

S32 Day Paddles - Alligator Chain of Lakes

Alligator Chain of Lakes Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This paddle consists of passage into the 6 connected lakes of the Alligator Chain of Lakes all of which are connected by Central & South Florida Canals, authorized by Congress in 1948. The US Army Corps of Engineers monitors and controls the water quality in the entire Alligator Chain. The Central & South Florida Project is a series of levees, canals, and water control structures authorized by Congress in 1948. The C & S F Project provides flood control, water for municipal, industrial and agricultural needs, and protects fish and wildlife. From north to south, the chain includes Trout Lake (273 acres), Coon Lake (148 acres), Lake Center, Lake Lizzie (792 acres), Alligator Lake (3,397 acres), and Brick Lake. Lake Lizzie Nature Preserve and Conservation Area, at the south end of Lake Lizzie, is home to several threatened and endangered species, including the red-cockaded woodpecker, Florida scrub jay, and woodstork. It's a great place for birdwatching. Alligators, otters, eagles, osprey, limpkins and sandhill cranes, may also be seen throughout the chain, along with migratory waterfowl in the winter months.

Skill Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 10.7 Miles/4.5 Hours

Launch Site: Trout Lake Public Ramp

Takeout Site: CR 534/Brick Lake Canal Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: The canals connecting these lakes can get very busy with power boats and jet skis, especially in summer and on weekends. The larger lakes can get quite rough on windy days. This paddle requires shuttling.

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.