

S3 Day Paddles - West Bay

Crooked Creek/Doyle Bayou Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This is a fairly long paddle down the creek from the launch site. Most of the land along the west bank belongs to RiverCamps on Crooked Creek, an expansive development with a few homes on large acreage tracts. You can't miss the RiverCamps on Crooked Creek landmark tower at the mouth of the creek.. This paddle is heavily influenced by the tides, and sandbars are common near the mouth on low tides. Most of the lower end of the Crooked Creek shoreline consists of Pines with black needlerush along the water's edge. Once out in the bay, the shoreline is mostly black needlerush all the way up Doyle Bayou. Ospreys and Pelicans are a common sight. If you're luck, you may see dolphins playing in the bay. The turnaround is just after the powerlines on Doyle Bayou.

Skill Level: Advanced, due to distance and open water on West Bay.

Distance/Approximate Time: 11.5 Miles/5 Hours

Launch Site: Crooked Creek Ramp

Special Considerations: This paddle is heavily influenced by the tides, and sandbars are common near the mouth on low tides. There is some open water paddling along West Bay, and it can get quite choppy on windy days, especially with winds out of the south.

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.