

Canoeing and kayaking in Innamincka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park

Canoeing and kayaking along the Cooper Creek and at Coongie Lake, one of the great wetland areas in Australia's arid interior, can be a relaxing and a rewarding experience. It also comes with risks that need to be carefully managed by those undertaking this activity in this remote area where emergency assistance is limited or can be delayed.

The waters of Cooper Creek are home to the Yandruwandha and Yawarrawarra people who welcome you to their country. In partnership with the Department for Environment and Water, they co-manage both Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park and Innamincka Regional Reserve.

While on Country, they ask that you respect their culture as significant sites and artefacts are all protected. In return, they hope you experience all this country has to offer, and that you have a safe and memorable visit.

Please take care and respect being on Country.

Be Smart, Be Prepared – Paddle Safe

The Cooper Creek and Coongie Lake can be suitable for canoeing and kayaking, but you are in a large area subject to floods, droughts and extreme weather events.

You will be navigating one of the world's largest unregulated and fresh water systems, with semi and semi-permanent waterholes.

When planning, be aware that;

- You will require an entry/camping permit – visit www.parks.sa.gov.au
- Canoeing and kayaking within Innamincka Regional Reserve is limited to Cullyamurra to Wills site, and from Kudriemitchie out onto Coongie Lake in Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park
- Camping is only in designated areas. Camping in non-designated areas can damage cultural sites and vegetation

Before entering the water;

- Ensure your vessel is suitable for this area and is in good condition
- Ensure that you are physically fit for paddling
- If you are on medication, please don't forget to have your usual dosage for your travel
- Approved lifejackets, Level 100 or higher, Level 50 or Level 50S must be worn at all times
- Ensure you have a satellite phone in a waterproof container as apart from at Innamincka, there is no mobile phone coverage
- Ensure you have an EPIRB or PLB in a waterproof container
- Ensure you have any other required safety equipment

- Wear sturdy shoes, long sleeved shirt, hat, insect repellent, sunscreen and use appropriate protective equipment
- Carry sufficient food and drinking water
- Carry a small first aid kit
- Paddle with a friend or family member – safety in numbers
- Advise a responsible member of your on-shore party of the following;
 - The name of the camp site/area from which you will start your journey, and record GPS coordinates if possible
 - Your travel route and final destination, with your estimated time of your travel and arrival
 - Action to be taken by your party if you are overdue at your destination – see emergency contact list below

Hazards

The waterways of this area have many moods. Hazards that need to be navigated include;

- Fast flowing waters
- Submerged snags, trees, barbed wire and rocks
- Dense lignum riverine growth on creek banks
- Channels that deviate from the main watercourse
- Exposure to sun, wind and rain
- Cold water if you fall in. Ensure you can get back to shore and get warm

Contacts in case of an emergency

If an emergency arises where you or someone becomes lost, please stay with your canoe or kayak, seek shade, relax, keep warm to prevent hypothermia and drink water to prevent dehydration. If possible, seek assistance from;

- Ranger Office at Innamincka Regional Reserve - 08 8675 9909 or UHF Channel 6
- The Innamincka Trading Post - 08 8675 9902
- Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) for medical assistance - 1800 733 772
- South Australian Police - 000

For more information

Contact Department for Environment and Water on;

P (08) 8207 7700

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www.parks.sa.gov.au