

S13TT Day Paddles and Overnight Trips - Ten Thousand Islands

East River Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Launch is into a 15 acre lake with a well hidden exit tunnel behind an island at the SE corner. The tunnel ends at a long (0.5 mi.) narrow lake that goes into another tighter tunnel (400 ft.) and then a half-acre lake. Make a left turn at the lake. Do not go straight or you'll end up in "Wrong Way Lake". You'll be in a 1500 ft long fairly tight tunnel (break your paddle in half) that goes to a 12 acre lake, which ends at another tight tunnel. Be prepared to break your paddle in half. In about 700 ft you'll get to a T. Take the left turn. Half a mile later you'll break into another lake (5 acre). The tunnel out of that lake is substantially wider and clearer and keeps widening until it gets to Fakahatchee Bay.

Skill Level: Advanced, due to distance and navigation issues

Distance/Time: 12.3 Miles/6 Hours

Launch Site: About 4.5 miles after Port of the Islands canal there's a roadside rest stop on the south side. Slow down. A quarter mile after that is the entrance driveway to the East River Launch. Say hello to the alligators.. There's a "Port-a-Potty" and a picnic table. You're not allowed to park where you unload. The launch area is small, flat, and easy. Parking is limited along the entrance road and runs out on to US41. The area is owned and maintained by the State.

Special Considerations: The spiders are harmless, but sometimes abundant. Bring a paddle that breaks in half. The tunnels are tight. Sometimes you can just push off both sides of the tunnel. GPS, map, and compass are highly recommended. You'll need to register at the park office before your trip (you will need to obtain the gate codes to access the boat launch). Contact the park for more information: (239) 695-4593

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.