

S9 Day Paddles - Little Manatee River

Lower Little Manatee Paddle Information Sheet

Description: The Little Manatee River begins in a swampy area near the ghost town of Fort Lonesome and flows almost 40 miles before emptying into Tampa Bay. The river has been designated an Outstanding Florida Water and is part of the Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve. This long paddle starts 2.5 miles east of I-75 and continues to the mouth of the river. Once you pass I-75 you will begin to see more and more residential areas along the shoreline. Head out to the Gulf and north up the shoreline.

Skill Level: Intermediate

Distance/Approximate Time: 10.3 Miles/5 Hours

Launch Site: Camp Bayou Nature Preserve Paddle Launch

Takeout Site: Little Harbor Bahia Beach Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: This paddle requires shuttling vehicles. Best paddled on a outgoing tide. This section of the river has increased powerboat traffic. Beach takeout at Little Harbor, 50 yard portage from parking lot.

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.