

S32 Day Paddles - Lake Tohopekaliga

Makinson Island Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Believed to be the 1807 birthplace of Seminole Indian Chief Coacoochee, the 131-acre Makinson Island was purchased by the State of Florida in 1999. Actively managed by Osceola County, with support from cooperating public partners, the island is an area for passive public recreation. The island contains picnic tables pavilions, bathrooms, grills, and hiking trails. Camping is allowed by permit only. The landscape of Makinson Island is characterized by concentric bands of wetland to upland habitats: from the Lake Tohopekaliga littoral shelf the site contains freshwater marsh and shrub wetlands that slope landward into a mosaic of cypress swamp and cabbage palm hammock. These wetland areas surround upland communities of live oak hammocks, pastures and rangeland, fallow citrus groves, spoil areas, ditches and swales. Fauna that you may see on and around the island include, Eagles, Snail Kites, Great Blue Herons, Tri-color Herons, Sandhill Cranes, Wood Storks, Limpkins, and Otters and Gators, also, migratory waterfowl in the winter months.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Approximate Time: 9.8 Miles/4 Hours

Launch Site: Kissimmee Lakefront Park Ramp

Special Considerations: Please follow all park rules, and practice "Leave No Trace" principles.

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.