

S26SMRT - St Mary's River Trail

Leg 7 Information Sheet

Description: This is the final leg and another long paddle for the more experienced paddler. The paddle is through rural farmlands, but most of the region is along a wooded buffer on both sides of the river, which give you the feeling that you are in a wilderness area. There is a decreased frequency of sandbars and sandy areas along the banks to get out and stretch your legs and grab a snack or lunch, and a marked increase in tidal influence as the river gets closer to it's mouth.. There are no bridges, and only a few houses along this leg.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 14.2 Miles/7 Hours

Launch Site: Ralph E Simmons State Forest Primitive Campsite

Takeout Site: Kings Ferry Ramp

Special Considerations: Best paddled when the MacClenny Gage is between 3 and 7', and on an outgoing tide. Please 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.