

## S29Day Paddles– Ocala National Forest - Alexander Springs Rec Area

### Spring Creek Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** **Alexander Springs** is a first-magnitude spring that feeds Spring Creek, The paddling trail runs from the Alexander Springs Recreation Area to the FR552 Landing, a distance of about 6.5 miles. Unlike nearby Juniper Springs, Alexander Springs immediately opens up into a wide, slow-flowing run. There is no regular shuttle service between landings, so for most visitors this is an out and back paddle, unless you shuttle on your own. Canoe and kayak rentals are available. A few older (grandfathered in) houses on the south side of the run, the only ones seen along the trail, mark roughly the halfway point between the Alexander Springs and FR552 takeout. The run is usually open and is an easy trip. The first 5 miles is a broad, slow-moving stream, with virtually no shade. Some sections of thick vegetation can be a workout. The central section is a more narrow, winding stream with some shade.

**Skill Level:** Novice

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 6.5 Miles/3 Hours

**Launch Site:** Ocala National Forest - Alexander Springs Rec Area Paddle Launch

**Takeout:** Ocala National Forest - Alexander Springs Creek Bluff Landing Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations/ Safety Issues:** Paddling below FR 552 to the St. Johns River is for experienced paddlers only; the channel may be hard to follow, there are no take-outs, and once on the St. Johns, it's almost 7 miles to the nearest marina. This paddle requires shuttling vehicles. Park day use fee.

#### Skill Level Definitions

**Beginner:** New to paddling and may need tips and or instructions about paddling strokes, safety procedures, and entering/exiting kayaks. Comfortable on short trips of 1 to 3 miles on protected waters, when wind does not exceed 5 mph.

**Novice:** Paddlers acquainted with basic paddle strokes and can manage kayak handling independently in winds not exceeding 10 mph on protected waters. Comfortable on trips up to 6 miles.

**Intermediate:** Paddlers with experience in basic strokes and some experience on different venues, including some open water. Comfortable on trip distances of 6 to 10 miles, winds not exceeding 15 mph.

**Advanced:** Seasoned paddlers who possess skills and experience to paddle all venues and conditions. Experienced in self-rescues. Should be comfortable paddling more than 10 miles in a day.

**NOTE:** Great care has been taken to ensure this guides accuracy, but weather, tides, and water conditions can change rapidly and create hazardous conditions. These maps are for visual reference only, please consult NOAA Charts for navigation. Paddlers should have all proper safety equipment and check conditions before departure. All paddlers should always wear PFDs while on the water, and leave a float plan. There are inherent dangers in any paddle sport. There are special hazards along the Florida coast due to shifting tides, changing wind and weather, shallow waters, and treacherous bottoms with soft mud, rocks, and oyster bars. It is up to each paddler to be aware of these dangers, to accept and be prepared for the risks involved, and to be certain they have the skills to safely paddle in these conditions.