

## Turner River Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This is one of the most popular paddles in the area. It winds through many different ecosystems, starting out in a cypress swamp. It then travels through a sawgrass prairie before entering into a very long mangrove tunnel. The first part of the tunnel hosts an abundance of bromeliads and native orchids. The mangroves begin to predominate as the tunnel opens back up. There is a series of Indian mounds with nice trails on the river left just a half-mile before entering Chokoloskee Bay. Look for the small shell beach. If you plan to reach the bay at medium to high water you can paddle along the north side of the causeway before cutting through at the bridge to save having to paddle around Chokoloskee Island. You can also cut about four miles off of the trip by parking on the causeway about a quarter-mile from the Island instead of at the ranger station.

**Skill Level:** Advanced, due to distance.

**Distance/Time:** 12.7 Miles/5 Hours

**Launch Site:** Big Cypress National Preserve - Upper Turner River Paddle Launch off Hwy 41

**Take-out Site:** ENP Visitors Center Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** This paddle requires a shuttle, and is best paddled on a outgoing tide. Map, compass and GPS recommended.

### 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.