony, all within walking distance of home.

Enjoy your day!



Billy's (Northern Harmony) Trail System



Cat Lake Landing provides views of nearly all of Cat Lake and its majestic oaks provide shade for weddings and overnight tent camping. You can access Jug Creek Trail from here or head northwest on Cat Meadow Link, which will take you across fields and woodlands to Billy's Trail.



Billy's Trail can also be reached from the trailhead at Harmony Star Field on Five Oaks Drive. It follows an old ranch road built before 1950 and crosses the deep wetlands that most anywhere along Billy's and Lookout Bridge trails if you get there early. Though water usually moves from east to west—from Cat to Buck—heavier rainfall on the Buck Lake side can sometimes reverse this flow at culverts crossing the trail.

Lookout Bridge is a loop trail that will return you to Billy's and provides a place to sit and look out on Buck Lake at the bridge. Watch your footing on this trail as wildlife and cow activity can make for an uneven and sloppy trail surface.

Many Trails



Someone has been here before you. The natural trails that wind through Harmony all follow routes that have been used for years by others.

In the early 1900s wagon roads were cut through the native pine flatwoods for turpentine production. In the second half of the century the Triple E Ranch drove cattle along what is now Jug Creek Trail, Butterfly and Billy's trails to get them from pasture to feed lot. Ditches were dug to drain water from cleared pastures and to lower Buck Lake itself. Excavating machines tossed earth to the side for what are now the routes for Pine Needle Path and Lookout Bridge Loop.

And in the background of all this, deer created their own paths, alligators slipped up and down banks and otters created routes from wetland to wetland. Even raccoons, rabbits, opossums and mice wore down paths to more easily get around.

Harmony is covered with trails old and new. We hope you'll enjoy the ones outlined in this guide and will visit again throughout the year.



Alligator tracks in the sand

Trail Etiquette

Cyclists yield to horses, and hikers, all yield to horses

Step to the side to let others pass

Keep the trail clean

Carry your trash out

Keep animals under control

Dogs are welcome if kept on a leash

Some trails pass through cattle pasture

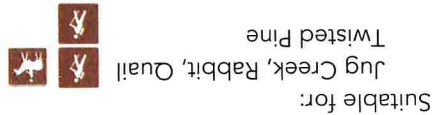
Close & latch all gates, cattle & cars don't mix

Do not feed wildlife

Enjoy animals from a distance

Please report trail issues or maintenance needs to info@harmonyfl.com

These trails are closely associated with Cat Lake and the western edge of a vast wetland system called Jug Creek Swamp.



Jug Creek (Eastern Harmony) Trail System



Photo: W. Luther

Jug Creek Trail starts near The Garden at Harmony, which also includes the Children's Garden. It's a community garden with opportunities for all of the community to enjoy gardening either directly or by just taking in the sights and smells. The trail passes across a scrub oak preserve and what are likely relic sand dunes formed when Florida's coast was much further inland. The trail continues across active cattle pasture (remember to close gates) to reach Cat Lake landing and is nearly two miles from end to end.

Rabbit Run and Quail Trail follow field and hedgerow edges. Watch and listen for a variety of birds, like quail, and rabbits darting in and out of the brush. Twisted Pine follows land that juts out into a quiet corner of Cat Lake and features a pine whose trunk corkscrews up into the tree canopy.

Equestrians

Horse riding is limited to Harmony residents and their accompanied guests

Please check in daily at the Sales & Information Gallery & show current Coggins papers as requested for every horse brought to Harmony.

A one time signed waiver is required at the Sales Gallery. Without a waiver you will be treated as a trespasser!

Stay on trails marked for horse use.

Protect yourself and others:

It is recommended that riders of all ages wear helmets.

Do not wear headphones on the trail-enjoy your surroundings and be safe. No dogs please.

Groups from outside of Harmony: Please arrange your visit through the Sales & Information Gallery.

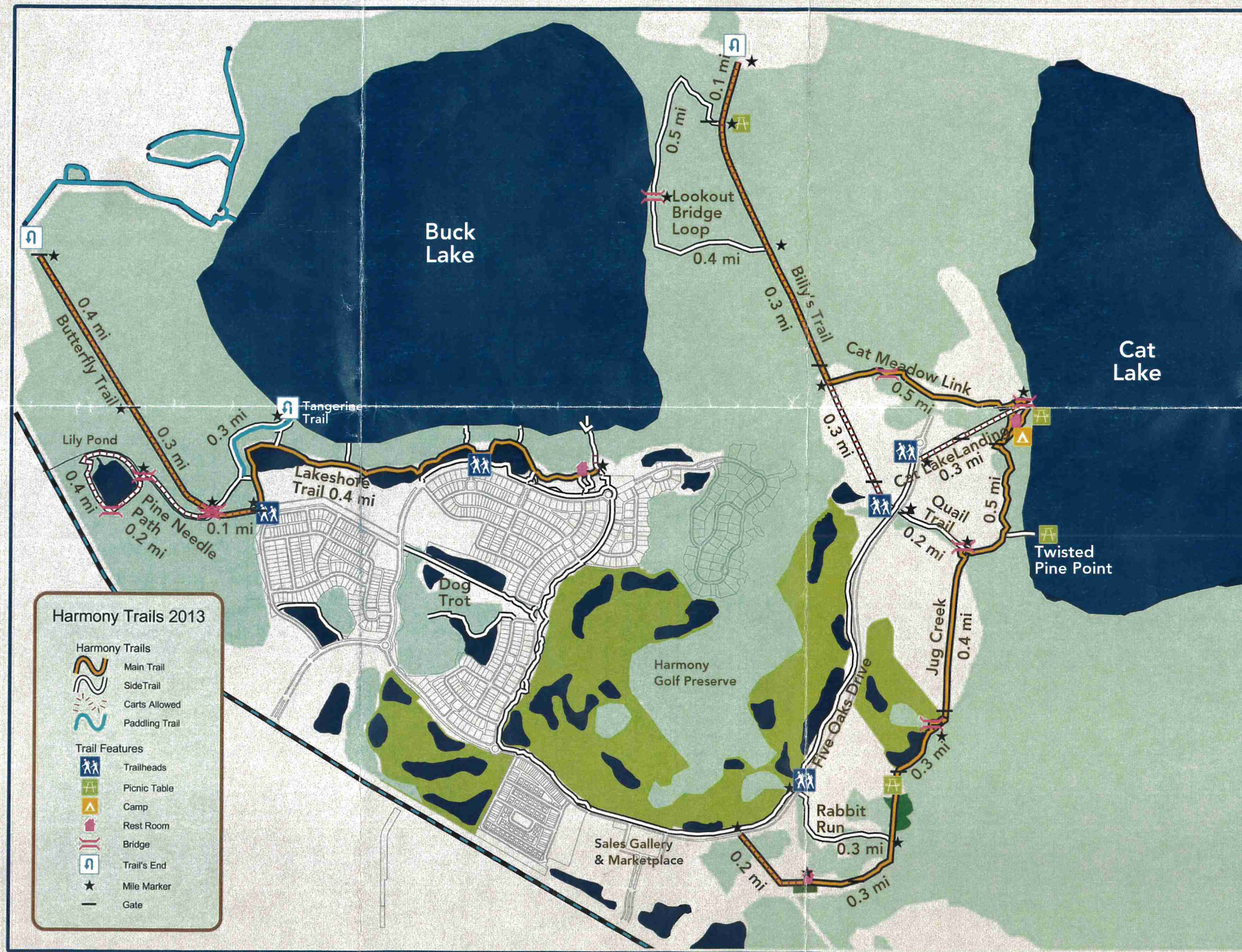
Butterfly was built on fill cast up during excavation for two natural gas pipelines that were originally placed parallel to it in the 1950s. Pine Needle runs atop material dug by the Triple E Ranch to create a canal that it used to control Buck Lake water levels. A sluice gate (now gone) was opened or closed to do this where a connection from Lakeshore Trail crosses the canal to access Pine Needle. Pine Needle heads west to loop around the Lily Pond, which was originally dug in the 1960s, probably to provide construction fill.



Take time to study the trees along these trails. Loblolly bays offer beautiful white blossoms in the summer, maples have crimson leaves in the winter and tiny red flowers in the early spring. Slash pines are everywhere, while the biggest trees in the woods are the buttress-trunked black gums. As the most commercially valuable trees, only a few cypress remain from past logging.

NATURAL TRAILS OF HARMONY

13+ Miles



ADVISORIES



Alligators are sometimes seen in water or on a sunny bank. Watch from 30' or more. Don't throw things at them. Never feed any wildlife.



Watch your step. Trails can have exposed roots, animal holes and other natural hazards. You are responsible for your safety.



All trails are considered to be an Easy Level of difficulty. Still, wear sturdy shoes.



Trails can be seasonally wet or muddy.



ATVs are not permitted on trails.



HARMONY

WHERE NATURE CALLS YOU HOME

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