

Day Paddles and Overnight Camping Trips - Panacea/ St Marks Area

Boggy Bayou Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This paddle is a counterclockwise trip through Boggy Bayou, Four Mile Creek, and down the St Marks River. The paddle is through typical salt marsh, shoreline consisting of black needlerush and some smooth cordgrass. There are quite a few large oyster bars in the river, but you can paddle over most of them at high tide. Once in the river, follow the shoreline down to Fog Island. Fog Island is a designated campsite for the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail, a National Recreation Trail. After passing Fog Island, it's best to head south to avoid most of the oyster bars. Once past the western tip of the Folly Oyster Bar, you can head back to the St Marks NWR Ramp. Bottle-nose dolphin, manatees and sea turtles are commonly seen in the bay, as well as eagles, osprey, oyster catchers, pelicans cormorants, and numerous shorebirds. Loons and migratory waterfowl can be seen during the winter months.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Time: 7 Miles/3 Hours

Launch Site: St Marks NWR - Lighthouse Pt. Ramp

Special Considerations: Recommended for medium to high tide only, due to shallow creek and numerous oyster bars. NWR entry fee. Open water paddling.

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.