

Little Oyster Creek - Fleets Island Water Trail



Legend

Little Oyster Creek Water Trail EXPERIENCE LEVEL

- Beginner
- Expert

Points of Interest

- Breakwater Shoreline Protection Structure
- Groin Shoreline Protection Structure
- Little Oyster Creek Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Little Oyster Creek Parking Lot
- Mosquito Island - Eroded, Not Present
- Westland Public Beach
- Windmill Point Marina

Aids to Navigation

- Red Daymark, Red Nun Buoy
- Green Daymark or Green Can Buoy



This project was funded by the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program at the Department of Environmental Quality through Grant #NA14NOS4190141 of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.



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The Little Oyster Creek Water Trail Fleets Island Loop is intended for expert paddlers only.

The Little Oyster Creek Water Trail has a sheltered section for beginners and novices to practice and fine tune their coastal paddling skills, while also having an expert paddler's loop that circumvents the entire Windmill Point peninsula and represents a more challenging and longer route (the expert loop is a little over 6 miles). The expert paddle trail is located in the open water of the Chesapeake Bay, so there is no shelter from the winds and waves generated on the open Bay, and should only be attempted by those with advanced paddling experience. Little Oyster Creek is located next to the Chesapeake Bay, therefore the salinity of the water is very close to that of the Chesapeake Bay. Little Oyster Creek has a very shallow mouth although it is relatively wide. This shallow depth prohibits most vessels of any size from entering or leaving the creek except at high tide. The limiting depth of Little Oyster Creek does not affect canoes or kayaks, however it does serve to limit the amount of power boat traffic. Less powerboat traffic provides a more natural setting for observing the terrestrial and aquatic inhabitants of Oyster Creek.

Interspersed throughout the shorelines of Little Oyster Creek and Windmill Point Creek are residential homes, some with traditional workboats at their docks like the one in the photo to the right. On Oyster Creek (north of the Windmill Point Rt. 695) bridge, there are few houses and mostly marsh and emergent vegetation. If you are interested in observing nature, Oyster Creek is the best place to go, but be careful of the low bridge. Waterfowl in this area varies according to the season, but expect to find blue herons, pelicans, ospreys, ducks and geese. Most water creatures are difficult to spot, except in very shallow water. Sea turtles, porpoises, dolphin are known to frequent the area in and around Windmill Point.



During the War of 1812, the British blockaded the Chesapeake Bay and sent raiding vessels up the rivers and creeks to plunder and destroy property. The lookout at Windmill Point (about a mile east) on Fleet's Island reported that on 23 April 1814, the enemy "landed near Windmill [Point] or North Point (about 2 miles northwest) and plundered a poor man & of a boat, everything he was worth." A detachment of the 92nd Regiment of Lancaster Militia posted in the vicinity fired across a creek nearby and drove the British back to their ship. This was the final raid of the War of 1812 in Lancaster County.

Fishing in the area of Windmill Point is some of the best fishing found in the Bay. In the early spring, speckled trout will bend the pole of eager anglers waiting for the more traditional species to migrate into the Bay. Mid Spring Rockfish and Croaker arrive and often are found in the warming shallows, eating minnows. As summer hits full tilt, toothy bluefish and spanish mackerel enter the waters around Windmill Point. Bluefish will hit any lure that is shiny as well as a few that aren't. A fast retrieve is needed for bluefish and mackerel to bite, however trolling is the preferred method. Smoked bluefish is a local favorite in the summer time. Some area restaurants will smoke customer caught bluefish for their patrons, with advance arrangements.

Access to Little Oyster Creek, Windmill Point Creek and Oyster Creek is located at the Windmill Point Canoe and Kayak Launch site, which is very near the end of Rt. 695, Windmill Point Road. Another attraction at the very end of Windmill Point is Westland Public Swimming Beach. Parking for the public beach is provided at the Windmill Point Canoe Kayak Launching site. Also located at the end of Windmill Point Road is a marina with a restaurant and a boat ramp which serves as an alternate put in/take out point for watercraft.

To reach the Windmill Point Canoe/Kayak Launch travel State Route 3 to the town of White Stone, Virginia. Take Route 695 East (Windmill Point Road) and follow almost to the end. You will know you are getting close to the end of the road when the speed limit is reduced. Once you cross a small bridge (crossing Windmill Point Creek), look to the right for the sign for the Windmill Point Canoe Kayak Launch site.

