

## S11 Day Paddles - Myakka River

## Venice Myakka River Park/Down's Dam Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This section of the river is mostly high-banked with a variety of hardwood and pine trees along the river. Alligators may be present along some of the lower banked sections of the river. Down's Dam is private property and the property owner's preference for no trespassing should be respected. Due to a couple of limestone shallows along the way, portages may be required and plastics boats are recommended at lower water levels.

**Skill Level:** Advanced

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 11.7 Miles/6 Hours

**Launch Site:** Venice Myakka River Park

**Special Considerations:** This paddle is best done at higher water levels (4 ft. and above at the USGS 02298830 Myakka River Gage). This paddle is for experienced paddlers only at higher water levels (approximately 5 ft. and above) due to strong currents; narrow, twisty turns; and deadfall which creates dangerous sweepers and strainers and requires excellent boat handling skills to avoid. Launch is from a floating dock. A kayak dolly is recommended to transport kayaks from the parking lot to the dock. Be alert for the entrance to the park upon returning down river. It can be easy to pass up.

### 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.