

S25 Day Paddles - ICW

North ICW Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This is a long paddle up the ICW for the more experienced paddler. Except for the commercial shipyard, boat ramps and bridge at the entrance to Sisters Creek, this is a great undeveloped area to paddle all the way to the Big Talbot Island State Park ramp. There are only two bridges to pass under on this leg - the Wonderwood Drive and the Heckscher Drive bridges.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time 12.9 Miles/6.5 Hours

Launch Site: Oak Harbor Ramp

Takeout Site: Big Talbot Island State Park - Sawpit Creek Ramp

Special Considerations: Between the boat traffic, the river and tidal currents, the water depth, and the large body of water, crossing the St Johns can be very dangerous. It should not be paddled on a windy day. If there are Naval vessels at the shipyard where Sisters Creek starts, remember to stay **at least 200 yards** away from them. Plan your crossing during the change of tides. This paddle requires shutting vehicles.

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.