

S28 Day Paddles - Lakes

Lochloosa Lake Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This paddle is along a moss draped Cypress lined natural lake 13 miles southeast of Gainesville. It's comprised of the 354 acre Little Lochloosa Lake in the southwest corner and the main 5,700 acre lake. Except for a 2 mile stretch along the east shore, it is undeveloped, and involved in a lake restoration project. The surrounding watershed supports abundant populations of fish, native animals and the largest number of bald eagles in north central Florida, plus hardwood swamps, sawgrass marshes and wet prairies. It is also a popular fishing lake and is a State Designated Outstanding Waterway. Most of the lake is surrounded by the Lochloosa Wildlife Conservation Area. The area was acquired by the St. Johns River Water Management District and is managed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Approximate Time: 10.5 Miles/5 Hours

Launch Site: Lochloosa Lake Park Ramp off Hwy 301

Special Considerations: There aren't many places to get out and stretch your legs on this paddle.

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.