Old Fort Bayou is a beautiful meandering waterway in Jackson County, Mississippi. Its origins (headwaters) begin in the longleaf pine savannas south of Vancleave. The bayou continues through many important natural areas including the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge, The Nature Conservancy’s Old Fort Bayou mitigation property, Land Trust’s Twelve Oaks Conservation Park and Mississippi’s Old Fort Bayou Coastal Preserve deepening and widening towards its mouth at Biloxi Bay in Ocean Springs.

A variety of habitats exist along Old Fort Bayou. The mouth of the bayou is considered an estuary, a place where the river meets the sea. This area hosts ecological communities of submerged aquatic vegetation such as widgeon grass or tape grass beds; its presence is vital in the developmental stages of many estuarine wildlife species such as native juvenile blue crabs, fish and other species that spend early developmental stages in shallow estuaries where they can hide from large predators. These grasses also help to stabilize sediments to prevent erosion.

This is typically a one-way trip and the direction may be reversed for convenience.

Fly fishing on the Old Ft. Bayou Blueway is a great experience for all ages. The bayou is like a neonatal unit for shrimp and many types of gulf fish. Fishing from a boat or kayak, being able to float up into the winding grass paths of the bayou’s inlets, is a beautiful experience that highlights the natural resources of the gulf.
Points of Interest

Gulf Hills
McElroy’s on the Bayou
Aunt Jenny’s
Hwy 609 (Washington Avenue)
Anthony’s
Mikey’s on the Bayou
Ocean Springs Cemetery
Twelve Oaks
Bristol Ave. Public Boat Launch
The Shed / Camp Journeys End
The Preserve Golf Course

AVOID PADDLING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL. ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET AND CARRY A WHISTLE OR OTHER SOUND PRODUCING DEVICE, PREFERABLY ATTACHED TO YOUR LIFE JACKET. PADDLERS SHOULD CHECK WATER LEVEL AND TIDES, WEATHER, AND WATERWAY CONDITIONS PRIOR TO EVERY TRIP. REMOVE WHAT YOU BRING, CLEAN UP MORE IF YOU CAN. AVOID TRESPASSING ON PRIVATE LANDS. PLEASE BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS AND ALWAYS RESPECT THE WILDLIFE. REPORT ANY PROBLEMS YOU ENCOUNTER TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES IF APPROPRIATE.