

Trip Report, Welch Island, Lower Columbia, 2008

A morning paddle from Skamokawa Center, across the navigation channel, between Fitzpatrick and Welch Islands, south to Red Slough, back across the channel and up the back side of Price Island.

Started from Skamokawa, traveling directly across channel towards beach building, turned WNW with current. Stopped to take readings from range markers to determine location (NW tip Welch Is). Paddled channel south on west side of Welch Is until reached the dead-end slough above Red Slough. Took readings there off east range marker and Aldrich Pt to determine location (about 290 to range marker, 210 to Aldrich Pt); paddled into Red Slough, confirming location with dead-end inlet heading east.

Currents were against us as we entered the channel west of Welch Is., but were with us as we traveled Red Slough (strong east current entering west end of Red Slough). Stopped at east end of Red Slough, reviewed charts again, trying to identify the upstream end of Price Island. Difficult as it blends into backdrop trees. Chose a course to take us directly between buoys 35 & 36, using a clearcut on ridge as target. Current in main channel was flooding slightly; arrived near the upstream line of pilings, downstream of Steamboat Slough entrance.

Paddled up Steamboat Slough, passing beautiful deadfall, pilings with foliage hats, and being serenaded by an osprey pair. David investigated a what he said was an old barge overgrown with trees on the right bank - he said it looked too cut for a natural bank and when he paddled next to it, discovered several huge logs laid on top of each other as a barge, but with treed vegetation on top.

Wonderful pilings at northwest end of Steamboat Slough - great place to practice boat maneuvers and take pictures - beautiful contrast between kayaks and vegetation. Total distance: about 7 miles.



Gail and David through Red Slough



Greg at west end Red Slough



Edie in Pilings West end Steamboat Slough