

## S29 Day Paddles - Harris Chain Of Lakes

### Haines Creek Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This paddle takes you from Lake Eustis to Lake Griffin by way of Haines Creek. Haines Creek is deep and totally navigable over its entire length. A manned lock, with a 3' drop, is located half way through Haines Creek which is open during daylight hours. The lock master has been known to take a lunch break around noon, so plan your trip accordingly. On the north side of the creek after the lock, is the Emeralda Marsh, a series of impoundments and lakes that provide a wintering home for migratory waterfowl and plenty of pond birds. Haines Creek is the most interesting part of this paddle and it is just under 6 miles long between the two lakes. Partitions of Haines Creek on the Eustis side of the lock are channelized, but the original creek's oxbows remain. The main channel averages 5-8 feet deep, and grass, holes, drop-offs, a spillway, and numerous canals offer various habitats for fishing. The clarity of the water in Haines Creek is generally good, especially in the residential canals, which at times, are very clean.

**Skill Level:** Advanced

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 13.5 Miles/6 Hours

**Launch Site:** Lake Eustis Public Ramp

**Takeout Site:** Lake Griffin Marina Ramp

**Special Considerations:** This paddle requires shuttling, and passage through the Haines Creek Lock. Ramp fee at the Lake Griffin Marina.

#### 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.