

S3 Day Paddles and Overnight Camp Trips - Econfina Creek

Upper Econfina Creek Primitive Overnight Camp Trip Information Sheet

Description: Econfina Creek is one of the most outstanding waterways in the state and is truly a wild experience, with few signs of human habitation and an abundance of wildlife and native vegetation. This swift flowing waterway is a nature-lovers delight and the upper section offers a challenging adventure for experienced paddlers.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: Total: 17.1 Miles; Day 1: 11.5 Miles; Day 2: 5.6 Miles

Launch Site: Scott Rd Bridge Paddle Launch

Campsite: Walsingham Landing

Takeout Site: Econfina Canoe Livery Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: Possible deadfall and snags, especially after storms or high winds in this upper portion of the creek. Check with a local outfitter for water levels and navigability. The upper 11 miles of the trail (between Scott's Bridge and Walsingham Park) is one of the most difficult stretches of river in the state and should be attempted by skilled paddlers only. It may take 8 -10 hours to paddle this stretch depending on degree of downed trees and water level. Please practice "Leave No Trace" principles. Reservations for camping at Walsingham Park are required from the Northwest Florida Water Management District. The river is easiest to paddle when the gauge at Scott Road Bridge reads from 2 to 4 feet. The gauge is not online. After heavy rains, the river is too dangerous to paddle due to strong currents and log jams. Avoid paddling the river when water levels reach nine feet. Not recommended to leave your vehicle overnight at isolated launch and takeout sites. Arrange a shuttle with a local outfitter or friend.

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.