

S1ER Day Paddles - Escambia River

Becks Lake Paddle Information Sheet

Description: The Escambia River, particularly the lower middle section surrounding Becks Lake, actually a bayou off the Escambia River, is ecologically diverse and considered one of the best fishing places in the state. The diverse habitats in the watershed support nearly 140 rare, imperiled, or threatened plant and animal species, including the Gulf sturgeon and at least 68 rare, imperiled, or threatened plant species. A number of these species are endemic. Conservation and recreational lands make up a substantial part of the watershed of this section of the Escambia River and the fragility of the local ecosystem is constantly being monitored and maintained. The area known as Becks Lake, and the Escambia River, are ecological treasures, especially the part of the River that lies between the Old Monsanto docks and Molino. Other than a couple of small boat ramps, there is no development along the paddle. Return is back to Becks Lake Fish Camp.

Skill Level: Novice

Distance/Approximate Time: 4.4 Miles/2.5 Miles

Launch Site: Becks Lake Fish Camp Ramp

Special Considerations: Good map, compass and GPS are 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.