

Great Chazy River, NY – Plank Road / Jerusalem Road to Miner Lake

Introduction

The Great Chazy river runs in northern New York state, very close from the border with Quebec, Canada. It is one of the best paddling destinations from Montreal for such a short distance. The river has two whitewater sections: one above Miner Lake, which is described here, and another one below. The section above Miner Lake is very interesting, scenic, and varied. It is not possible to combine the two sections directly, because Miner lake stands on Mohawk territory, where crossing is not an option, no matter how kind, persuasive, aggressive, or armed one could be. When we ran the river without knowing this beforehand, armed Mohawk police stopped us on Miner lake, and made us walk back up the river.

Water levels

The best reference level for the Great Chazy is the following hydrographical station of the USGS:

04271500 GREAT CHAZY RIVER AT PERRY MILLS NY

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ny/nwis/uv?04271500>

At a level of 4.55 ft, or 1090 cfs, we found that the section downstream of Jerusalem Road had enough water, and that a bit lower or higher would have been a great level too. According to the historical USGS data, this level is typically reached during the first half of April, and sometimes during the Fall after significant rain. In the description from the AWA website, <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/3438>, they recommend a minimum level of 5 ft.

We ran the section upstream of Jerusalem Road at a level of 7.0 ft, or 3000 cfs, and it was perfect. At a level under 5.0 ft, it would probably be bony.

Difficulty

The section described here is 14 km long. The rapids are typically continuous, mostly of class 2, with lots of surprises along the way, ranging from class 2 ledges to class 4-5 ledges. In its first kilometers, the river is narrow, often splits into multiple branches, limited sight, with strainers, and a high level of possibility to find strainers that go across the whole width of the river. Considering all this, this river is advised to paddlers being comfortable in rivers with a general difficulty of class 3.

Access and Shuttle

See the road map provided.

- On Plank Road, about 600m south of Alder Bend Road.
- On Jerusalem Road, about 300m east of Alder Bend Road.
- At T-intersection between Alder Bend Road and Rabideau Road.
- At the next bridge, near the east end of Rabideau Road. Be sure not to proceed further, as this is private territory owned by the Mohawk, and they will not let you cross.

Other local runs

- The section of the Great Chazy below Miner Lake is known to be a bit more difficult than the one described herein. See <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/1316>
- King Brook is a tributary of the Great Chazy river that crosses Jerusalem Road about 800m east of the Great Chazy itself. King Brook parallels the Great Chazy for the first 2 km, before they merge. This could be an alternate starting point (to explore, not tried).
- Great Chazy, North Branch. Class 3, with stretches of class 4. See map on www.cartespleinair.org

Credits

Survey

- Charles Leduc, Olivier Tardif, Yves Tarrab
October 30, 2005
4.55 ft/1090 cfs
- Charles Leduc, Jean-Francois Lépine, Olivier Tardif
May 20, 2006
7.00 ft/ 3000 cfs

Base Map

- USGS 1:24000 Ellenburg Mountain
NYS DOT Quadrangle code: B48
USGS Quadrangle code: o44073g7
County: Clinton
<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/quads/drq24/b48.htm>
- USGS 1:24000 Jericho
NYS DOT Quadrangle code: B49
USGS Quadrangle code: o44073g6
County: Clinton
<http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/quads/drq24/b49.htm>

Map work/Text

Charles Leduc, November 2006.

Contributors

Olivier Tardif – revision and corrections

Distribution

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Disclaimer

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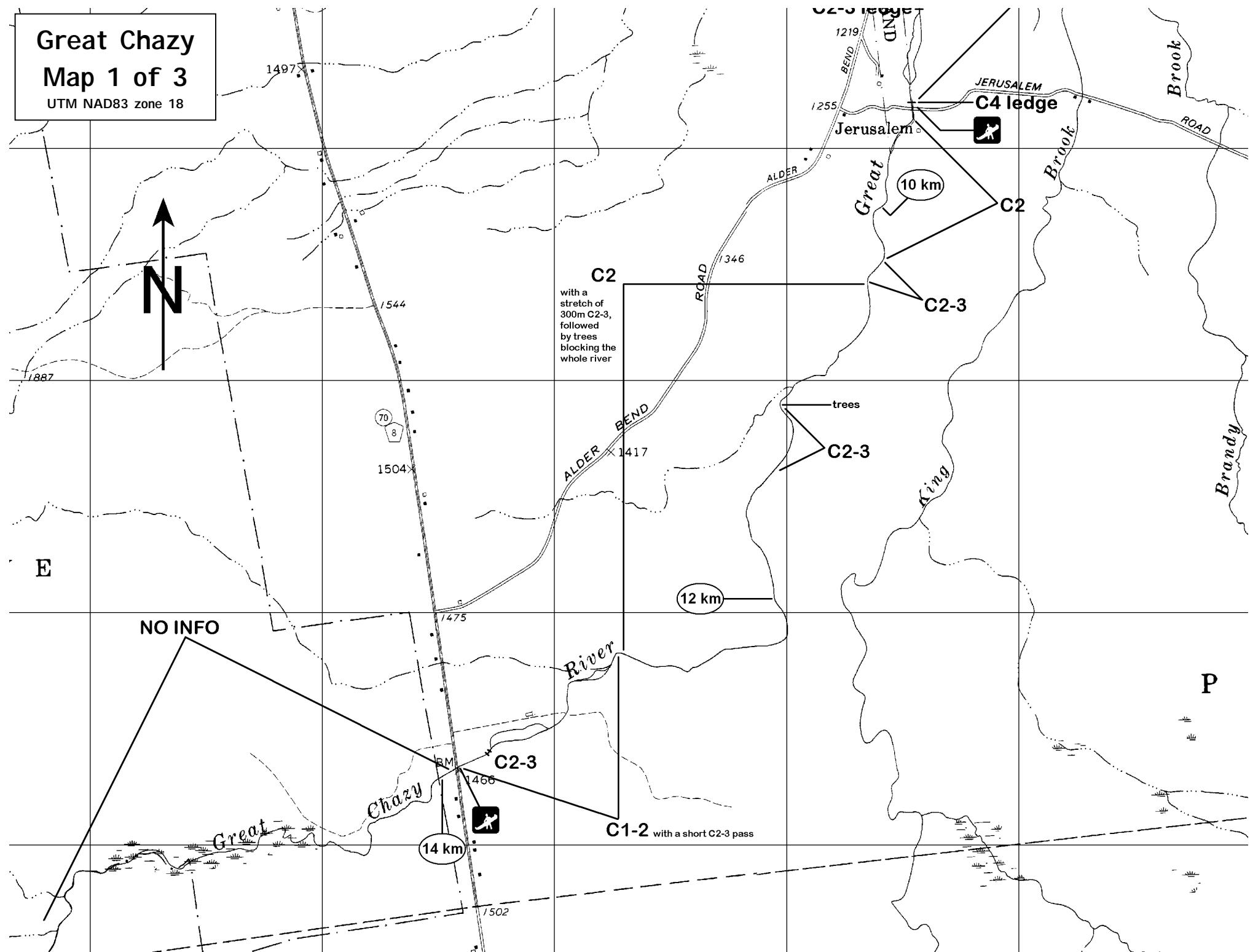
IMPORTANT

Be warned that the order of rapids and other elements is uncertain, and their position is very approximate too. Also, at places the river splits into multiple branches, and we did not explore them all. It would be great having someone validating the whole, and possibly locating the rapids accurately with a GPS.

Great Chazy

Map 1 of 3

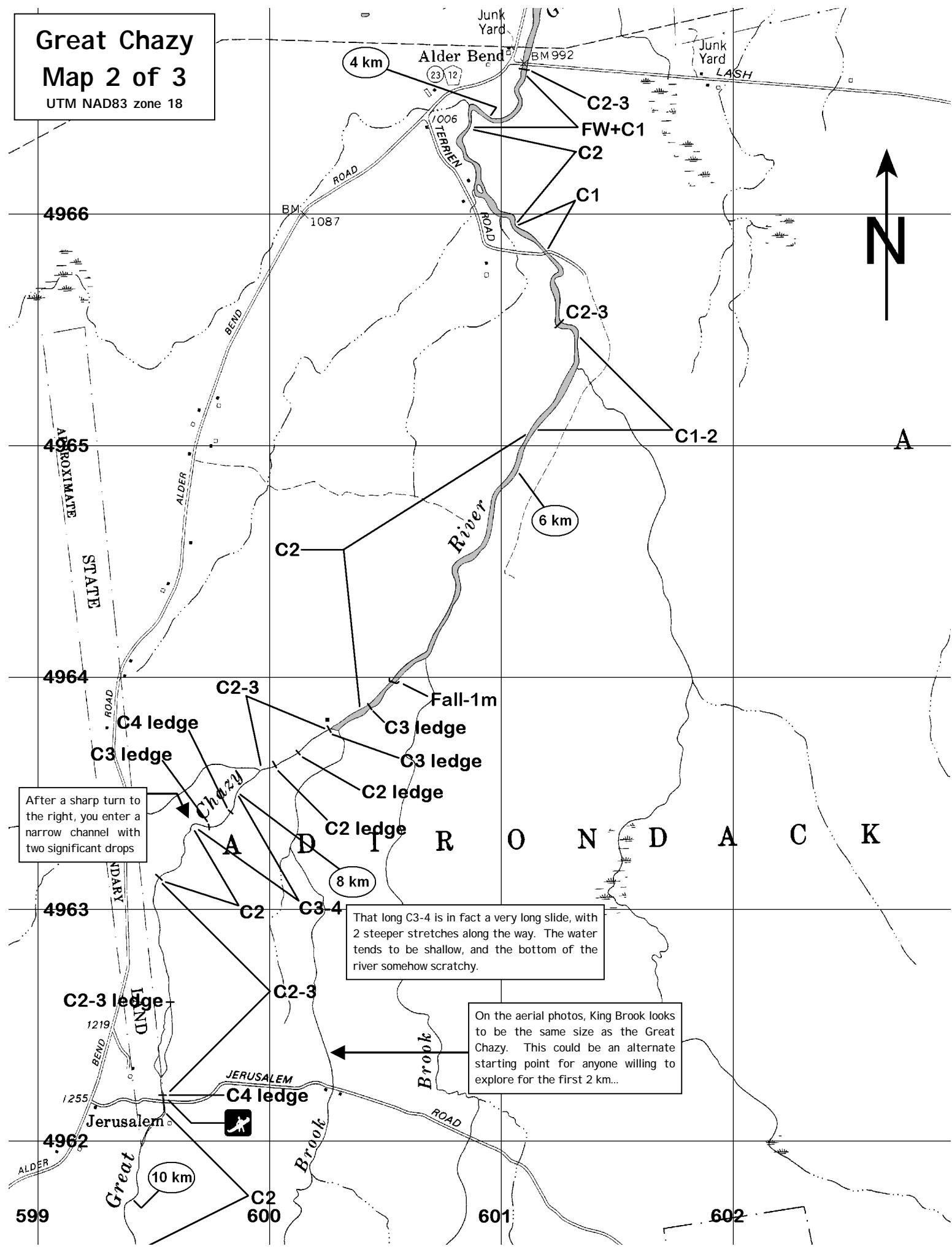
UTM NAD83 zone 18



Great Chazy

Map 2 of 3

UTM NAD83 zone 18



Great Chazy

Map 3 of 3

UTM NAD83 zone 18

UTM NAD83 zone 18

