

# BOATING SAFETY

Lake County is not only blessed with great natural resources, but a responsive Sheriff's Office Marine Unit. The unit routinely patrols the lakes, rivers and other bodies of water located within Lake County. These deputies conduct boating safety inspections, enforce boating laws and respond to routine and emergency calls occurring on the water. The Marine Unit offers the following general boating safety tips to help make every boating excursion a safe and fun one.

- 1. Alcohol and boating don't mix** – Alcohol impairs a boater's judgment, balance and coordination. More than 50 percent of drownings result from boating incidents involving alcohol.
- 2. Look for the label** – Use Coast Guard-approved life jackets when boating and fishing.
- 3. Prepare for fire safety** – All motorboats less than 26 feet in length must carry at least one B-I, hand portable, readily accessible, Coast Guard-approved fire extinguisher.
- 4. Bring noisemakers** – Boats less than 40 feet in length are required to carry a sound producing device.
- 5. Develop a float plan** – Anytime you go out in a boat, give a responsible person details about where you are going, how long you will be gone and what your boat looks like. This is important because if the boat is delayed because of an emergency, becomes lost, or encounters other problems, you want help to be able to reach you.
- 6. Watch the weather** – Know local weather conditions and prepare for electrical storms. Stop boating as soon as you see or hear a storm.

- 7. Keep the ship in tiptop shape** – Make sure the boat is in top operating condition and there are no tripping hazards. The boat should be free of fire hazards and have clean bilges.
- 8. Maintain a safe speed** – Develop a habit of boating slowly within 150 feet from shore. Remember to obey restricted zones such as "slow speed minimum wake" and "idle speed no wake." In Lake County, all public access man-made waterways that are connected to lakes and rivers are designated "idle speed no wake" unless otherwise posted.
- 9. Ride carefully** – Do not ride on the bow, stern, seat back or sides of the boat when in motion.
- 10. Anchor with caution** – Refrain from anchoring a boat in any heavily traveled area that would interfere with or create a navigation hazard for other boaters.

# SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Besides meeting the legal requirements, prudent boaters should carry additional safety equipment. The following additional items of equipment are suggested depending on the size, location and use of a boat.

- VHF radio
- Anchor
- Heaving line
- Fenders
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Mirror
- Searchlight
- Sunscreen lotion
- Tool kit
- Ring buoy
- Spare fuel
- Spare anchor
- Chart and compass
- Boat hook
- Spare propeller
- Mooring line
- Food and water
- Binoculars
- Spare batteries
- Sunglasses
- Marine hardware
- Extra clothing
- Spare parts
- AM/FM radio
- Pump or bailer
- Paddles
- Whistle or horn
- Visual distress signal

# PADDLING SAFETY TIPS

1. Avoid canoeing or kayaking alone, or at night.
2. Prepare a "float plan." Leave a paddling route and return time with a relative or friend.
3. When in a group, assign a lead and sweep boats. Preferably, both boats should be manned by experienced paddlers with no one in the group passing the lead boat or falling behind the sweep.
4. Never paddle farther from shore than you are prepared to swim.
5. Make mental notes as you pass trail markers – knowing the location of the closest marker will help emergency personnel should you need assistance.
6. Watch for motorboats. Stay to the right and turn your bow into the wake.
7. Secure your car and take keys with you. Remember to bring a cell phone to call emergency personnel at 9-1-1.
8. State Law requires all persons in vessels including canoes and kayaks to have a wearable personal flotation device (PFD) for every person on board. And a horn/whistle on the vessel.
9. Do not approach or harass alligators, as they can be dangerous. It is illegal to feed wildlife. Blueway trails are shared with alligators, nesting birds and other wildlife. Please observe, but do not disturb.

# LAKE COUNTY BLUEWAYS PALATLAKAHA RUN

The Palatlakaha Run is one of eight featured waterway trails in the Lake County Blueways Program. A blueways trail is similar to a hiking trail with an abundance of scenery and wildlife.

The estimated 130 total miles within the eight blueways trails are located in four distinct areas of Lake County: St. Johns River, Golden Triangle, Palatlakaha Basin and Oklawaha Basin. The trails do not impede other uses of the waterways, but simply promote these waterways for canoe and kayak users. For more information about Lake County's Blueways, log on to [www.lakecountyfl.gov](http://www.lakecountyfl.gov), keyword: blueways.

The longest trail in the Lake County Blueways Program, the Palatlakaha Run traverses seven bodies of water: Lake Minneola, Lake Minnehaha, Lake Louisa, Lake Susan, Lake Palatlakaha, Lake Hiawatha and the Palatlakaha River. These lakes help form the 17-lake Clermont Chain.

Highlights of the Palatlakaha Run include two protected areas in Lake Louisa State Park and Crooked River Preserve. Other entry points include Palatlakaha Park, located north of Lake Louisa, and the Clermont Boat Ramp, located on Lake Minneola.



FREE WATERWAYS MAP



**Lake County WATER AUTHORITY**  
27351 State Road 19,  
Tavares, FL 32778  
Phone: 352-324-6141  
Fax: 352-324-6364  
[www.lcwa.org](http://www.lcwa.org)



**LAKE COUNTY FLORIDA**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM DEPARTMENT  
315 W. Main St.  
P.O. Box 7800  
Tavares, FL 32778  
Phone: 352-742-3918  
[www.VisitLakeFL.com](http://www.VisitLakeFL.com)



**Lake County wateratlas**

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLERMONT CHAIN OF LAKES

Winding through the rolling hills of South Lake County is the 17-lake Clermont Chain of Lakes. The tannic water, abundant vegetation and man-made structures provide ample cover to grow trophy size bass.

Largemouth bass are generally found in the shoreline grasses and at the mouths of creeks connecting the lakes. Live shiners drifting in these areas should produce some good action. Artificial baits fished along the shoreline and at the creek mouth also work well. In addition, anglers will also find catfish and speckled perch to be quite plentiful.

For the sports enthusiast, the Clermont Chain of Lakes is home to bass, crappie, catfish and bluegill. Trophy bass are possible on every cast in the Clermont Chain of Lakes. For more information on planning your next fishing trip, visit [www.lakebigbass.com](http://www.lakebigbass.com).

## CLERMONT CHAIN OF LAKES STATISTICS

Number of lakes	17
Total acreage	8,692
Boat ramps	2

Lake Minneola	1,888 acres
Lake Minnehaha	2,411 acres
Lake Winona	79 acres
Lake Louisa	3,573 acres
Lake Palatlakaha	102 acres
Lake Hiawatha	49 acres
Wilson Lake	41 acres
Lake Susan	81 acres
Crescent Lake	122 acres
Cook Lake	21 acres
Cherry Lake	401 acres
Lake Lucy	365 acres
Lake Emma	170 acres
Stewart Lake	65 acres
Lake Willamee	3 acres
Hattie Lake	8 acres
Hunt Lake	49 acres

## POINTS OF INTEREST

### 1 Arnold Brothers Boat Ramp

Reopened in July 2007, this once simple boat-ramp facility received a major facelift. Construction at the site included repairing the boat ramp facility and adding a 200-foot boardwalk, a pavilion with picnic tables, a new parking lot and increased landscaping.

Lake County Parks & Trails Division manages the .15-acre recreational facility, which provides the northern most access to the Clermont Chain of Lakes. Located in the City of Groveland, the Arnold Brothers Boat Ramp provides boaters direct access to the Palatlakaha River. For more information, call 352-742-0992.

### 2 Crooked River Preserve

The 64-acre natural area protects an undisturbed section of waterfront on Lake Louisa, as well as frontage along the Palatlakaha River (also known as the "Crooked River"). The preserve is managed by the Lake County Water Authority to protect the site's natural resources and to provide the public with passive recreational opportunities.

A parking area, restroom and trailhead located off Lake Louisa Road allows for passive recreation and exploration of the sandhill plant community and wetlands. Popular activities at the preserve include fishing, hiking, picnicking and paddling. For more information, call 352-324-6141.

### 3 Lake Louisa State Park

Perched atop a ridge, the 4,500-acre Lake Louisa State Park features rolling hills and six lakes. Anglers can fish in four of the park's six lakes, but gasoline-powered boats are not allowed. From the park's fishing pier or on a small boat, largemouth bass and specks are popular catches for anglers.

The park features 20 cabins and a 60-site RV camp. Popular activities at the park include fishing, canoeing, bird watching, wildlife viewing and hiking. The 25 miles of park trails accommodate hikers and horseback riders. For more information, call 352-394-3969.

### 4 Palatlakaha River Park

This 23-acre park is set alongside the beautiful Palatlakaha River at 12325 Hull Road. Take a leisurely stroll down this outstanding Florida river or access the Clermont Chain of Lakes through this park's single paved boat ramp with a courtesy dock. The park features a fishing pier and a nature trail with interpretive signs describing the local habitat. Other amenities of the park include a pavilion, grills, picnic tables and a large playground. For more information, call 352-742-0992.

### 5 Waterfront Park

This City of Clermont park is conveniently located along Lake Minneola, nestled between East Avenue and Eighth Street. Passing through the park is the 5.5-mile Lake Minneola Scenic Trail, which connects to an additional 26 miles of trails. Waterfront Park also features restroom facilities, picnic areas, playground, beachfront swim area and fishing piers.



In addition to its proximity to downtown restaurants and shops, the park is host to several major happenings each year, including Pig on the Pond in March and the Great Floridian Triathlon in October. For more information, call 352-394-4081.



V.2 2/18

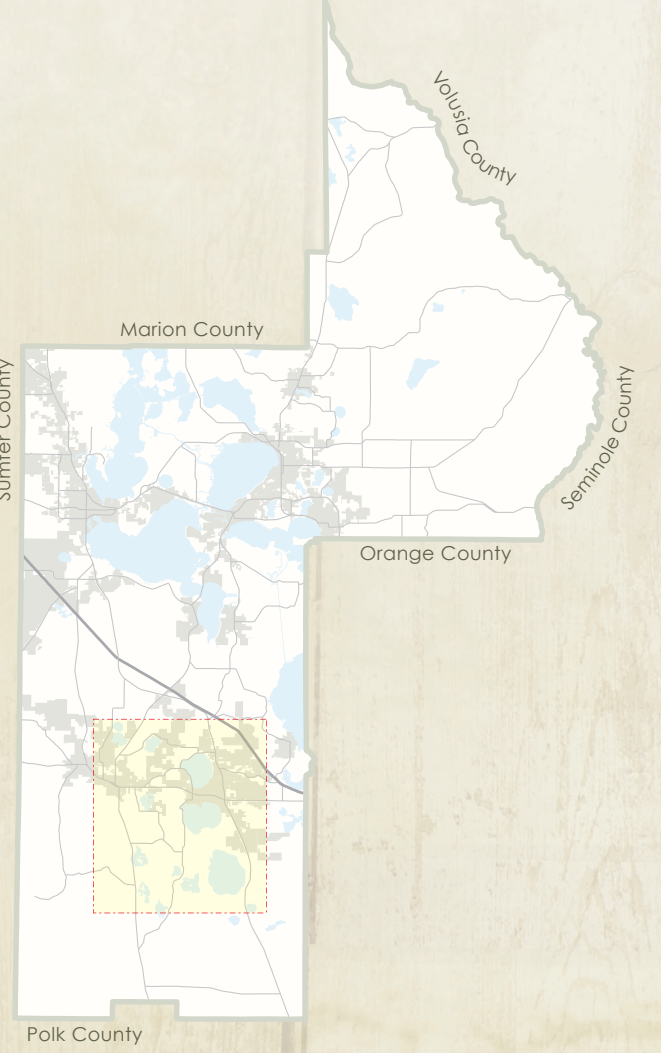
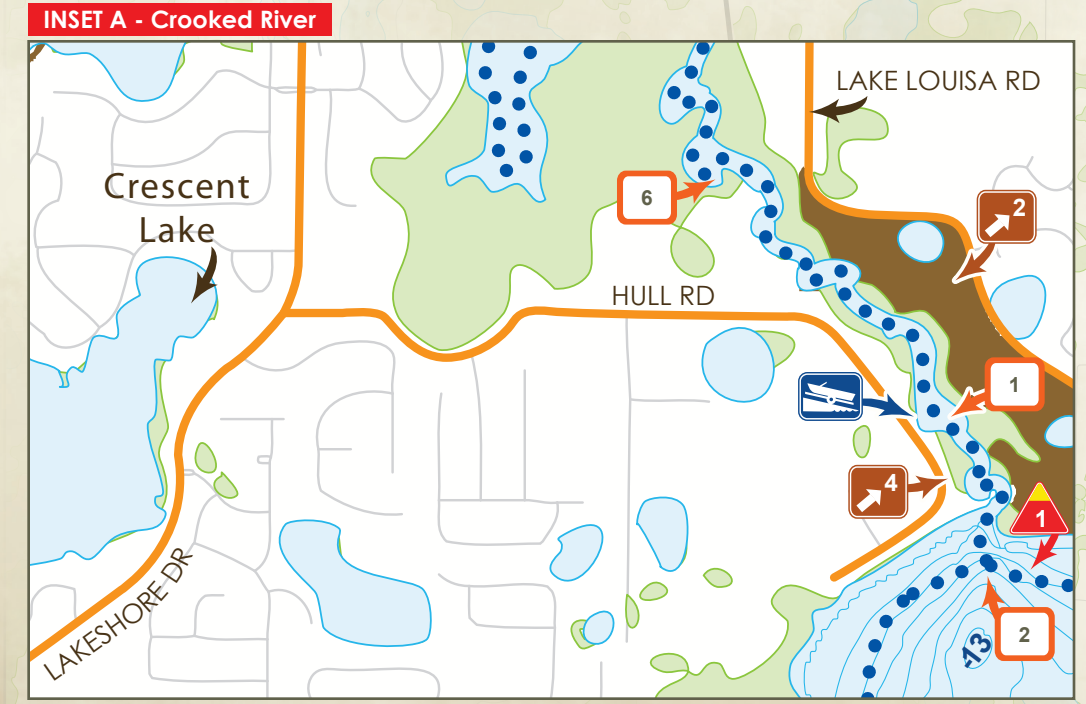
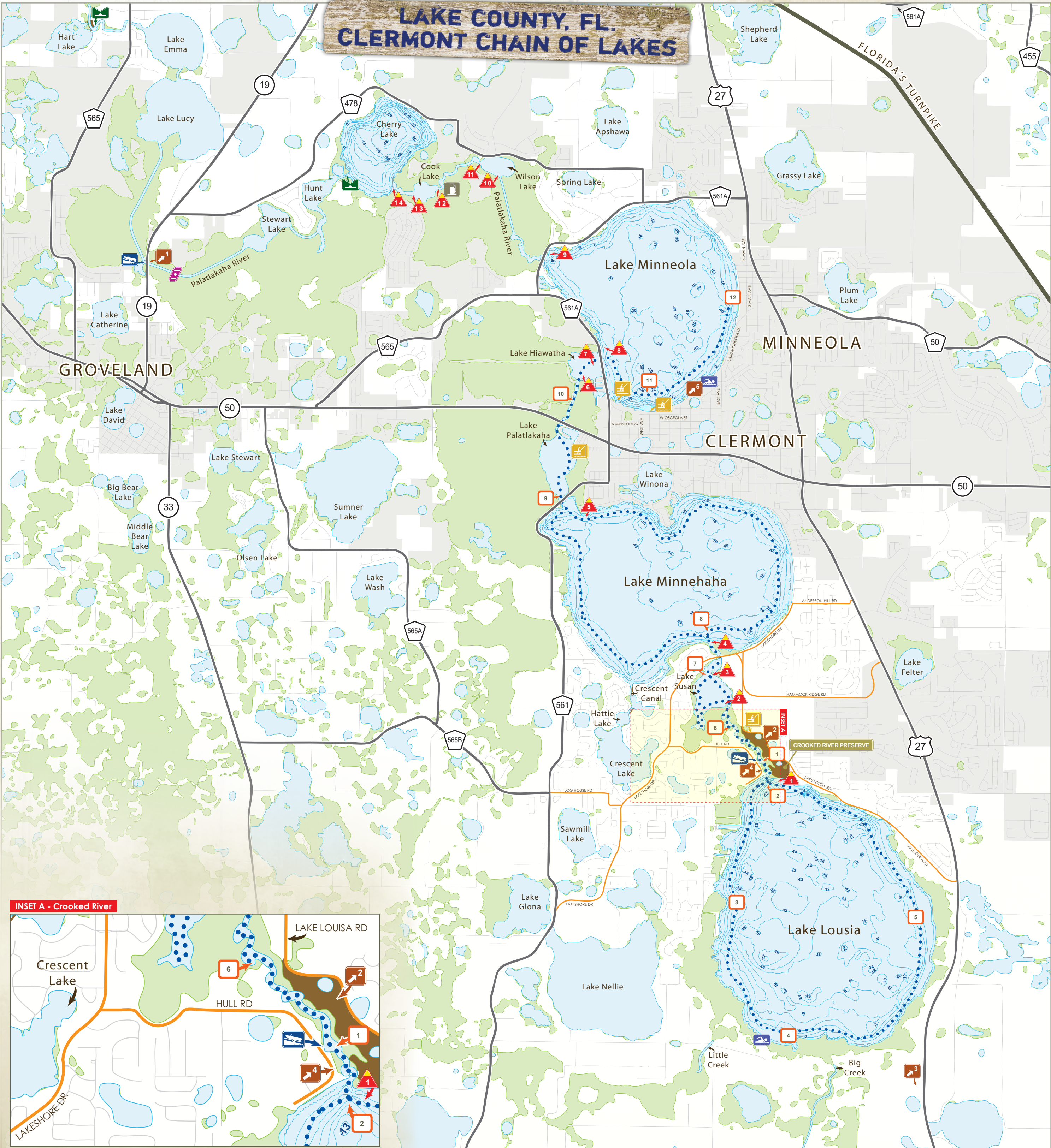
# DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

- 1 Lake Louisa – Crooked River**  
Lake Louisa State Park . . . . . 180°  
Lake Louisa to Lake Susan . . . . . 1.4 mi. @ 330°
- 2 Lake Susan – Crooked River**  
Lake Minnehaha . . . . . 347°  
Lake Susan to Lake Louisa . . . . . 1.4 mi. @ 220°
- 3 Lake Susan – Palatka River**  
Lake Minnehaha . . . . . 15°  
Lake Louisa . . . . . 150°
- 4 Lake Minnehaha – Palatka River**  
Lake Palatka . . . . . 310°  
Crescent Lake . . . . . 241°  
Lake Winona . . . . . 330°  
Lake Minneola . . . . . 310°  
Lake Minnehaha to Lake Susan . . . . . 0.2 mi. @ 14°
- 5 Lake Minnehaha – Lake Palatka**  
Lake Susan . . . . . 132°  
Lake Winona . . . . . 90°  
Crescent Lake . . . . . 160°  
Lake Minneola . . . . . 340°  
Lake Palatka . . . . . 340°
- 6 Lake Hiawatha – Palatka River**  
Lake Minneola . . . . . 25°  
Lake Hiawatha to Lake Palatka . . . . . 0.7 mi. @ 210°
- 7 Lake Hiawatha – Lake Minneola**  
Lake Minneola . . . . . 60°
- 8 Lake Minneola – Lake Hiawatha**  
Lake Hiawatha . . . . . 140°  
Palatka River . . . . . 320°
- 9 Lake Minneola – Palatka River**  
Lake Hiawatha . . . . . 140°  
Lake Minneola via Palatka River . . . . . 140°  
Lake Minneola to Wilson Lake . . . . . 1.3 mi. @ 320°
- 10 Palatka River – Wilson Lake**  
Palatka River . . . . . 123°  
Wilson Lake to Lake Minnehaha . . . . . 1.3 mi. @ 165°
- 11 Wilson Lake - Palatka River**  
Palatka River . . . . . 123°  
Wilson Lake to Crescent Lake . . . . . 0.7 mi. @ 310°
- 12 Cook Lake - Palatka River**  
Palatka River . . . . . 258°  
Cook Lake to Wilson Lake . . . . . 0.7 mi. @ 040°
- 13 Palatka River – Cook Lake**  
Palatka River . . . . . 76°  
Cook Lake to Cherry Lake . . . . . 0.2 mi. @ 270°
- 14 Cherry Lake**  
Cherry Lake to Cook Lake . . . . . 0.2 mi. @ 130°

# NAVIGATING THE LAKE COUNTY BLUEWAYS

The map denotes a suggested route for canoes and kayaks as well as GPS-coordinates along the trail. The trail is marked with line of sight navigation markers. Markers are placed at every directional change in the trail. Note that the trail crosses busy boating channels used by recreational and commercial powerboats – please paddle safely.

PALATKAHA RUN	
1 N 28.504444; W 81.749167	7 N 28.517500; W 81.757778
2 N 28.501944; W 81.747500	8 N 28.522500; W 81.758056
3 N 28.482500; W 81.754444	9 N 28.543611; W 81.783611
4 N 28.462778; W 81.748333	10 N 28.562778; W 81.780833
5 N 28.475000; W 81.718611	11 N 28.558889; W 81.772500
6 N 28.512778; W 81.754444	12 N 28.581111; W 81.786667



### LEGEND

- Low Bridge (Difficult Passage)
- Directional Signs (Informational)
- Palatka Run
- Preferred Boat Ramp Route
- Dam (No Passage)
- Fishing Pier
- Swimming Beach
- Boat Ramps w/No Fee
- Gas
- Water
- Wetlands
- Public Land
- Points Of Interest
- County Roads
- State Roads
- U.S. Highways

