

S13NC Day Paddles - Northwest Coastal Area

Doctors Pass/Clam Pass Loop Information Sheet

Description: Paddle north through lower Clam Bay and out Clam Pass. You'll pass Markers 1 thru 12 and then go into the Gulf and 3 miles south to Doctors Pass. There is occasional boat traffic. Dolphins and manatees are common at and inside the pass. Go north through Doctors Bay and Venetian Bay. You'll pass under two bridges and have residences and seawalls on both sides. At the north end of Venetian Bay you'll see a concrete bench. That's the portage point across Seagate Drive to a canal on the other side. Be careful when launching. The flow through the culvert can be dangerous. This canal is a finger of Lower Clam Bay.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Time: 7.2 Miles/3.5 Hours

Launch Site: Clam Pass Park is a county-owned and maintained facility. The launch is at the far (west) end of the parking lot. You'll have to carry the craft about 100 ft to the water's edge. The launch is shell and gravel, flat and easy. Non-residents have to pay a fee to enter the parking lot. Motorized craft are not allowed.

Special Considerations: Open water paddling. This is an easy paddle if the wind is calm and the Gulf is smooth. You're paralleling the beach and in protected bays, so you won't get lost. The portage is short and the re-launch can be tricky depending on your craft.

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.