

# Holmes Creek Paddling Trail



## Holmes Creek Trip Planning

**Counties:** Washington

**Nearest towns:** Vernon

**Trip length:** 9 miles

**Mileage:** Mile 0--Vernon Wayside Park  
Mile 5--Brunson Landing  
Mile 5.9--Hightower Springs Landing  
Mile 16--Live Oak Landing.

**Difficulty:** Easy - moderate

**Skill level:** Beginner - intermediate

**\*\*The provided mileage data is approximate (rounded to the nearest 0.5 mi) and shouldn't be relied upon for navigation.**

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**(Access Point 1) Put-in:** Wayside park off SR 79 in Vernon

**Nearest town to put-in:** Vernon

**Miles from put-in: In town**

**Directions to put-in at Vernon:** From Vernon travel north on SR 79 to bridge and small park on the east side of the road

**(Access Point 2) Access Point:** Brunson Landing

Directions: Take CR 278 west 3 miles from Vernon; take dirt road 1 mile south to landing.

**(Access Point 3) Access Point:** Hightower Springs Landing

Directions: Take SR 79 south from Vernon 4 miles to Hightower Springs Road. Go north 0.5 miles to landing.

**(Access Point 4) Take-out:** Live Oak Landing

**Directions to take-out:** From Vernon travel south on SR 79 to junction of SR 284, turn right (west) and drive about 1.3 miles to Hancock Rd. Turn right on Hancock Rd. and go 1 mile to Live Oak Landing Rd. Turn left on Live Oak Landing Road and drive about 0.5 miles to public boat ramp.

**Driving distance from put-in to take-out:** About 10 miles

**Topo maps (USGS quads):** Vernon, Millers Ferry

**Gazeteer page:** 30

**Outfitters within 20 miles of trail:** None

**Shuttle service offered:** None known

**USGS link (water level info):** <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/fl/nwis/uv?02366000>

**Break / Lunch areas:** Picnic facilities located at Fanning Branch, Hightower Springs, and other small boat launch areas

**Camping options:** Camping is allowed on Water Management District properties except at Cotton Landing, no permit is required on posted areas.

**Other lodging:** Hotels available nearby in Chipley and Bonifay

**Food/Beverage restrictions:** No alcohol in parks

**What to expect on the river:**

**Tidal influence:** None

**Pull-overs:** Possible after storm events

**Low branches:** Few

**Narrow water:** None

**Shallow water:** None

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**Strong currents:** Usual current 1-2 mph, stronger after rain

**Rocks:** Along the banks

**Houses:** Few residences

**Shoals:** None

**Tight turns:** None

**Open water:** None

**Springs:** Numerous springs empty into Holmes Creek, access this website:  
<http://tfn.net/Springs/index.html>

**Potable water sources:** None

**Wildlife:** Alligators, turtles, otter, numerous freshwater fish, and birds

**Natural communities:** Higher banks on upper and lower stretches of the creek have pine and mixed hardwood communities. The middle portion flattens out and contains black gum/cypress swamp, and river floodplain forest

**Portages:** Possible after storm events

**Swimming:** Crystal Springs and Beckton Springs are popular swimming areas located upstream from the put-in. Swimming is at your own risk along the rest of the creek

**Motorboats:** May be encountered near Vernon and other boat ramps along the creek but presence of motor boats is limited by presence of deadfall.

## **Expect at parking Vernon wayside park put-in:**

- **Parking fee:** None
- **Bathrooms:** Portable
- **Hours of operation (gates close):**
- **Camping:** None
- **Camping fees:** N/A
- **Crowds:** Possible on weekends and holidays
- **Boat Ramp:** Concrete
- **Potable water source:** No
- **Canoe/kayak launch:** None

**Notes:** The Northwest Florida Water Management District has installed a canoe/kayak launch at Cotton Landing, located about three miles north of the put-in at Vernon on CR 277. This adds another 3 miles to the trip and offers access to Beckton Springs and Cypress Springs which can be reached by paddling about 0.25 miles up the spring run from Holmes Creek. These two popular springs may also be accessed by paddling upstream from the Vernon put-in, adding another two miles to the trip.