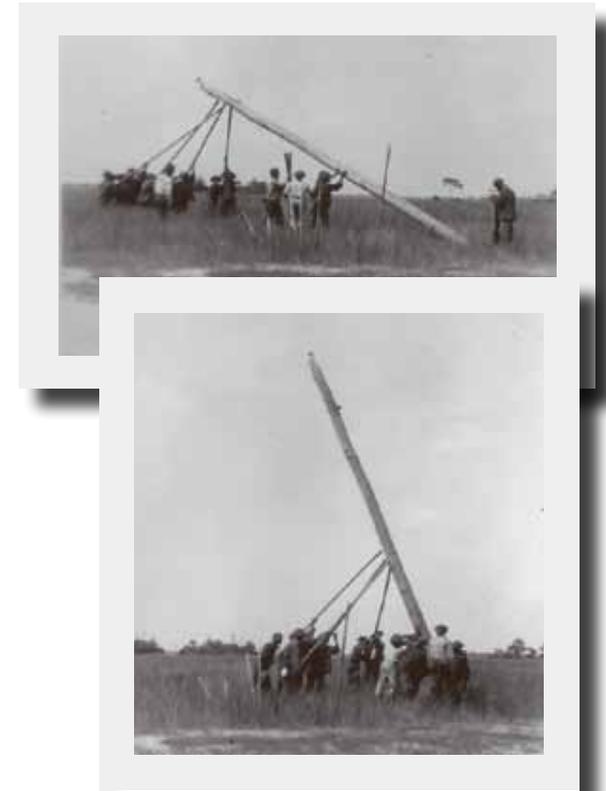


St. Marks and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

GPS Coordinates:
84°8.710' W ~ 30° 7.797' N

Initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and authorized on March 31, 1933, the CCC put thousands of young men to work across the United States.



Courtesy St. Marks Refuge files

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge History Trail

1	Wakulla Beach: site of Wakulla Beach Hotel and West Goose Creek Seheyard	84°15.703' W	30° 6.316' N	4	Mounds Station: site of Shell Mounds and Naval Stores	84° 9.869' W	30° 5.282' N
2	Plum Orchard: site of Port Leon	84°8.892' W	30° 9.099' N	5	St. Marks Lighthouse: site of Lighthouse, Ft. Williams, and Spanish Hole/Shipwreck	84° 10.955' W	30° 4.658' N
3	East River: site of CCC and Salt Works	84°8.710' W	30° 7.797' N	6	Mandalay: site of Aucilla River	83° 58.769' W	30° 6.985' N



St. Marks and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)



When road conditions prevented a truck from operating, the bulldozer provided the horsepower. (Courtesy St. Marks Refuge files)

The U.S. Army oversaw housing, healthcare, education, feeding, and moving men and materials. Each man received \$30 a month, but \$25 was sent home to his family.

Thirty-three camps were located in Florida. Camp BF-1, BF stood for Bird Refuge, was assigned to the St. Marks Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, as it was called at the time. It was one of the few African-American camps in the CCC.

Between 1934 and the early 1940s, men from this camp built the refuge. Heavy equipment used to construct roads and impoundments included dump trucks, draglines, a bulldozer, and a rock crusher, but most of the work depended on the muscles and skills of the men.

Almost everything was fabricated by the CCC men. Poles that carried the power and telephone lines, fence posts, and cypress for siding and roofing were cut on the refuge and trimmed by hand. Among their accomplishments are the earthen levees surrounding the pools, miles of



Dragline mat material being taken from the East River Swamp (Courtesy St. Marks Refuge files)

ditches, 30 acres cleared for a reservoir, and Lighthouse Road. They built dwellings and other buildings, a diversion dam, and two lookout towers. They strung 30.8 miles of telephone line and 4.5 miles of power line, cleared a 24-mile truck trail, 21.5 miles of firebreaks, ran surveys, installed cattle guards, and devoted 416 man-days to fighting forest fires. Smaller projects included building toolboxes and desks, and landscaping. With little heavy equipment available at the time, their main tools were shovels and muscles. Their work was deeply appreciated by the staff.



Maple lumber from trees harvested from refuge swamps was used to construct desks and other furniture used in refuge offices and residences. (Courtesy St. Marks Refuge files)

Most of the structures they built no longer exist. Their legacy lives on in Lighthouse Road and the pools that provide habitat for migratory and resident wildlife.

When the U.S. entered World War II, the CCC program ended. Most of the CCC men went to war. Their training and experience had prepared them well for serving their country.

The St. Marks Refuge Association, Inc., with a matching grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, produced the signs and brochures for the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge History Trail. The association is a 501(c)(3) organization that supports educational, environmental, and biological programs of St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Visit www.stmarksrefuge.org for more information. 9/2010