A National Historic Landmark in 2016, the Ford Family estate was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, and was designated by Jens Jensen. The property was meticulously planned by famed landscape architect Albert Kahn in 1926 to resemble a cluster of English Village cottages. The grounds appear to be almost completely natural, but were found in the late 1960s to resemble a cluster of English Village cottages.

St. John’s Marsh

St. John’s Marsh is located north of the North Channel of the St. Clair River along Bouvier Bay. This rarely-visited destination is a plant and wildlife paradise adjacent to the St. Clair River. This area is a major stopover for migrating waterfowl, and is home to a number of rare plant and animal species. Sodium and chloride-rich groundwater once seeped from ancient brackish aquifers to create this type of marsh. The marsh is named for the Salt River, which drains into the St. Clair River.

Selected Historical and Natural Features

Historic Island

The Old South Channel Range Lights began operation in 1859. These historic beacons once guided ships through the largest freshwater delta in the world, the St. Clair River Delta. The surrounding marshes, channels and inlets offer a variety of day trips for adventurous paddlers, including the St. Clair Flats area, which is a designated Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

The Salt River is a slow, shallow, and swampy for most of its length, the Salt River’s greatest depth is approximately six feet. This system supports a variety of rare plant and animal species. Sodium and chloride-rich groundwater once seeped from ancient brackish aquifers to create this type of marsh. The marsh is named for the Salt River, which drains into the St. Clair River.

Paddlers who paddle in Lake St. Clair are responsible for their actions and must adhere to all laws and regulations while on the water. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has jurisdiction over navigation safety on Lake St. Clair. Michigan law requires that each vessel must always have a sound-producing device on board such as a horn, whistle, or siren. Such devices must produce an auditory signal that can be heard over the water. Expectation of such a sound at any point on the trail may be required to avoid losing items if capsizing occurs.

Safety Advisory

Lake St. Clair Metropark - Black Creek Marsh

The Kayak Store

DNR Fair Haven Launch

DNR Snooks Launch

Ruedisale Point Park

Harrison Twp. Waterfront Park

9 Mile Boat Launch

Detroit River Sports

South Channel Lights

For paddlers and canoeists over 16 feet in length, the Michigan Marine Act requires each person actually WEAR an appropriate PFD. It is strongly recommended that each person actually WEAR an appropriate PFD. Type IV personal flotation device (PFD) for each person on board. It is strongly recommended that each person actually WEAR an appropriate PFD. Type IV personal flotation device (PFD) for each person on board.

Lake St. Clair Coastal Water Trail

Paddling on Lake St. Clair is a high-quality recreational experience but requires some preparation and understanding of various hazards. High winds are not uncommon, and strong wind and wave conditions can cause large waves that can cause the kayaker to be thrown from the water and can cause capsizing.

SAFETY GEAR

Each vessel must always have a sound-producing device on board such as a horn, whistle, or siren. Such devices must produce an auditory signal that can be heard over the water. Expectation of such a sound at any point on the trail may be required to avoid losing items if capsizing occurs.

Private watercraft, rescue, and other vessels may use a Type I or a throwable life ring to rescue people within the immediate vicinity of the watercraft. Vessels are not required to carry Type I or II PFDs on board but Type I or II PFDs should be readily available. Examples of Type I or II PFDs include: (e.g., ocean life rings, throw pouches, etc.).

Do not paddle on Lake St. Clair after dark. If this is unavoidable, vessels are required that have highly visible lights and must have a whistle, siren, or horn that can be heard over the water. Expectation of such a sound at any point on the trail may be required to avoid losing items if capsizing occurs.

16 feet in length are required to be registered in Michigan. Privately-owned canoes, kayaks, paddleboards and rowboats greater than 16 feet in length are required to be registered in Michigan. Privately-owned canoes, kayaks, paddleboards and rowboats greater than 16 feet in length are required to be registered in Michigan. Privately-owned canoes, kayaks, paddleboards and rowboats greater than 16 feet in length are required to be registered in Michigan.
This publication is provided only as a general guide. It is a graphic rendition of what paddlers might experience on Lake St. Clair. Conditions on the lake are subject to constant change. Do not rely on this guide as a navigational tool or to identify all hazards. Remember that kayaking and canoeing have inherent risks and you are solely responsible for your own safety. All distances and times are approximate.

**Featured Paddle Trips**

**Calm water and minimal motorboat traffic make this area an easy paddle, even for beginners. The City of New Baltimore offers a soft shore launch site from Walter and Mary Burke Park.**

From a soft shore launch on the park’s south side, leisurely paddling can be experienced when heading east along the park’s popular beach area. A westerly voyage offers views of the 96-acre Point Rosa Marsh. Both trips are suitable for beginners and can be accomplished in about an hour. Kayak rentals are available!

The Black Creek Marsh is on the park’s north side, offering a labyrinth of paddling routes brimming with wildlife and premier bird watching. On land, paddlers can enjoy the park’s many walking trails, have a picnic, or visit the Nature Center. Park amenities include a par-3 golf course, a swimming pool, a splash pad, and a 1,600-foot boardwalk. Experienced paddlers can journey north from the park to the Clinton River Water Trail and return as part of a day trip, but be aware of heavy boat traffic and unpredictable conditions in the open water of Lake St. Clair.

Launch sites are limited along the waterfront from the City of St. Clair Shores to Belle Isle in Detroit. However, use the public 9 Mile Launch to access the Edsel & Eleanor Ford House and check out the visitor center, or schedule a tour of the historic home and gardens. Lake St. Clair’s south coast is open to a large expanse of open water and paddlers should be aware that conditions can change quickly. Strong currents are also present, particularly when approaching the Detroit River. Freighter traffic can be encountered in this area and is best seen from a distance. Extra caution should be taken near seawalls due to wave action against the walls that prohibits beaching your paddlecraft.

**Anchor Bay – North Coast**

Calm water and minimal motorboat traffic make this area an easy paddle, even for beginners. This City of New Baltimore area is ideal for the entire family, including a popular sandy public beach for sunning and swimming. Shopping and dining venues in New Baltimore’s quaint downtown district surround the park. Private residences and many other leisure activities are found near the park. Park amenities include a par-3 golf course, a swimming pool, a splash pad, and a 1,600-foot boardwalk. Experienced paddlers can extend their journey north from the park to the Clinton River Water Trail and return as part of a day trip, but be aware of heavy boat traffic and unpredictable conditions in the open water of Lake St. Clair.

**Lake St. Clair Metropark**

From a soft shore launch on the park’s south side, leisurely paddling can be experienced when heading east along the park’s popular beach area. A weekday voyage offers views of the 96-acre Point Rosa Marsh. Both trips are suitable for beginners and can be accomplished in about an hour. Kayak rentals are available!

The Black Creek Marsh is on the park’s north side, offering a labyrinth of paddling routes brimming with wildlife and premier bird watching. On land, paddlers can enjoy the park’s many walking trails, have a picnic, or visit the Nature Center. Park amenities include a par-3 golf course, a swimming pool, a splash pad, and a 1,600-foot boardwalk. Experienced paddlers can journey north from the park to the Clinton River Water Trail and return as part of a day trip, but be aware of heavy boat traffic and unpredictable conditions in the open water of Lake St. Clair.

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**South Coast**

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**Shipwreck Tours**

- **Simple Adventures**: 1-844-WE-KAYAK   |   248-320-2429   |   www.simpleadventures.net
- **Detroit River Sports**: 313-908-0484   |   paddle@detroitriversports.com   |   www.detroitriversports.com
- **Detroit Outpost**: 313-422-3618   |   detroitoutpost@gmail.com   |   www.detroitoutpost.com

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