



## **Proclamation**

*Board of County Commissioners  
Manatee County, Florida*

**WHEREAS**, in the early 1500s, Spanish conquistador Juan Ponce de León landed on the shores of Florida in an attempt to colonize. Thwarted by Native Americans, the colonists abandoned their quest, leaving behind the first livestock in North America ... horses, hogs, and Andalusian cattle, the ancestors of the Texas Longhorns; and

**WHEREAS**, by the 1800s, as settlers moved south, so did the cattle, searching for new pastures; and

**WHEREAS**, following the Civil War, early settlers along Florida's east coast and central corridor became known as Florida Crackers, Cracker Cowmen, or Cow Hunters. The Crackers relied on bullwhips to flush cows out of the palmetto scrub and spur on oxen that pulled their carts and wagons. The snaps of these whips would break the sound barrier making a loud CRACK. This sound earned the Cowmen the nickname of Crackers; and

**WHEREAS**, each year, the Crackers gathered west of Fort Pierce to drive their herd of scrub cattle west across the state toward Bradenton and then to Tampa, Punta Gorda, and Punta Rassa to ship them to Cuba. The Cracker Trail was the only dry route across Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1987, a group of individuals came together to form the Florida Cracker Trail Association to recreate a part of Florida's past that has become a traditional event. The Annual Cross-State Ride is a re-enactment of the return trip from Bradenton to Fort Pierce. It commemorates the dedication of the Florida Cracker Trail and honors the Cracker Cowmen and their history; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2018 Cross-State Ride will be held February 17 through February 24.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Manatee County, Florida, that February 17-24, 2018, shall be known, designated, and set aside as

### **FLORIDA CRACKER TRAIL WEEK**

in Manatee County, Florida.

**ADOPTED** with a quorum present and voting this 13<sup>th</sup> day of February 2018.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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*Priscilla Trace, Chairman*

**ATTEST:** *Angelina Colonnese*  
*Clerk of the Circuit Court*

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