

## S19 Day Paddles - Loxahatchee River Area

### Upper Loxahatchee River Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** The lush, twisting Loxahatchee River is worthy of its status as Florida's first National Wild and Scenic River. The coffee-colored stream meanders through centuries-old cypress trees and an abundance of palm trees that give the upper section a photogenic quality. Trapper Nelson's cabin is a point of interest near the trail's terminus in Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Nelson was an intriguing and colorful fur trapper who came to the area in the 1930s and lived along the banks of the Loxahatchee. This outstanding paddling trail is suitable for intermediate paddlers and has many surprises including two log dams. The dams have pullover structures for portaging or they may be paddled over in high water. Scout these structures before attempting to cross them; portage is likely, especially in low water. Short canoes or kayaks are recommended in the upper section (9-14 feet long) due to its narrow channel and sharp turns. Check with local outfitters about current river conditions and water levels

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 8.9 Miles/4 Hours

**Launch Site:** Riverbend Park Paddle Launch

**Takeout Site:** Jonathan Dickinson SP Ramp

**Special Considerations:** This paddle has a lot of narrow twists and turns, so it is recommended for shorter (15' and under) boats. Depending on water levels, occasional dead falls to portage over and/or limbo under may be required.

#### 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.