

## S15MK Day Paddles - Middle Keys

## Long Key State Park Lagoon Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** This is a short paddle good for windy days or with kids. It is a very shallow lagoon surrounded by mangroves. You will see some bird life and a lot of cassiopea (upside down jellyfish) in the still waters. It is very short but can be extended by exiting the lagoon on the northeastern side where it becomes Zane Grey Creek. You will pass some homes and then enter Long Key Bight. You can do a one-way paddle around Long Key Point where there are some isolated beaches to explore (cannot be reached by car or hiking). You end at the state park picnic area.

**Skill Level:** Novice

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 2.3 Miles/2 Hours

**Launch Site:** Long Key SP Creek Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** This is a very shallow paddle best done at high tide. It is also best to time this for high tide so you can approach the beaches and get out. There is a fee for entering the park.

### 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.