

S26OP– Ocean Pond Day Paddle

Ocean Pond Paddle Information Sheet

Description: Ocean Pond rest in the smallest of Florida's three National Forests, Osceola National Forest. The forest is between Lake City and Jacksonville. Outdoor recreation includes boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, hiking, biking, hunting and picnicking. Wildlife viewing is also nice here. Ocean Pond is nearly 2 miles across and comprises 1760 acres of reed lined cypress shoreline. There are several ramps, launch sites, and campgrounds along the shoreline to take a break and stretch your legs.

Skill Level: Novice

Distance/Approximate Time: 6 Miles/3 Hours

Launch Site: Olustee Beach Ramp

Special Considerations: Due to the size of the lake, it can get rough on windy days.

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.