

**INTRODUCTION**

This classic whitewater run is said to be one of the best rafting runs in the USA. It starts on the Indian River, a tributary of the Hudson on which a dam release is made periodically throughout the season in order to sustain the local economy, largely based on rafting. After 4 exciting kilometers on the Indian river, the run continues on the larger and wider Hudson river. The next 14 kilometers bring you through the wild and scenic Hudson Gorge, with plenty of good rapids. Then the river cools down and brings one to civilization through another 7 km of milder rapids and quick water. Despite a total length of 25 km, this run can typically be made in 5 to 8 hours. At most water levels, it should be run only by experienced paddlers.

**DRIVING DIRECTIONS (see map included)**From the north, on Interstate 87 :

- take exit 26 (toward US-9, Pottersville, Minerva)
- turn left onto Stone Bridge Road, drive 0.6 km
- turn right onto US-9, and drive 0.8 km
- shortly after passing under I-87, take the Olmstedville Road to the right. It is very easy to miss, so pay attention.
- after 9.5 km on Olmstedville Road, it becomes County Road 29, keep going for another 2.6 km.
- at Minerva, turn left onto NY-28N, and follow it for 8.1 km.
- turn right onto NY-28. Following it for 7.2 km brings you to the hamlet of North River

From Interstate 87, exit 26: 29 km, 0h30

From Plattsburg: 142 km, 1h35

From Montreal: 245 km, 2h40

From the south, on Interstate 87 :

- take exit 26 (toward US-9, Pottersville, Minerva)
- turn left onto Valley Farm Road, drive 0.5 km
- turn right onto US-9, drive 0.3 km
- turn left onto Olmstedville Road
- after 9.5 km on Olmstedville Road, it becomes County Road 29, keep going for another 2.6 km.
- at Minerva, turn left onto NY-28N, and follow it for 8.1 km.
- turn right onto NY-28. Following it for 7.2 km brings you to the hamlet of North River

From Interstate 87, exit 26: 29 km, 0h30

From Albany: 150 km, 1h45

Take-out at North River :

- before and in North River, there are multiple water access sites.
- another popular take-out is about 200m past (north of) the hamlet, near a railroad crossing.

Gas :

- exit 33 of I-87, open until 9 or 10 PM
- North Creek (a couple miles south of intersection between NY-28 and NY-28N)
- Minerva, probably closes at 9 or 10 PM
- Indian Lake, Stewards Shop, 6AM to 10PM, closes at 11PM Fri/Sat.

Shuttle:

- from North River, drive about 19 km on NY-28, northbound
- immediately after the bridge over Abanakee Lake, turn right onto Chain Of Lakes Road
- drive about 2.5 km on Chain Of Lakes Road.
- on the left there is a parking lot, and to the right a trail of about 100m gives access to the Indian River, at a place called Rafter's Bay.

Shuttle :

23 km

**CAMPING**On the river:

Many camping spots, of generally good quality. Rafting outfitters use them frequently for their overnight rafting trips, but still it remains relatively easy to find an available one.

Car-accessible:

Possible but maybe not legal along Chain of Lakes Road.

A farther but legal and enjoyable option is to drive to Minerva, then continue about 1 mile north on NY-28N, take Northwoods Club Road to the left (actually you go straight while NY-28N bears right), then drive a couple of kilometers (very approximately 6 or 7) to the bridge over Boreas river. There are large campsites immediately past the bridge, and a few other spots before the bridge along the road.

**WATER LEVELS**

General reference is the USGS station on the Hudson at North Creek (01315500):

<http://water.usgs.gov/ny/nwis/uv?01315500>

+1.518.465.2016 (recorded message)

Dam releases on the Indian River:

In order to make rafting possible during the whole summer there are frequent releases from the dam at outlet of Lake Abanakee.

The release increases the level of the Indian by about 40 to 90 cm, and the level of the wider Hudson by about 15 to 30 cm. During periods of low waters, it is virtually impossible to run the Indian without a release, and even the Hudson becomes rocky.

- April-May: frequent and strong releases to let the natural flow of the Indian out of Lake Abanakee.
- June-August: generally 3 or 4 days a week, depending on the water available. Tue-Thu-Sat-Sun. 10 to 11:30 or 12:00 AM.
- August-October: Sat-Sun. 10 to 11:30 or 12:00 AM.
- Last releases made weekend of Columbus Day (around Oct 12)

One may want to look at the USGS data to get an idea of the prevailing pattern (the dam releases can be seen on the flow graphs), or call any of the rafting companies that operate on the river.

## Difficulty vs water level (Hudson)

Level (ft)	Flow (cfs)	Description
3.0		Minimum level for canoes and kayaks
3.5		
4.0	1520	Lower limit of target zone for most mortals
4.5	2160	
5.0	2950	Long C3, few C3-4, level corresponding to this map.
5.5	3900	
6.0	4950	Upper limit of target zone for most mortals
6.5	6140	
7.0	7470	Too high for open canoes according to book of Bruce Lessels. The rapids of the Hudson Gorge blend all together in a very long class 4 rapid.
7.5		
8.0		Class 5

The map included here depicts the river at a level of about 5.0 ft, or 2950 cfs. Note that Bruce Lessels, in his book "Classic Northeastern Whitewater Guide", also describes the river for a level of 5.0 ft, and grades most rapids a bit higher than here.

## REFERENCES

- (1) Bruce Lessels, "Classic Northeastern Whitewater Guide", Appalachian Mountain Club, 1998, ISBN 1878239635.
- (2) C. Proskine, "Adirondack Canoe Waters – South & West Flows", Adirondack Mountain Club, 1989, ISBN 093527250X.
- (3) Dennis Squires, "New York Exposed: The Whitewater State – Vol. 2", 2004, ISBN 0971945012.

## LEGEND

### Access



Road or Train Access



Floatplane Access

### Rapids

FW, QW	Fast Water, Quick Water
C1, C2, ..., C6	Rapid with class of difficulty
C2-3	Rapid that is between two classes of difficulty
C2+3	Rapid with uneven class of difficulty
Ledge, Drop	Ledge or Drop, with class of difficulty
F, Fall	Fall
K, Cascade	Cascade
P 250m L	Portage with distance and side (left/right).

## Campsites



Campsite, with beach if applicable  
Size (nb of 3-4 person tents): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, G (group)  
Quality: A (excellent), B (good), C (fair),  
D (passable), E (miserable/emergency)



Campsite, unknown rating



Campsite, potential (requires work)



Campsite, existence uncertain



Campsite  
LW = site available at low water only, flooded otherwise  
HW = site available at most or all water levels



Organized campsite, with possible fee.

## PRODUCTION-DISTRIBUTION

### Original Survey

André Bleau, Club de Canot-Camping des Aventuriers du Québec ([www.aventuriers.qc.ca](http://www.aventuriers.qc.ca)), June 1989.

Water level (Hudson): 4.8ft – 5.0 ft

Water level (Indian): Spring flow, without the dam release.

### Corrections and details

Olivier Tardif, Charles Leduc, Angela Guzzo:

Multiple runs at levels between 3.3 and 5.5 ft

### Base Map

USGS - NY - Dutton Mountain, 1997, (43°45'00"N 074°00'00"W)

Available from: <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/gisdata/quads/>

### Map work / Text

Marc Thibault, 1999

Charles Leduc, 2001, 2006, 2014

### Contributors

Carrie Wallace, Olivier Tardif: revision and corrections.

### Distribution

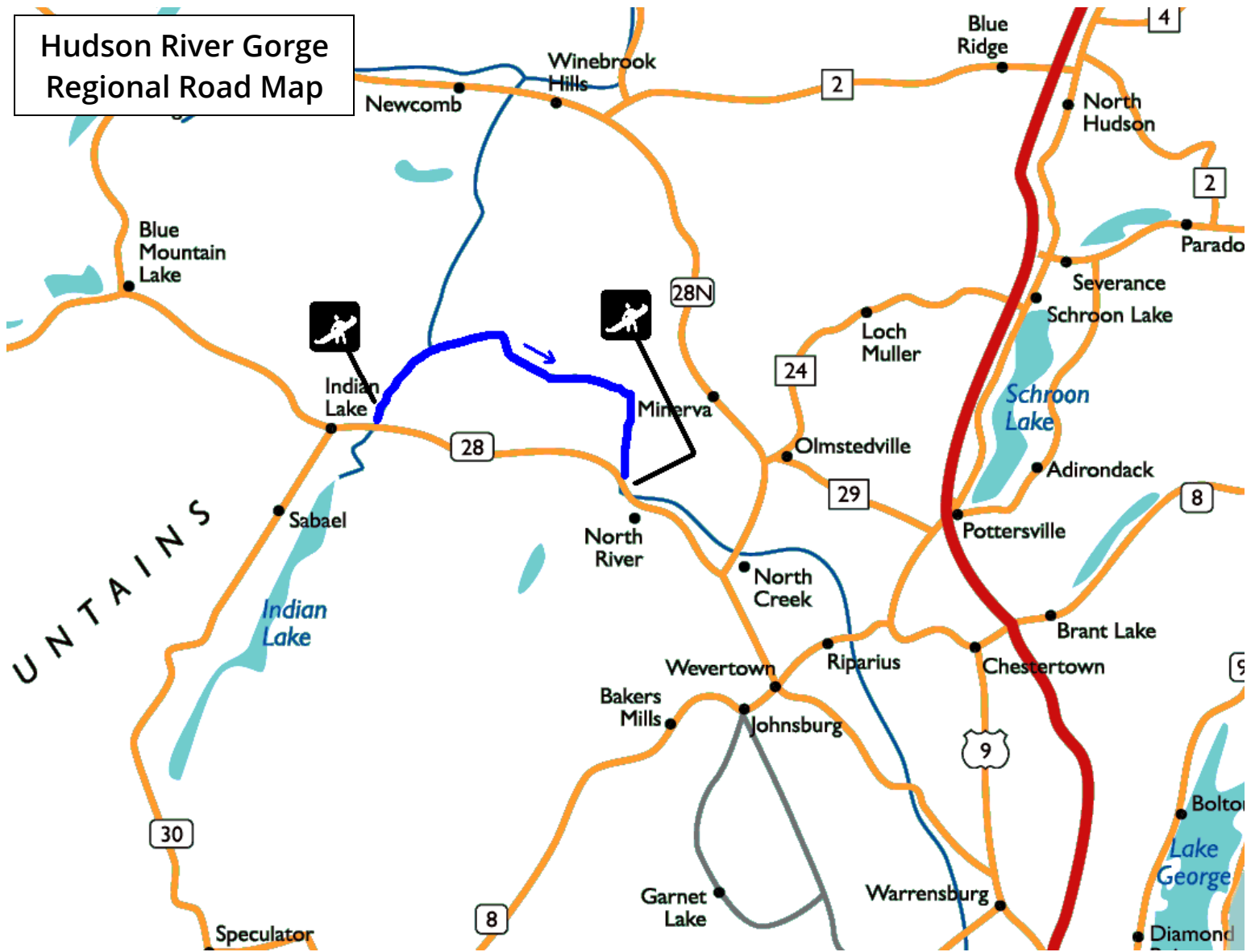
Authorized, provided the content remains unchanged and the distribution is done free of charge.

Available from [www.cartespleinair.org](http://www.cartespleinair.org).

## DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced on a volunteer basis by paddlers who do not claim to have infallible judgment. The authors assume no responsibility for any accident, damage or other prejudice that may result from the use of this document. Omissions or errors are always possible, and we would be grateful should you bring them to our attention.

# Hudson River Gorge Regional Road Map



# Hudson River Gorge Map 1 of 4

Hudson River from Newcomb:  
Map available from [cartespleinair.org](http://cartespleinair.org)

At the mouth of the Indian, a lost boat would stop for a minute or so before continuing on the Hudson. In case one must walk out, there is a trail that follows an old logging road up to Chain of Lakes Road.

Very soon on the Indian, a side channel to the left takes you for a trip in the woods; far enough to make you doubt you will ever rejoin the Indian. Finally, you will have to haul your boat for a very short distance across the campsite, to make it back to the Indian.

## Release on the Indian:

Middle-top of 1<sup>st</sup> log: average, class 2-3  
Middle-top of 2<sup>nd</sup> log: stronger  
Middle-top of 3<sup>rd</sup> log: solid class 3 to 3-4  
Several inches above the 3<sup>rd</sup> log: strongest

Pond  
**Rafter's Bay**



Otter Slide  
C2  
C4-5 ledge  
C2 + C3 ledges

Lake Abanakee Dam

When you reach a less intense stretch, with the river narrowing in front and a horizon line with white waves dancing, get ready for some pleasure into Indian Head Rapids.

2 km

Pruyn Islands

Gooley Steps

C2

C3

C2-3

C2

Cedar Ledges Rapids

0 km

Indian Head Rapids

C2

C3

C2-3

C2

Cedar Ledges Rapids

0 km

Indian Head Rapids

C2

C3

C2-3

C2

Cedar Ledges Rapids

0 km

Indian Head Rapids

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Cedar Ledges Rapids

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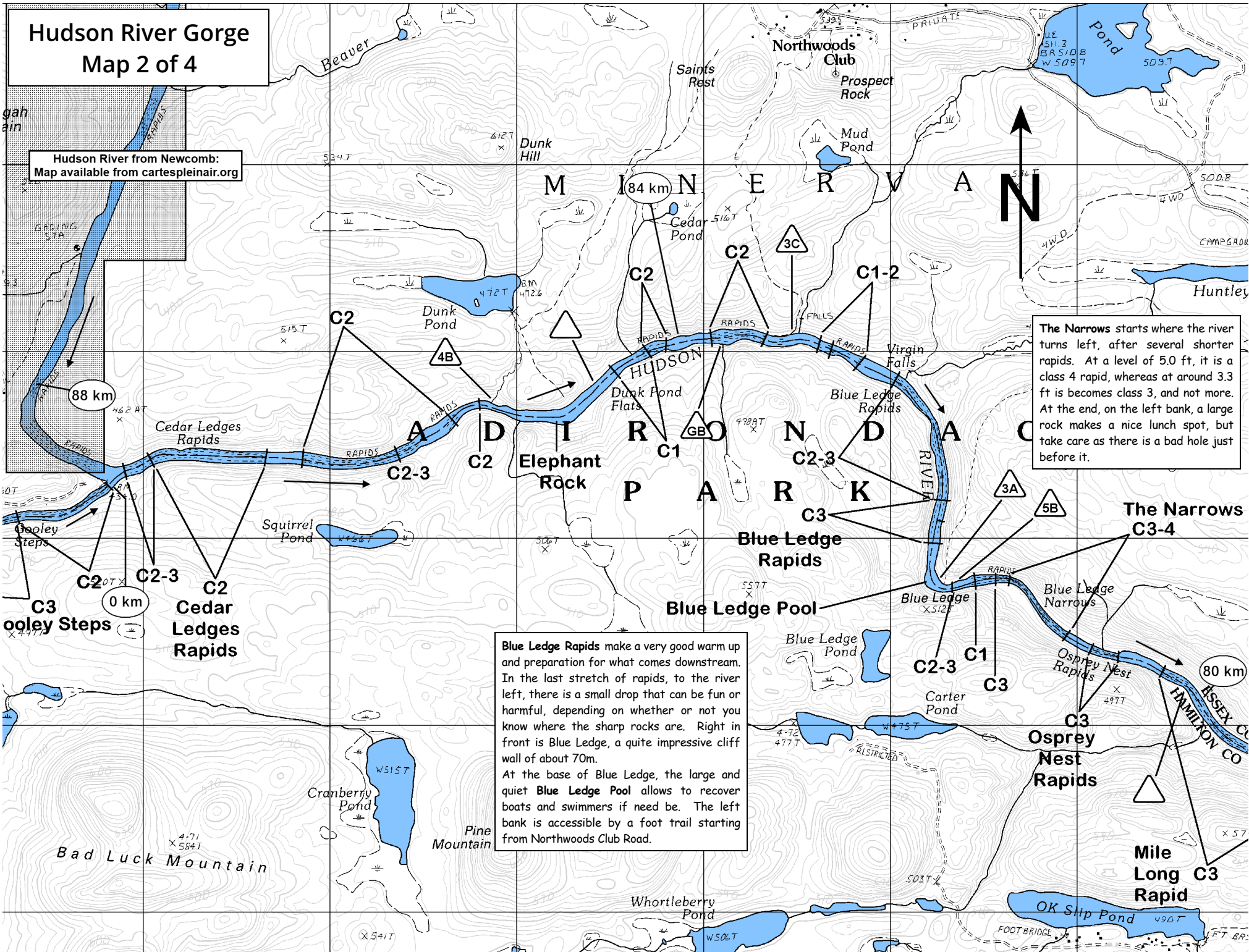
Indian Head Rapids

C2



## Hudson River Gorge

### Map 2 of 4



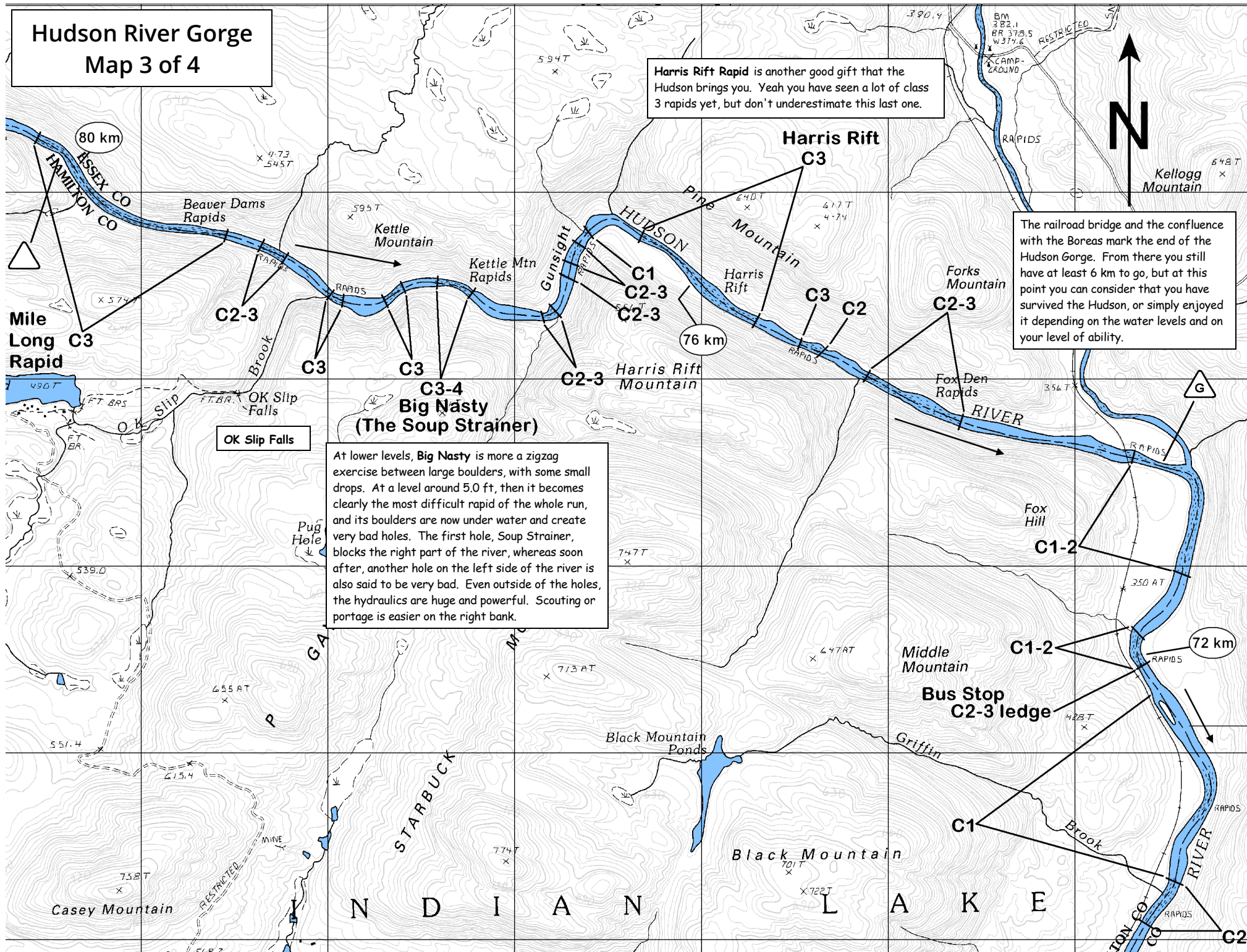


# Hudson River Gorge Map 3 of 4

Harris Rift Rapid is another good gift that the Hudson brings you. Yeah you have seen a lot of class 3 rapids yet, but don't underestimate this last one.

The railroad bridge and the confluence with the Boreas mark the end of the Hudson Gorge. From there you still have at least 6 km to go, but at this point you can consider that you have survived the Hudson, or simply enjoyed it depending on the water levels and on your level of ability.

At lower levels, Big Nasty is more a zigzag exercise between large boulders, with some small drops. At a level around 5.0 ft, then it becomes clearly the most difficult rapid of the whole run, and its boulders are now under water and create very bad holes. The first hole, Soup Strainer, blocks the right part of the river, whereas soon after, another hole on the left side of the river is also said to be very bad. Even outside of the holes, the hydraulics are huge and powerful. Scouting or portage is easier on the right bank.





Hudson River Gorge  
Map 4 of 4

