

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

### Kitchen Cove Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This counter clockwise paddle takes you down Indian Pass and around three saltmarsh islands, Sprague, Big Pass and Little Pass. The islands mainly consist of black needlerush and some smooth cordgrass along the waters edge. There are several small cedar groves where you can get out and take a break. There are numerous oyster bars, especially on the southern side of the islands and across the river mouth. 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/Approximate Time:** 7.9 Miles/3.5 Hours

**Launch Site:** St Marks NWR - Lighthouse Point Ramp

**Special Considerations:** Recommended for medium to high tide only, due to shallow creek and numerous oyster bars. NWR entry fee. Open water paddling, not recommended on windy days. Powerboat traffic on the river, especially on weekends.

#### 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