Fort Gadsden, Florida

June 4 - 20, 2015

Project Partner: Apalachicola National Forest

History: In the 1800s, Spain had a tenuous hold on Florida. Seeking opportunity after recently losing American colonies, the British advanced and established Prospect Bluff along the Apalachicola River, offering freedom and land to escaped American slaves. The defensive fort they built exploded during the War of 1812, and a new fort was commissioned by Andrew Jackson and Lt. James Gadsden in 1818. From this base, Jackson took extreme measures to eliminate Spanish, British, Choctaw, and Seminole interests in Florida. Fort Gadsden was abandoned shortly thereafter, repurposed during the Civil War, and abandoned once again. The site today is the only National Historic Landmark in Florida’s National Forests. It hosts both forts’ footprints, a cemetery, interpretative trails and markers, and an artifact kiosk. More information and interpretative video is available on the Apalachicola National Forest’s website.

Scope of Work: HistoriCorps volunteers and the Texas Conservation Corps helped maintain this Landmark by improving site accessibility and interpretative materials. Participants worked with field staff to learn new skills and techniques; tasks completed include:
• Clearing and developing trails
• Repairing/rebuilding wooden pedestrian paths
• Weatherizing and repairing insect damage to wooden structures
• Improving interpretative signs and materials.

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