

Coastal, Rivers and Blueways Trails

Lower Chipola River Trail - Leg 4

Scott's Ferry to Dead Lakes Rec Area Ramp Information Sheet

Description: Launch from Scotts Ferry and head downstream. This is possibly one of the most beautiful stretches of river in north Florida, and a photographers treasure. Paddle through the swampy cypress filled river until it starts to open into the Dead Lakes. You will notice more and more side routes as you head south. Through the Dead Lakes the channel generally runs along the right bank, however, for those more adventurous, try the center or even the left side of the Dead Lakes as you head south through the majestic cypress trees and the eerie stumps left from cutting years ago. Most all routes clearly interconnect. Make sure you work your way to the right bank before you get to the West Arm Creek leading to the takeout at Dead Lakes Rec Area ramp on your right.

Skill Level: Intermediate, due to distance and navigation difficulty.

Distance/Time: 17 Miles/Approximately 6.5 Hours

Launch Site: Scotts Ferry

Campsite: Dead Lakes Recreation Area

Special Considerations: Difficult navigation, GPS highly recommended. Occasional stumps just below water surface in Dead Lakes. Reservations recommended at Dead Lakes. Camping 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.