

Peace River Paddling Guide

Researched and Written by Teresa Griffith

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**The condition of a river is always changing. This guide is meant as a rough guide only.
Please use all caution when paddling. You paddle at your own risk.**

Author's Forward

In the summer of 2010, I had the unique opportunity and responsibility of paddling 800 km on the Peace River in order to write this guide for GeoTourism Canada. I planned to do it in two sections: the northern reach, from the town of Peace River to Fort Vermilion first, and later in the season, the upstream portion, from Hudson's Hope to Peace River. On July 8, with 10 days of food, I set out in a 17-foot Prijon Kodiak kayak to paddle to Fort Vermilion. I am an experienced kayaker but I had never taken on a trip so long, solo. Excitement and nerves filled my stomach the morning my trip began; as I paddled, the nerves faded, but the excitement didn't. I also felt incredibly lucky to be doing this as my job.

It was an incredible experience! I enjoyed the solitude and serenity of paddling and camping every day. The valley and river are beautiful, and striking scenery met me with every bend. By day five, I was noticing some pain in my right shoulder, from overcompensating in wind and steering too aggressively. I had to learn patience and had to let the current carry me a little off-course if necessary – to surrender to it, so to speak. I improved my stroke technique and was more mindful of my every move in order to save my joints any additional stress. My shoulder was not in very much pain, but I knew I had to be careful. I wasn't ready to give up yet. By the afternoon of day six, after bucking a strong headwind and

sitting out an intense thunderstorm, both shoulders were unhappy. On the morning of day seven, my shoulders started feeling better, but I nevertheless decided to end my trip at Tompkins Landing, in order to prevent any serious damage. I'd done 300 km of solo kayaking in six and a half days.

A few weeks later, I picked up where I left off, paddling from Tompkins to Fort Vermilion, experiencing what some said were the lowest water levels on the Peace in 70 years. The ferry at Tompkins was moored on the east side and considered out-of-order due to the shallow water. I dodged gravel bars continually and even saw the river bed in some places – where the steep shores met the river nearly perpendicularly, the river bottom was exposed. It slowed me down, but I successfully reached Fort Vermilion; my heart sang when I saw that picturesque and historic village on the bank!

A month later, in mid-September, a friend and I canoed from Hudson's Hope to the town of Peace River (375 km). Water levels fluctuated wildly, and we had warm days, cool days, and crisp nights. We cruised over boulders lying deep in crystal clear waters – a new experience for me, as the waters had always been quite opaque before. We saw spectacular cliffs and beautiful creek-valleys. We ran aground and portaged after picking the wrong channel in one spot. We reached new lows in personal hygiene, as it was warmer to just keep the clothes on (including toques) than wash our hair. We had a spectacular adventure!

I did my best to make waypoints, notes, photos and

observations along the way. In order to make notes while on the water, I used a small audio recorder. I spoke into it, describing what I saw or wanted to make a note of, often while getting a GPS waypoint. I made notes in the evenings, pored over maps and renamed waypoints. It wasn't always possible while paddling to go all the way to shore to take a waypoint for a possible campsite, but waypoints in the river combined with my description should enable anyone to find those unique spots. After collecting and poring over the data, notes, and the memories, this paddling guide was born. I hope it opens doors for you to enjoy the beauty of this wilderness river as I did.



Peace River Paddling Guide

Acknowledgments

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About the Author

Teresa Griffith is a renaissance woman and owner/operator of Flow North Paddling Company. Her interest in history, geology, and geography come together in this guide, creating an informative resource for all river users — everything you need to know to take a trip on the beautiful Peace River.



Peace River Paddling Guide

Introduction to the Guide

A Joyous Escape

My paddle glides into the water
Smoothly, silently,
And propels me just a little farther.
The air is still and the water like polished glass.
I cannot hear a sound,
Except a gentle gurgle from a stray current.
The river carries me invariably
Toward my destination,
But I feel I won't be ready to leave her loveliness,
Peace, and solitude
When I get there.
Every moment a perfect one,
Every stroke a meditation,
I discover trust and joy
On the waters of the Peace.

-T. Griffith

The Peace River. Before settlers and pioneers, the First Nations people and intrepid fur traders plied the swift waters of the Peace for hunting and trading. The first white men to see its shores were men of the Northwest Company, and the first trading post was



established by Charles Boyer in 1788 near the mouth of the Boyer River, 7 km downstream from present-day Fort Vermilion. For Sir Alexander Mackenzie, it was a vital path to the Pacific; he and his crew of 9 men went upstream from Fort Chipewyan in the fall of 1792 all the way to a spot near the mouth of the Smoky River, Fort Fork, where they wintered. The following year, they pushed upstream through the waters of the Peace as far as possible on their way to the west coast. They reached tidal waters after a mere 72 days of travelling – canoeing, portaging, and canoeing some more – and returned to Fort Fork only 32 days later, covering the reach from the rapids near Hudson's Hope, BC to Fort Fork in just 3 days! This guide will take you from Hudson's Hope, BC to Fort Vermilion, AB, for a journey of 812 km in 24 days, all downstream.

Character of the River

The Peace River, or Unjaga as it was called in Alexander Mackenzie's time, was the freeway before there was pavement. Although you and I might feel like it's “the long way,” it was by far the quickest way to cross this vast country of ours before there were roads and rails. Bushwacking is difficult and slow, and as you walk, you must carry everything you need, up and down slopes, around swamps, and then, when you meet them, across creeks and rivers. It's easier to take the river, even upstream. Although, in winding across the land, they might go twice the distance, rivers provide a path of less resistance when compared to thick bush.

Peace River Paddling Guide

The Peace River is an old one; it has carved its way out of bedrock and glacial till for thousands of years. On its western reaches, the banks are generally 200 m high, but at Fort Vermilion, they are only 70 m. You'll see some spectacular cliffs and eroded hills, many loaded with fossils. Remember, take pictures of what you find and make a note of where, but never remove a fossil from the site you found it. If it's particularly spectacular, notify the palaeontologists at the Royal Tyrell Museum of your find.

Altogether, you'll paddle through bedrock formations from the upper and lower Cretaceous period, specifically the Albian (lower, or early Cretaceous) and Cenomanian (upper Cretaceous), 93 to 112 million years ago. The oldest rocks are those near Hudson's Hope, and for about the first 130 km of your trip, the rocks will get younger. A few kilometres after Dunvegan, the bedrock will start getting older again, i.e. the river incises into older rock. The layers are not as clear and tidy as a layer cake, but this is true in general. Much of the bedrock is marine shale, from dark grey to light grey, or siltstone, and later on, you will start to see more sandstone, conglomerate rock, and concretions – huge round rocks found within sandstone bedrock.

A river is constantly changing. The conditions I describe in this guide could be quite different from those you encounter. Gravel and sandbars gradually move and change. The river doesn't freeze over completely, but in parts of the river that do (the river generally remains open year-round upstream of Taylor, BC, a result of the dams upstream) ice can scour the banks and push piles of gravel

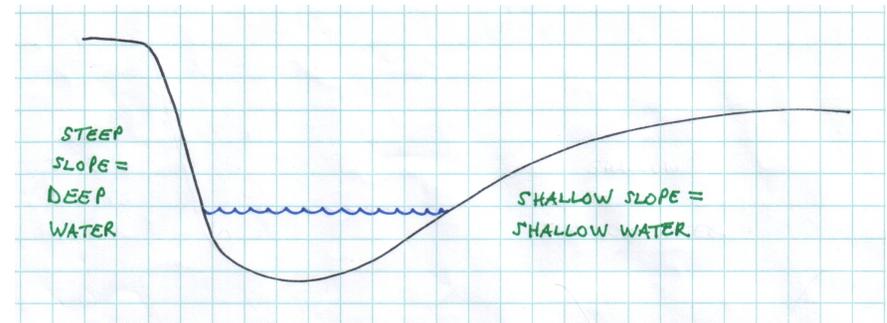


during breakup. If water levels are high, you may not see many gravel bars, but if they are low, you'll see and dodge plenty of them. Water levels can increase due to water released from the dams upstream as well as rainwater, snowmelt, and storm surges. A downpour hundreds of kilometres away can affect the river level if it happens anywhere within the watershed of the river. A paddler must always be vigilant of changing conditions, both in water level and weather.

Whenever you stop and get out of your boat, even just for a quick break, make sure you tie it up to something – a large rock, a tree, a clump of shrubs – or even make a pile of rocks to weigh the rope down if nothing else. It is good to pull the boat out of the water, but it isn't necessary. It **IS** necessary to tie it to something that won't move. **Consider this the most important thing you do** when you get out of your boat. The waterline can change vastly overnight, and the variation is more extreme the closer you are to the two dams. It's common for the water to go up or down by 4 feet (1.2 m), and can even change 10 feet (3 m), within the first 150 km of Hudson's Hope. One long-time resident along the river (near Carcajou) said he's seen the water come up 10-12 feet in ~10 hours because of the dams and rain combined. Many careless paddlers have awoken to find their canoe gone, carried away by rising waters. On most reaches of the Peace, this will mean a steep climb and a *very* long walk to get help. Even at lunch, leaving your canoe unattended and untied is foolhardy; a passing jet boat's wake could be enough to dislodge it.

Peace River Paddling Guide

Like all rivers, the speed and character of the current changes with the overall volume of water that is flowing. Higher water levels mean faster water in general. The current also changes as you encounter widening or narrowing sections, deepening or shallowing. Surface waves will often help you guess what's going on underneath, but wind can make it trickier. The river is nearly



always deepest along the outside of a curve, as rocks and sand tend to get deposited on the inside of the curve by boundary layer cross currents, called secondary flow, that roll them along the bottom of the riverbed and up the shallow slope toward the shore (see guide #7 for more information). The Peace also tends to build up gravel bars and islands right in the middle. The deepest channels are usually along the steepest shore – just imagine that the shore extends its visible slope down into the water. The result is that to find the fastest, deepest water, you often have to take the longest path around a curve, but if water levels are low, it's worth it. **Always be alert** as this is a general rule and there are exceptions. Always respect the power of the current.



Jet Boat Races

Recreation on the Peace River is enjoyed by many people, especially near the population centres along the river. As such, you'll have to share the river. Most power boaters are quite polite in slowing down, giving canoes/kayaks space, and some even stop to chat.

The Peace River Jet Boat Races are generally held on a Saturday and Sunday in July each year. If possible, plan to paddle the section of the river between Dunvegan and the DMI bridge north of Peace River on a weekday (guides 10, 11, 12 and part of 13). If you plan to follow this field guide precisely, if you start in Hudson's Hope on a Sunday or Monday, you'll be safe, otherwise, you may have to:

- adjust your campsite locations by paddling more or less some days,
- spend an extra day in camp somewhere, or
- paddle very early or late in the day to avoid the jet boat traffic.

As you plan your trip, there are several ways you can find out when the races are:

- call the Peace River Tourist Information Centre at 780-624-2044
- check the Peace River Boating Association page on Facebook
- check the town of Peace River's website (www.peaceriver.ca)

You should take care **not** to interfere with the jet boat races; the boats can reach speeds up to 190 km/h and the boat traffic

would **not** be safe.

In 2011, the Outlaw Eagle Manufacturing World Jet Boat Marathon is taking place in Canada. The Peace River portion is scheduled for July 3 & 4, 2011. On July 3, the boats will be racing a circuit from Deer Island (near the Smoky River confluence) to a point north of the bridges. The races start at 1 pm, so begin at sunrise if you must paddle this section on July 3, 2011. On July 4, the race is between Peace River downtown and Watino, on the Smoky River, so you could probably start your trip north (guide #13) on that day (use the boat launch near 84 Ave if it's too hectic at River Front Park).

You have a unique opportunity to paddle a river that has been affected by industry. Hydroelectric dams create an unnatural environment, yet it is still beautiful and rugged. If BC Hydro's plans for a third dam at Site C are approved, the river will change again. This guide takes you through the section of the river that will be flooded if/when the dam construction begins – from Hudson's Hope to the Moberly River confluence about 78 km downstream. Once the construction begins, some areas will be off-limits, and once the river is flooded behind the dam – a process estimated to take only 1 to 2 months – those areas will never be the same. Much of Bear Flat will be flooded, for example, and “the Gates” will be much less dramatic underwater. The Peace Canyon, historical “Ne Parle Pas” rapids, homesteads, trappers' cabins, whole native villages and much of the Parsnip and Finlay Rivers are lost forever at the bottom of the reservoirs of the dams already built.

Using This Guide

Paddling is such an incredible way to enjoy nature, reconnect with your loved ones, and experience true peace and quiet in our otherwise hectic lives. Before you can get away, however, some planning is required, and the more you do, the smoother your trip will go. This guide is meant to help you plan, provide information and advice, and give practical suggestions for anyone wishing to paddle the Peace River. It is by no means comprehensive. Descriptions of gravel or sand bars should not be taken to be overly precise, as these structures are always shifting and changing. This guide was written in 2010.

The following information is given for each guide:

Name of River Section	Starting Point to Ending Point
Paddling Time	estimated from the distance, using speeds of 5 km/h to 10 km/h
Paddling Distance	estimated distance of the most likely, most direct paddling path
Rapids (Class number)	class of rapids, if any
Portage	distance and difficulty of portages, if any
Typical speed of current on this section	taken from a GPS unit while drifting
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	if cell phones are likely to work, and where the best signal might be found
Appeal to Families & Children	one sentence summary of the highlights in this section as they relate to families
Appeal to People with passion for topic	one sentence summary of the highlights in this section

Scenic Appeal of River Section	how beautiful this section is, 1 to 5 stars (★★★★★)
Possible as a day-trip?	“Yes” if there is road access at both start and end points, otherwise, “No.”
NTS maps required for this section	list of 1:250,000 maps required (with 1:50,000 in brackets)

In the written portion of this guide, I generally refer to things as “river left” and “river right” meaning on the left or right shore as you go downstream. I may also refer to things as upstream or downstream, and use cardinal points. I indicate most locations by using approximate kilometre distance marks, starting from Hudson’s Hope for guides 1-12 and thereafter, starting from the town of Peace River. The distances were obtained by measuring the path on the river using Google Earth. I then marked 10-km intervals on my paper topo maps. From there, I estimate or measure the other distances in between. I’ve marked the maps in the guide in the same manner, for consistency.

You’ll find a list of possible campsites after the main description, along with a list of emergency road access. This latter section is meant to give you an idea of how you could get off the water in an emergency – walking up a rough road, even a bumpy quad trail, is easier than bushwacking. If you have a cell signal or a sat phone, you could also direct someone to pick you up using these roads, but again, not all roads/trails have been test-driven and I cannot guarantee they will be passable.

Before you depart, you may like to check the current water

flow. The Alberta Government maintains water monitoring stations throughout the province, and this is the link to the real-time data: <http://www.environment.alberta.ca/apps/basins/default.aspx>

GPS waypoints can be downloaded in gpx format to enable you load them into your GPS device. You can then see them on the display and use the various functions of the unit, such as distance and bearing to waypoint. The waypoints are given in the order they are encountered (downstream), and named as “D##P##” meaning day-number point-number. Some waypoints were taken standing on the very spot, and others were taken from the river to show where you can see a certain cliff or alongside a possible campsite. If you are only downloading the waypoints for certain guides, you may want to download those preceding and following the section you intend to paddle, just in case. For example, load the waypoints for guides 9-13 into your GPS unit if you plan on paddling guides 10-12.

Other notes

Remember when you drive into BC to move your watch one hour back. Although *technically* the boundary between the time zones is farther northwest, Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope are one hour behind Alberta.

Interesting websites:

- Regarding river channel and island formation (fluvial geomorphology): <http://geofroth.posterous.com/a-way-to-think->

Peace River Paddling Guide

[about-channel-patterns](#)

- Biography of Alexander Mackenzie:

<http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=36643>

Safety and Wilderness Camping

Safety

Always keep safety in mind. Even as you plan your trip and pack your gear, think about safety in everything. Imagine the worst thing that could happen and then plan for it. Once you have a plan, you can forget about it happening and have fun.

Make sure all your safety gear is in good working order. Go through everything and make sure it's serviceable before you reach the water's edge. Standing on shore with your boat loaded is not the best time to discover that your first aid kit has been raided by the kids and doesn't have anything but large triangular bandages left in it.

Transport Canada requires that you have:

- a personal flotation device for each person
- a sound signalling device (I recommend a whistle on each PFD)



- at least 15 metres of buoyant rope (make sure there is NO risk of entanglement if you should capsize. Throw bags are good for this.)
- a bailer or manual pump capable of pumping water over the side of the boat
- a paddle
- a light if paddling at night or in times of reduced visibility, such as fog

The above applies to human-powered craft less than 6 m (~20') in length. For more information, please visit Transport Canada's website: <http://tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/menu.htm>

Make sure you are not attempting to paddle outside of your skill level. Although this is a class I river, it is best if you have experience paddling on moving water before attempting this trip.

Hazards & Precautions

Hazard: Drowning

Precaution:

Always wear your personal flotation device (PFD) when on the water or near the water's edge. Make sure it fits properly and wear it snug.

Never try to stand up in a deep current. Don't even try to put your feet down to see how deep it is – undercurrents can pull you

down and drown you. Float on your back, keep your feet up and pointed downstream, and swim for shore. Only try to stand up when you can feel the bottom with your bottom.

Ropes can be a significant tangling and drowning hazard. Make sure they are kept bundled or stowed so they won't uncoil if you capsize. Throw bags are good for this.

Always pitch your tent as high above the water as possible to avoid rising water and potential panic in the night.

Hazard: Injury

Precaution:

Always think before acting when paddling or setting up camp and keep your actions careful and deliberate. Bring a well-stocked first aid kit in a waterproof container and learn first aid before you go. Know the signs for heatstroke and hypothermia.

Create a "second aid kit." This includes things like reusable warming gel-packs, pain killers or other medication, tensor bandages, and extra matches. Be extra careful around your campfire and/or cookstove to avoid burns. Take a GPS tracker such as a SPOT device or satellite phone so that you can request help if needed.

Hazard: Illness

Precaution:

Make sure you are healthy before you start your trip. For example, don't start a trip if you feel a flu coming on. Bring all

prescription medications in waterproof containers packed in several places (don't put all your eggs in one dry-bag)! To avoid getting giardia (beaver fever), never drink untreated water and make sure to follow the directions on your water treatment system carefully. Bring extra water treatment tablets in case. Be sure to drink enough water to avoid dehydration.

Hazard: Getting separated from your boat

Precaution:

Prevent capsizes by:

- never paddling beyond your ability
- being alert to changing conditions when paddling (ie. upcoming gravel bar or rapids)
- communicating clearly with your partner when embarking and disembarking, and help your paddle partner get in or out of the canoe/kayak.

Prevent your boat from floating away by always tying it up to a good anchor (tree, large driftwood or rock) whenever you get out of it, even for a short break.

In case you do capsize and lose your boat or some of your gear:

- Always have the following items on you (in a pocket or attached to your PFD): matches/lighter/flint, SPOT GPS or Sat phone (in waterproof bag if necessary), multi-tool or army knife, and water treatment tablets.
- Always know where you are. Keep track of your progress on your map. Even if you lose your map, you should know where

the nearest town or road is.

- Always wear shoes while in the boat, so that if you have to walk out, you can.
- Never pack difficult-to-replace things with you (like a passport). If you must bring it, keep it on you at all times.
- Never pack **all** your food in one place.

Hazard: Getting lost

Precaution:

Make sure you have maps, such as 1:250,000 NTS topo maps, for the areas you are paddling (in addition to the maps in this guide). This will also help you find the nearest road access if you need to get help. Keep track of where you are as you paddle. You should know how to read a topo map; when the topo lines are close together, the slope is steep, when spaced apart, it is gradual. Creeks are clearly seen on a topo map by the valley they create as they incise (erode) their way to the main river. Ideally, you should know how to use a map and compass to navigate yourself to a desired destination through the bush if necessary — if you cannot, always follow a landmark, like a creek or road. At minimum, you should know how to read a map and find your location on it using GPS coordinates (assuming you bring a GPS along). Always bring more than enough spare batteries for your GPS. Leave the details of your trip with a responsible person, so that if you are overdue, that person will call the RCMP to initiate a search and rescue operation.

Hazard: Forest Fire

Precaution:

If you make a campfire, always do so on a non-flammable surface such as rock or sand, not the forest floor. Build your fire along the river (not in the trees) and keep it as small as possible for your purpose (warmth, light, cooking, etc). Be aware of what the forest fire hazard rating is before you leave on your trip, and also use common sense – if the duff (leaves, twigs, decaying organic matter) on the forest floor is very dry, be extra vigilant of where sparks land or don't build a fire at all. Chronic lack of rain and/or hot weather can raise the fire hazard rating to extreme levels in just a few days.

Be absolutely sure that your fire is out. If the duff is a little dry, chase any sparks that travel and douse them if necessary. When extinguishing your campfire, pour water on it, stir it with a stick and then pour more water on it. Make sure the coals are cold.

If you see a forest fire or smell smoke while on shore, stay calm. If it appears the fire is definitely headed your way, get all your gear into your boat and get on the water as quickly as possible. The middle of the river is probably the safest place, or you may decide to cross to the opposite side of the river. If the fire appears to be downstream, prepare a wet cloth or towel to breathe through before getting in your canoe. If you are experiencing thick smoke, breathe through a damp piece of cloth. If there is active fire fighting taking place, follow the instructions any fire fighters give you. If you see aircraft flying low, do your best to signal them by waving your arms or using a signalling mirror.

Hazard: Bear Encounter or Attack

Precaution:

Your priority in bear country is to **avoid an encounter altogether**. Set your tent up away from where you cook your food and tie up your boat. Make sure all food is stowed each night and don't bring any food or other smelly items (like deodorant or toothpaste) into the tent. If you spill food on your clothes, wipe it off immediately and if you are worried it will smell, change clothes and wash the soiled item or put it in a bag and leave it in the boat. **Bears are attracted to campsites primarily because of smells.** Keep all your food in bear-proof containers, thick-walled dry bags or blue barrels. Pasta and rice, which has little smell, can go in thick-walled dry bags while chocolate, produce, smelly wrappers, garbage or baggies should all go in a bear-proof container. I recommend the “Backpacker's Cache” made of black PVC plastic. You can hang your food from a tree limb, put it inside kayak hatches, or simply keep it on shore.

Keep bear spray and/or bangers in your tent at night and make sure you know how to use them. You may also want to mark your territory by sprinkling household ammonia around your tent to keep animals at bay. Besides smelling like super-potent urine, ammonia is one of the only smells bears won't associate with food. One sure-fire technique to prevent bears from messing with your gear is to cover it with a spare tarp and then place a couple of small containers filled with ammonia under the edge. The ammonia vapours will fill the airspace under the tarp and any curious bears

who get a whiff of that will head for the hills!

Be sure to make plenty of noise whenever you come ashore. Announce your intentions out loud to let the bears know you are there, giving them time to run away before you get close. Try loudly projecting “hello bears! I'm coming up the hill now, so if there's anybody there, you can run and hide now...” Learn how to tell the difference between Black and Grizzly bears.

If you see a bear (and it sees you), stay calm. See if it is agitated or just surprised. Determine what type of bear it is. Try not to corner it – always give it a way out. Speak to the bear, avoid eye contact, make yourself larger than you appear, and slowly, calmly, back away. If it charges you, stand your ground. You may need to become more aggressive or defiant or use your bear spray or bear bangers. Most attacks are defensive, but if it becomes predatory, you should change your strategy. For black bears, try to get away or keep fighting – show you are not easy prey. For grizzlies, it is better to lie down and play dead.

Any bears you see swimming are no threat; they cannot and will not attack you while swimming. That doesn't mean you should approach them. Give them space (and take lots of pictures).

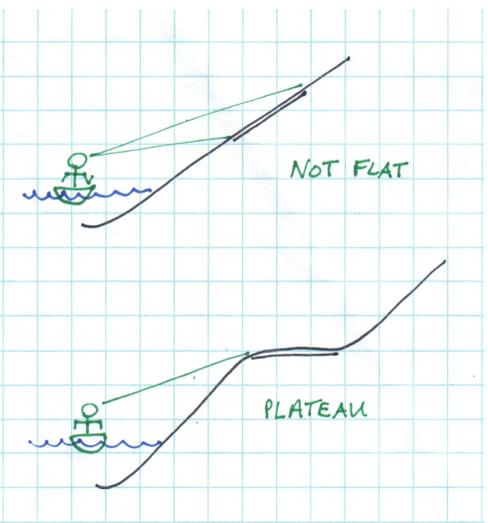
Backcountry Camping

This is a wilderness river. It is recommended that you have experience wilderness camping prior to your trip. You may want to

read some books on wilderness camping, such as *Song of the Paddle* by Bill Mason.

Remember the three basic human needs: food, shelter, and clothing. Bring only the essentials, and once you've checked it all over and packed it, try it out in your boat. Will it all fit, with enough freeboard (space above the waterline on the boat)? If not, reduce it down until it fits. See the Comprehensive Trip Packing List here: <http://flownorth.ca/what-we-offer/planning-your-paddling-trip/> Find small, light items whenever possible. Take the minimum of clothing, but at least one full change of clothes. You can't go wrong with extra socks or underwear. Hygiene items should be few and small; you aren't going to win a beauty pageant!

When looking for a good camping spot, remember that it should be high enough above the water to be safe, and as flat as possible. If you can see the patch of ground you want to put your tent on from the water, it probably isn't flat! If you can see a ridge, it is probably flat beyond. There are a few



places along the river where there are no suitable camping spots for several kilometres, and I have indicated this in the guide.

Most islands provide possible campsites, although I use the word “campsites” loosely. They are not campsites in the sense of public, maintained locales; they are simply places you can camp. Generally, sandy or gravelly islands start out with a gravel bar preceding them (upstream) which gradually gets higher and the slope increases until the downstream end of the island is very steep (sand or mud) with flat campsites on top if you can climb to them. Therefore, about one-third of the way along most islands is the ideal spot to set up camp – before the slope gets too steep or high. The disadvantage to camping on a slope that is too gradual is that you'll walk a mile before you get to bed, going back and forth to and from the tent location, the kitchen location, and the boat. Maybe this doesn't seem like a problem, but if the water level goes down, you'll have to carry your boat a hundred feet or more over rocks to find water again. So, camping on a shallow bank is possible but not ideal. Look for a shore with a little more slope to it, and flat space on top. Be careful when working near the shore not to drop anything in the water, or somewhere it might roll into the water.

You can camp adjacent to private land, as no one owns the water and the shore immediately along it. Just the same, if a private landowner asks you to leave, it is best to do so. Most camp sites recommended in this guide are parks or crown land, and the landowners of all end-point sites have given permission for users of this guide to camp at that site.

Leave No Trace

Always abide by the Leave No Trace principles:

- **Plan Ahead and Prepare.** A well-planned trip is more likely to leave no trace than an ill-prepared one.
- **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.** Always minimize trampling of vegetation when camping.
- **Dispose of Waste Properly.** Dig a cathole (toilet) 15-20 cm (6-8”) deep and 10-15 cm (4-6”) in diameter at least 60 m (70 adult paces, or 200 feet) from the river. Bury your toilet paper (or use leaves) and fill the cathole with the original dirt when you are finished.
- **Leave What You Find.** It is illegal to remove cultural artifacts, and highly discouraged to remove rocks, fossils, flowers, etc. Do not build fire rings or crude furniture.
- **Minimize Campfire Impacts.** Don't build a fire when the fire hazard is high. Keep your fire small and don't cut trees, limbs, or bark. Gather wood smaller than your wrist from a wide area. Read more here: <http://www.leavenotrace.ca/principle-minimize-campfire-impacts>
- **Respect Wildlife.** Watch wildlife from afar and remember you are a visitor in their home.
- **Be Considerate of Other Visitors.** If you encounter others, be respectful. Keep noise levels down. Keep your pet under control and stoop and scoop.

Essentially, when you leave your lunch spot or campsite, there should be no evidence that you were there. No garbage, no piles of firewood, no damaged trees, no artificial clearings. Using a cookstove reduces your impact greatly – you won't need to make a fire at all, but if you want one, you can make a small one, just for lingering around. Read more about the Leave No Trace principles here: <http://www.leavenotrace.ca>

Also, when possible, avoid landing/launching your boat in marshy or soft areas. Always leave wildlife alone, and in particular, do not disturb nesting birds you may see along the shore. If you have to go to the bathroom, always do so on shore, never directly into the river.

When walking about, try to use existing trails or walk on surfaces that are most resistant to erosion (rock instead of soil).

Meals and Snacks

Food is a very personal thing. Most of us can endure a lot of physical discomfort or rugged conditions as long as the food is good. Here are some ideas for meal planning.

The basics. Pasta and rice work well for supper, and many soup mixes or flavour packets are easy to pack and will keep for a long time. Add some fish (caught or packaged or smoked), beef jerky, pepperoni, or dried hamburger and you've got supper. For breakfast, oatmeal or granola work well, with powdered milk or rice milk on shorter trips. Lunch is the tricky one – if you don't want to

stop and make a fire or set up a stove, it has to be tasty and filling without requiring cooking. Cheese keeps a long time without refrigeration, although it will sweat. Soft tortillas are good – they keep a long time and you don't have to worry about squishing them (unlike bread). Bring along lots of trail mix for snacks while paddling. The following fresh foods travel well: potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions, turnips, apples, oranges and eggs (packed carefully). You can dehydrate foods to make your own meals and snacks. You can bring frozen foods along (in thermal bags) on 2-3 day trips and use them once they have thawed.

Flavour, flavour, flavour. Use dehydrated vegetables, spices, sugar and salt to add flavour to your basic food.

Temperature control. Use insulated bags to keep foods cool, such as cheese or cucumbers (short trips). Open the insulated bag in the evening to allow a complete air exchange with the cool air. You may be able to use bags of cold water to keep things cool as well.

Packaging. Avoid canned items as they take up a lot of space and you have to very thoroughly clean them and then pack the cans/jars out with you. Dried foods are good, but double-bag them to make sure they stay dry. Fish can be purchased in bags instead of cans. Beef jerky is an obvious choice. When packing, measure and re-package foods to minimize the packaging and space they take up.

Water. Do not bring bottled water for anything longer than a day trip. Buy water purification tablets or a filtration system and follow the instructions given. Bring extra bottles for processing the

water to make sure you always have lots available, so you do not get dehydrated. Consider bringing electrolytes, such as Gatorade juice crystals, if you will be paddling hard on hot days. Generally, a person requires 2-4 L of water per day (depending on body size and fluid loss).

Snacks. Store-bought or home-made trail mixes work well, along with dehydrated apples, apricots, bananas, and any other fruit you care to dry! Nuts, raisins, figs, crackers, carrots, granola bars, pepperoni, cheese, and many other common snacks are great, especially if you re-package them. Be especially careful to keep track of where the snack food is to avoid bear encounters. If you aren't careful, you might accidentally bring a granola bar into the tent in your pocket.

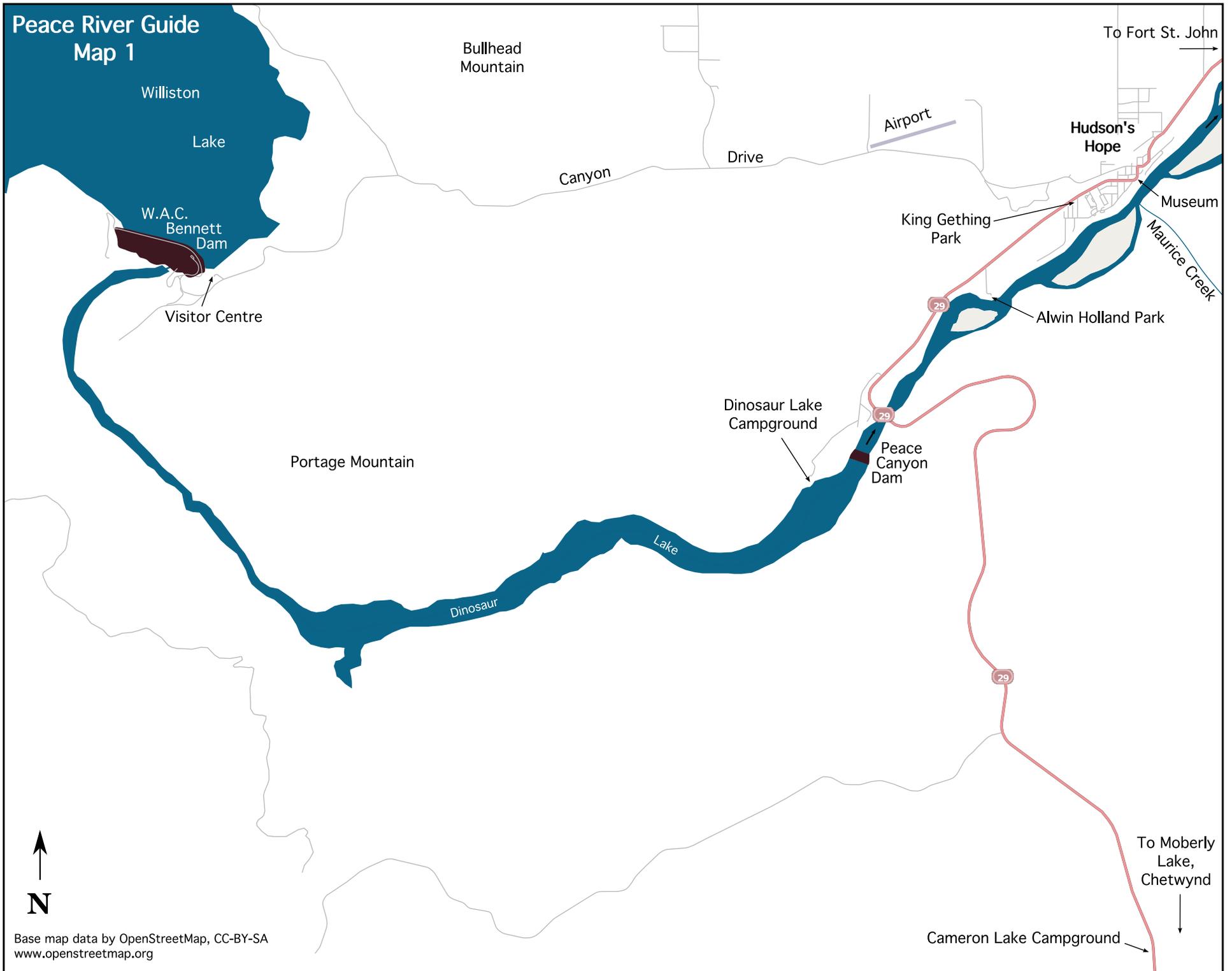
Fancy menus. You can bring ingredients such as flour, baking powder, graham wafers, etc., and try your hand at bannock, fruit cobbler or any other food you make at home. You can bake on an open fire or stove using cast-iron pans or other cookers. You are only limited by your preparation time, imagination, and the volume/weight capacity of your boat. There are many books on camp cooking, so I refer you to them if you want a fancier menu.

Images

All photos in this section are by Darren Griffith.

All illustrations by Teresa Griffith.

Peace River Guide Map 1



Guide 1

Hudson's Hope – The Starting Point

Name of River Section	Hudson's Hope – The Starting Point
Paddling Time	N/A
Paddling Distance	N/A
Rapids (Class number)	N/A
Portage	N/A
Typical speed of current on this section	N/A
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	Yes
Appeal to Families & Children	Explore history, hydroelectric dams and lovely parks in this town in the Rocky Mountain foothills.
Appeal to People with passion for topic	See the “source” of the Peace River – the two hydroelectric dams that control the flow of the river.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	N/A
NTS maps required for this guide	Highways only: 94 A, B (A/4, B/1); plus the river: 93 P, O (P/13, O/16)

There are many sights to see in and around Hudson’s Hope – two massive hydroelectric dams, a lovely museum, visitor centre, parks and, of course, the river! This area is the eastern boundary of the Rocky Mountain foothills, which makes it very picturesque.

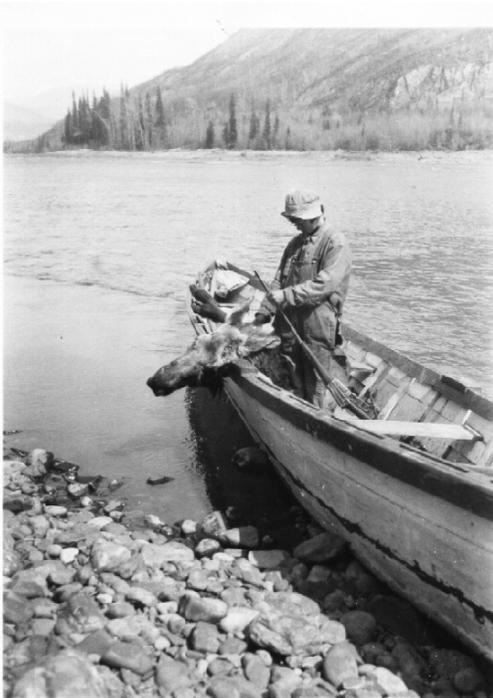
Hudson’s Hope has a long and interesting history. The first white men to see the area were Alexander Mackenzie and his crew in 1793. The first fur trade post, called Rocky Mountain Portage

House, was established by the North West Company in 1805. It was near the mouth of Maurice Creek on the south side of the river. In 1810 it moved to the north side of the river, and in 1868 was renamed “Hudson’s Hope.” In the late 1800’s, fur traders, gold seekers and, in the early 1900’s, ranchers and farmers came to the area. Gold was discovered along the banks of the Peace and Parsnip Rivers (in the Rocky Mountain Trench) in 1861 and 1862, which caused the British Columbia colonial administration – under the nominal control of the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) – to quietly move the border of British Columbia from the Rocky Mountains to the 120th meridian, making sure all known gold discoveries were within the BC boundaries.

In 1883, the “Peace River Block,” a parcel of land 3.5 million acres in size, was transferred from BC to the federal government. Unfortunately, this slowed the development of the area, but in 1907, land was surveyed for farming from Fort St. John to the western side of Hudson’s Hope. From this point, settlers began to put down roots, including a certain Englishman, Reginald Withers Shaw, also known as “Dudley” or “Deadly” Shaw – a nickname given due to his frequent use of the word “deadly” to describe camp food. He came to Canada in 1903 and made his way to Hudson’s Hope by 1912. He built a cabin, now found in Alwin Holland Park (see “possible campsites” below) where he lived until his death in 1965.

Jack Pollon was another early settler. He arrived in Hudson’s Hope in 1931 with his three children. After working in a sawmill and other odd jobs, he built a lime kiln to make quicklime, or calcium oxide, from natural limestone deposits. The first batch of

lime was burned in 1932, and by the 40's it was being shipped by the HBC boats to all points in the Peace and even all the way to the Bering Sea. The kiln was located below a natural spring along the steep north bank of the Peace River. One can still see the base of the old rock kiln, if you look closely; you would have to put a canoe in at the old ferry landing (the starting point of this paddling guide,



waypoint D02P01) and paddle about 200 m upstream and look along the north shore.

Dr. William Greene was a fascinating character in the Peace Region. He was born to a wealthy San Francisco family and, after high school, completed two degrees – medicine and dentistry. He was interested in aviation from a young age, and became one of the first

ten people to fly, competing with the Wright Brothers and Glenn Curtiss. He lacked the monetary backing, however, and travelled to Edmonton and then on to Hudson's Hope in 1911. He never mentioned being a pilot. He and his wife, Evangeline and daughter Ursula lived in a cabin near Hudson's Hope for four years before he

Peace River Paddling Guide

went away to WWI. After the war, the Greene family moved back to the Peace River Country, this time to the fledgling town of Peace River. Ursula grew into a remarkable outdoorswoman, felling trees and blazing trails, driving her father's dog team in races in the town of Peace River, and later becoming a movie actress using the name "Toni Crane." The photo at left shows Ursula in a large canoe with a dead moose.

One of the HBC boats that plied the waters of the Peace was the *D.A. Thomas* (at right). Originally built by David Alfred Thomas, appointed Baron Rhondda, it was the largest of the steamers on the Peace, measuring 49.3 m (161.9 feet) long, 11.3 m (37 feet) wide and 1.9 m (6.3 feet) deep (draught). It had three levels plus the

wheelhouse. From the launch on May 31, 1916 to the end of the season in 1921, it travelled between Hudson's Hope and the



Vermilion Chutes regularly. It was bought by the HBC in 1924, who operated it for the next 6 turbulent years. It was eventually sent over the chutes, where it limped to its last destination, Fort Fitzgerald. The wheelshaft is on display on the grounds of the Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre.

No visit to Hudson's Hope is complete without seeing the hydroelectric dams. The first one, farther upstream, is the W.A.C. Bennett Dam. It is a massive earthfill dam built in the 1960's. It is 183 m (600 feet) high and 2 km (1.2 miles) wide along the top. At its peak, 4,800 people were employed to work on it. They blasted out huge diversion tunnels to direct the river's flow through an outcrop of bedrock – converting the river bed into a dry construction site. An abandoned coal mine was excavated further to house the power generating turbines and rock was quarried from a hill – Portage Mountain – and moved via a huge conveyor 1.7 m (66”) wide and 4.8 km (3 miles) long to the dam site. Stop in at the visitor centre (waypoint D01P01) to learn more and sign up for an underground tour of the power station. It is located about 20 km



Peace River Paddling Guide

west on Canyon Drive. You can also drive across the dam and enjoy the view from a lookout area on the west side (above). Notice the coal seams in the canyon walls and the striking, folded layers in the



Cretaceous bedrock. The bedrock on either side of the river is from the Gething Formation of the lower Cretaceous, composed of sandstone, minor shale, coal deposits and conglomerate.

The Bennett Dam created Williston Lake or Reservoir, one of the largest man-made lakes in the world. It is 300 km long, covers an area of 1,773 square km, and has been a subject of some controversy. The river banks were not logged before the reservoir was flooded, so there was and continues to be a great deal of dead heads and floating debris in the lake. The shores are unnatural and have severe erosion – sandstorms are common on windy days.



Rising and falling lake levels create ugly shores prone to erosion. Many natives who lived in villages along the river were forcibly relocated as their lands were flooded; many early homesteads and trapper's cabins are now underwater as well.

Williston Reservoir flooded the Rocky Mountain Trench and what Alexander Mackenzie's crew called the "ne parlez pas" rapids, since they didn't make a great deal of noise upon approach. The dam also flooded the Finlay and Parsnip Rivers – the Parsnip is the river Mackenzie followed.

The second hydroelectric dam, Peace Canyon Dam, completed in 1980, created the Dinosaur Lake Reservoir. At 21 km (13 miles) long, it is much smaller than Williston Reservoir, and its creation flooded the legendary Peace Canyon Rapids. The river through the rapids on the whole dropped 68 metres (225 feet) over 29 km (18 miles), which is now under Dinosaur Lake and Williston Reservoir. Alexander Mackenzie described them in May of 1793 by saying "...the river above us, as far as we could see, was one white sheet of foaming water." Local native peoples had warned Mackenzie about these rapids and told him about an established portage trail, but he didn't use it — he and his crew instead went farther upstream, with great difficulty, and when they could make no more progress, they portaged up and over Portage Mountain. The native trail was an easier if longer route, going around the mountain.

Many dinosaur fossils have been found in this area and Hudson's Hope even has a dinosaur named after it. The Hudsonelpidia, a large ichthyosaur (somewhat dolphin-like), which

was first discovered here in the early 1960's. You can view casts of dinosaur footprints at the Bennett Dam Visitor Centre (D01P01), or investigate actual dinosaur footprints about 40 km from Hudson's Hope near Gething Creek. Ask staff at the Hudson's Hope Visitor Information Centre, located downtown across from the museum, for more information and directions to the site.

You can tour the Peace Canyon Dam and stop in at its visitor centre as well – only 7 km from downtown Hudson's Hope. Go south on Hwy 29 (Don Philips Way) and watch for the Peace Canyon Road turnoff and signs for the visitor centre. You can also stay on Hwy 29 and drive across the bridge over the river near there and go to a small lookout area just downstream of the dam.

Go to Alwin Holland Memorial Park to see some spectacular scenery and flowerpot islands, including one named "The Coffee Pot." It is along the north shore of the river about 3 km south of Hudson's Hope along Hwy 29. You can camp here or simply enjoy the river.

Additional Notes:

- Hudson's Hope is in the Pacific Time Zone (one hour behind Mountain Time Zone).
- Watch for deer along all highways and in town.
- Hudson's Hope Visitor Information Centre is open May to September at 9555 Beattie Drive 250-783-9154. November – April, call 250-783-9901.

Waypoints

D01P01 (Bennett Dam Visitor Centre): 56° 0.723' N 122° 11.312' W / 10V Easting 0550593 Northing 6207717 / elev 712 m

D01P02 (lookout point on far side): 56° 0.875' N 122° 13.240' W / 10V Easting 0548587 Northing 6207976 / elev 697 m

D01P03 (campground): 56° 1.460' N 121° 55.720' W / 10V Easting 0566773 Northing 6209306 / elev 499 m

Possible Campsites

- King Gething Park – South side of Hudson's Hope (waypoint D01P03). Named after a founding pioneer of Hudson's Hope, Quentin Gething. \$15/night, includes one armful of firewood.
- Alwin Holland Campground – located 3 km south of Hudson's Hope off Hwy 29. Named after the first teacher in the area. \$15/night, includes one armful of firewood.
- Dinosaur Lake Campground – about 7 km SW of Hudson's Hope, along Hwy 29. Named after dinosaur footprints in the area (now underwater at the bottom of Dinosaur Lake). \$15/night, includes one armful of firewood.
- Cameron Lake Campground – located about 24 km south on Hwy 29. Has a very nice lake for swimming. \$15/night, includes one armful of firewood.
- For full information on campsites, see <http://www.dist.hudsons-hope.bc.ca/campgrounds.html>
- There are also two hotels in Hudson's Hope: the Sportsman's Inn

Peace River Paddling Guide

at 10101 Beattie Drive, phone 250-783-5523 or the Best Western 9006 Clarke Avenue, phone 250-783-2300

- There are two lodges on Williston Lake: Torwood Lodge (phone 250-787-6406) and Williston Lake Resort (phone 250-783-0837 or 250-412-2700)

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Images

(Colour Photos by Teresa Griffith)

Ursula Greene in a canoe with a dead moose, c. 1930 (Hudson's Hope Museum & Archives)

The *D.A. Thomas* docked just below present location of museum, c. 1919 (Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre, PRMA-MC 80.1123.18)

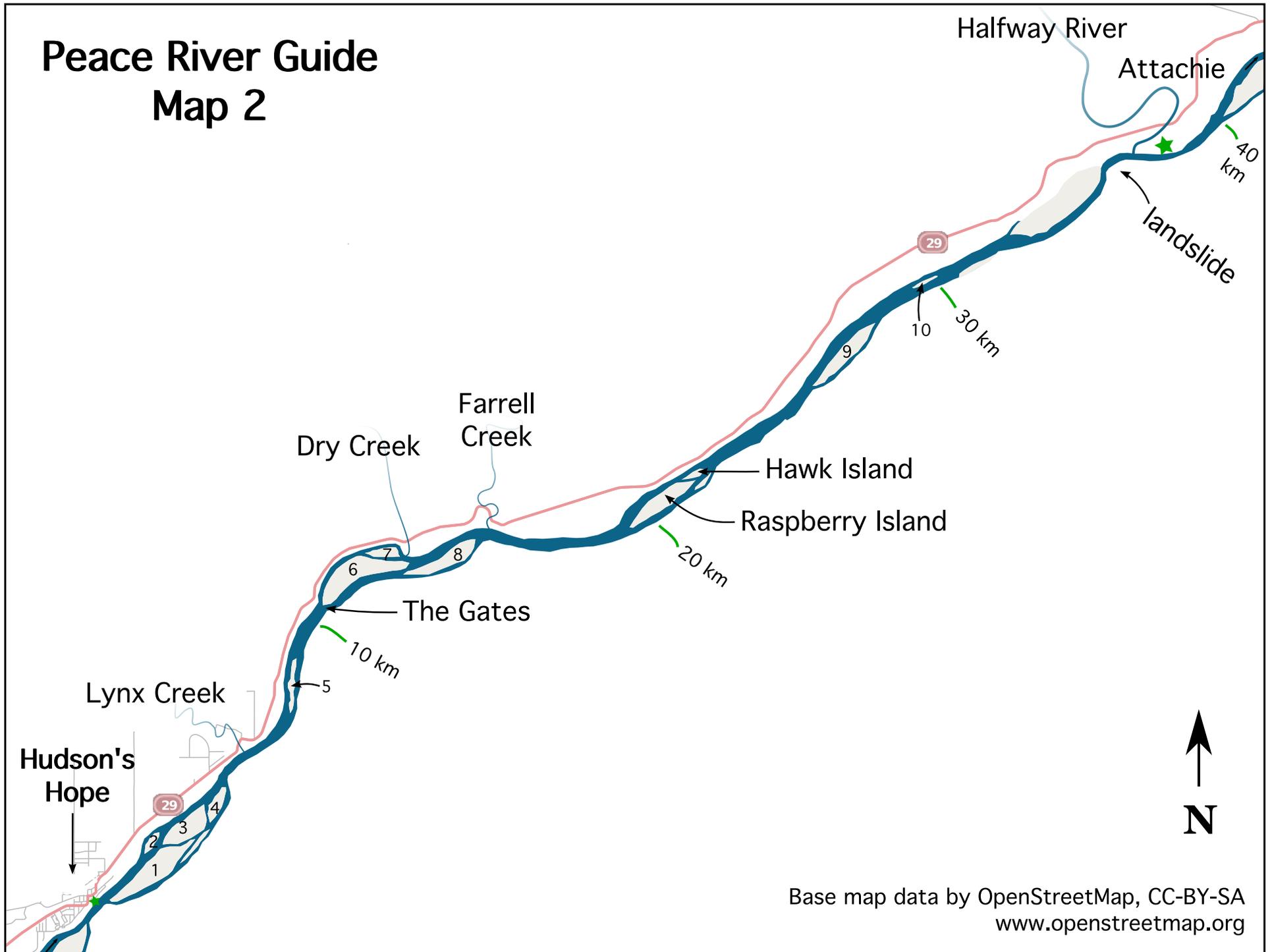


W.A.C Bennett Dam as viewed from the Visitor's Centre. Williston Lake is formed behind the dam.

Dam viewed from the west side. The water exits from the two outlets near the lower right of the picture.

Peace River Guide

Map 2



Guide 2

Hudson's Hope to Halfway River

This guide was written in 2010. This river section may now be affected by construction of the Site C dam.

Name of River Section	Hudson's Hope to Halfway River
Paddling Time	4 – 8 hours
Paddling Distance	38 km (0 km – 38 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids, small standing waves
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	2 – 6 km/h
Cellular telephone access	At Hudson's Hope
Appeal to Families & Children	This section makes an excellent day-trip for parents with older school-age children (they will be in the boat all day), or the start of a longer journey!
Appeal to People with passion for topic	Here, the Peace River has crystal clear waters, sheer cliffs and some of the most memorable scenery on the river.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	Yes
NTS maps required for this section	94 A (94 A/3, A/4)

Hudson's Hope is an excellent place to start your Peace River canoe trip. Arrive the day before you plan to start paddling so you can explore the area (see Guide #1 of this series for more

Peace River Paddling Guide

information). The put-in point is at the old ferry landing at the end of D.A. Thomas Road. If you enter Hudson's Hope on Hwy 29 from the east, turn left onto Clarke Ave (where the Best Western is). If you come from the west, simply go past the Best Western. About 260 m (850 ft) later, make a sharp right onto D.A. Thomas Road. Follow this gravel road to the water.



After passing through the generating stations of two BC Hydro dams – W.A.C. Bennett Dam and the Peace Canyon Hydro Dam – the waters of the Peace River are ready to flow! Crystal clear water flows through a beautiful, narrow valley, reminiscent of the canyon above the Peace Canyon Dam, where Dinosaur Lake is. The shores are sometimes vertical cliffs made of sedimentary rock with limestone outcrops and sometimes tremendous, steep hills.



The paddling is class 1 – watch for waves created by slowing or increasing currents, as well as shallow areas.

Take a look at your topographic map before starting. The put-in spot is just upstream of the first big island (indicated by “1” on the map which accompanies this guide). In the first 5 km, you'll pass between islands 1 and 2, and left of the next large islands (3 and 4).

After packing all your gear and pushing off, keep an eye on the left shore for a pile of vehicles pushed over the cliff! After passing the first 4 islands, you'll pass Lynx Creek, which has a private campground and boat launch. Around 9 km, on the left bank, is where the telegraph line was strung to connect Hudson's Hope to the outside world in 1915. Dr. William Greene (see guide #1) homesteaded in this area.

After about 10 km of paddling, you will paddle through “The Gates” – a narrow gap banked by vertical cliffs on either side. On NTS topo map 94 A, you'll see a fairly large island with a brown topo line; stay right of this to pass between The Gates. On this guide's accompanying map, the island is labelled with number 6.



The cliff on the right looks like a flowerpot island, although it is actually connected to the shore. The cliffs are made of sedimentary rock such as sandstone, mudstone and shale – lower Cretaceous

bedrock identified as The Gates Formation. The cliffs contain coal, fossils and petrified wood. Moose and other ungulates give birth to calves here as the island provides protection against predators. You can find a possible campsite just after The Gates, around 11 km, on the right. Go slowly and look for a path up the medium-high bank which leads to the camping spot. This site is maintained by the Peace Country River Rats.

Around 15 km, you will pass Farrell Creek on river left. There doesn't appear to be any community here any more, but in

1931 there was enough of a community to support a post office opening. The creek and village were named after Henry W. Farrell, a homesteader who moved to this area after World War I. There is a large flat after Farrell Creek called Darling Flat. It was named after John Watson Darling who homesteaded here in 1929. If you see cows along the flat or anywhere along the left shore from here to Halfway River, they belong to the Ardill Family. A ranch was

established in 1920 by Jack and Betty Ardill after Jack returned from World War I and found out he was eligible for a soldier's land grant. The ranch has been in the family ever since, and now has about 350 head of cattle that graze and feed off hay and grain grown on the fields closer to the river. Some buildings from the ranch can be seen on the left bank around 31 km.

If you take the right channel around the island locally known as Raspberry Island, you can find a nice possible camp spot about two-thirds of the way down the island. If you take the left channel around Raspberry Island, you'll pass by the Hawk Island campsite, also maintained by the Peace Country River Rats. Around 30 km, there is another possible camping spot. It is a hunting camp on the right bank just in line with the end of Island 10 (which is not much



Peace River Paddling Guide

more than a gravel bar).

Shortly before reaching the Halfway River mouth, you will paddle past the 1973 landslide. On May 26th of that year, after a period of heavy rain, 7 million cubic metres of clay and soil suddenly gushed down the hillside, creating a tsunami which obliterated the trees on the opposite shore. The landslide completely blocked the flow of the river for approximately 6 hours. The cretaceous shale that makes up much of the Peace River's banks is prone to landslides. You can see the result of the landslide: uneven sandy-looking banks on each side of the river, with trees growing on the top (see photo at left; aerial photo on next page).

The recommended campsite is at the 38 km mark, just after the Halfway River confluence. After passing the landslide area, stay to the right and watch for the mouth of the Halfway River on the left. Shortly after the river mouth, paddle over to the left shore and camp along the grassy bank. The one disadvantage to this site is that you will hear vehicle traffic on the highway, especially trucks gearing up and down the hills and across the bridge. Unfortunately, the highway is your companion until mid-way through day 2, after Bear Flat (55 km).

This area was a landing for river boats, and in 1912, Harriet Cadenhead established a successful ranch in this area. She was a 56-year old widow who built the ranch with the help of her children and 88-year-old mother. They had milk cows, beef cows, pigs and poultry, and grew a successful garden with corn, tomatoes, cauliflower, cucumbers, cabbages and other vegetables. They often sold butter, eggs, cream, bread and vegetables to people passing





through. The Tompkins family established a ranch nearby in 1919 which became very successful in breeding cattle.

If you brought a fishing rod, you might want to try near the Halfway River mouth to see what you can catch. The Peace in this area is

known to have mountain whitefish, arctic grayling, rainbow trout, lake whitefish, and walleye. Less common catches include bull trout, Kokanee, and northern pike.

Start – Hudson's Hope

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Hudson's Hope, BC, V0C 1V0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Hudson's Hope, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	29

Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	On Hwy 29, coming from the east, turn left onto Clarke Ave and then after 260 m, right onto D.A. Thomas Road. Follow this road to the water.
Parking Instructions at Site	There is room to turn around at the bottom of D.A. Thomas Road, but it is not a good place to leave a vehicle. Ask the Sportsman's Inn about parking your vehicle there.
Ownership of Site	District of Hudson's Hope
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Starting Point	10V Easting 0568142 Northing 6209823
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates	56° 1.7274' N 121° 54.3954' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	459 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Typical boat launch — sloping gravel to the river

End – Halfway River

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Hudson's Hope, BC, V0C 1V0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Hudson's Hope, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	29
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	Just east of Halfway River Bridge, turn south off Hwy 29. Follow gravel road/gravel bar to river.
Parking Instructions at Site	Park off gravel road near the Hwy.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0596720 Northing 6230654 (from Google Earth)
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 12.658' N 121° 26.437' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	6 m
Altitude of Site in meters	430 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Uneven grassy & gravelly shore

Waypoints

D02P01 (start point): 56° 1.7274' N 121° 54.3954' W / 10V
Easting 0568142 Northing 6209823 / elev 459 m

D02P02 (Gates campsite): 56° 6.002' N 121° 48.156' W / 10V
Easting 0574484 Northing 6217860

D02P03 (Hawk Island campsite): 56° 8.027' N 11° 38.553' W / 10V
Easting 0584365 Northing 6221800

D02P04 (end point): 56° 12.658' N 121° 26.437' W / 10V Easting
0596720 Northing 6230654 / elev 430 m

Possible Campsites

- Lynx Creek (7 km) – there is an RV park and campground right along the river, with a boat launch, sites with picnic tables and fire pits, washrooms and showers, a playground, mini golf course and horseshoe pits.
- Gates campsite (11 km) – located on right shore just after the Gates (Waypoint D02P02)
- Raspberry Island (~21 km) – Take the right (south) channel around the island, and look for possibilities along river left about two-thirds of the way down.
- Hawk Island campsite (~22 km) – Take the left (north) channel around Raspberry Island and then watch for a maintained site along Hawk Island, river right. (Waypoint D02P03)
- 30 km on river right, look for trail up to a hunting camp area.

Emergency Road Access

Hwy 29 follows the river along the left shore, so road access can be obtained by climbing the valley, or at Lynx Creek (use either the boat launch just upstream of the creek mouth, or use the access at the campground). You may see water trucks at the boat launch. Although Farrell Creek and Attachie are dots on the map, they do not appear to be populated. Road access at Attachie requires you to walk along the gravelly east shore of the Halfway River towards the highway.

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The Big Dam Country by Bruce Ramsey and Dan Murray

Northeast News, Thursday, January 29, 2009

<http://www.site-c-dam.com/search/label/Peace%20River>

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Peace Valley Environment Association “Paddle for the Peace” brochure

Images

The put-in spot, looking west (Photo by Teresa Griffith)

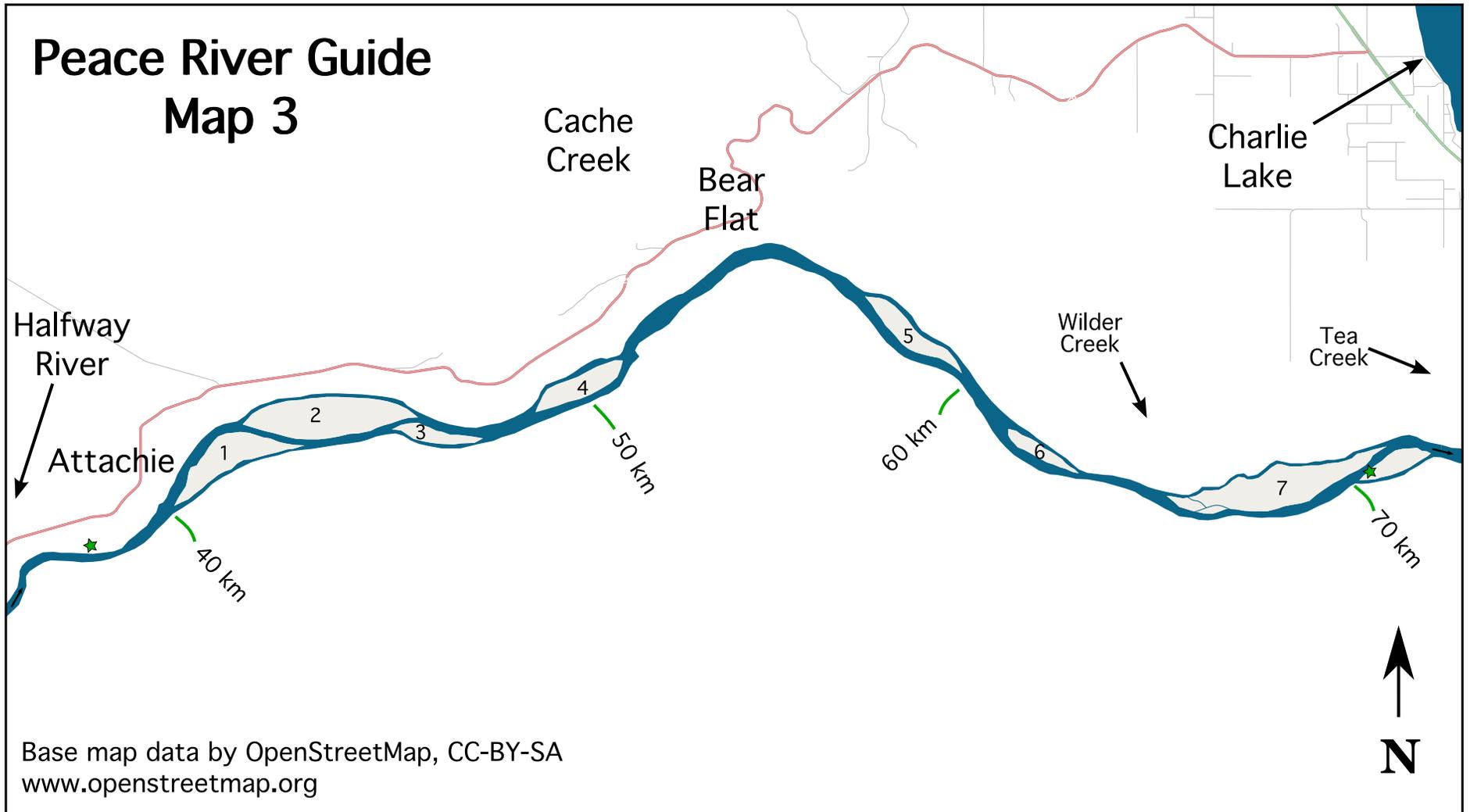
Approaching “The Gates” (Photo by Carolyn Kristensen)

The 1973 landslide, near the Halfway River mouth (Photo by Teresa Griffith)

Aerial photo of the 1973 landslide. South is up. (BC Government, photo number BC5529-75)



Peace River Guide Map 3



Base map data by OpenStreetMap, CC-BY-SA
www.openstreetmap.org

Guide 3

Halfway River to Island's End

This guide was written in 2010. This river section may now be affected by construction of the Site C dam.

Name of River Section	Halfway River to Island's End
Paddling Time	3 – 6 hrs
Paddling Distance	32 km (38 km – 70 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	2-6 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	possible near Fort St. John
Appeal to Families & Children	This section is great for families wanting a backcountry camping experience followed by a second day of paddling.
Appeal to People with passion for topic	More fantastic scenery awaits you on this section which diverges from the highway to become a true wilderness paddle.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
NTS maps required for this guide	Highways only: 94 A, B (A/4, B/1); plus the river: 93 P, O (P/13, O/16)

The Peace River continues to wind its way through a spectacularly high valley, past rocky cliffs and hillsides up to 400

Peace River Paddling Guide

m (1300 feet) high. Today, you'll finally leave the highway behind and start to feel like you're really doing a wilderness paddle.

The area you camped at is named after a Beaver Indian Chief, Attachie, who was a famous hunter and one of the signers of Treaty 8. Chief Attachie died in the flu epidemic of 1918-19 and is buried near the Halfway River.

You'll see the highest cliffs of the day after about 10 km of paddling on river left, just east of Bear Flat, but you'll start your day paddling with high cliffs on the right. The main channel of the river goes to the left of the first mostly-dried-up island. Along island 2, you'll pass the first possible campsite (waypoint D03P01). The main channel then weaves its way between islands 2 and 3 (see map).

Around 49 km, you'll come to the next island (4). If you choose to pass right of it, you'll see some camping possibilities on it. The "Beaver House" campsite is near the beginning of the island (D03P02). Then, the river wraps its way around a hook-shaped prominence coming from river right. You may encounter waves, boulders, and conflicting currents, requiring attentive paddling to keep you from being pushed to shore and for obstacle avoidance. The left channel around island 4 might be navigable as well, and if you take that route, you'll still encounter turbulent waters where the currents meet in this constriction.

You'll start to really see Bear Flat on the left, which you may remember from the drive to Hudson's Hope as having a great view of the river. Alexander Mackenzie describes it well in his journals



of his trip upriver on May 16, 1793 on his historic journey to the Pacific:

“The land above the spot where we encamped, spreads into an extensive plain, and stretches on to a very high ridge, which, in some parts, presents a face of rock, but is principally covered with verdure, and varied with the poplar and white birch tree. The country is so crowded with animals as to have the appearance, in some places, of a stall-yard, from the state of the ground, and the quantity of dung which is scattered over it. The soil is black and light. We this day saw two grisly and hideous bears.”

Bear Flat was a settlement with a post office that opened in November 1924, closed in 1928, re-opened in 1929 and then closed permanently in September 1950. Cache creek flows into the Peace from the left, and the 1300-foot high steep cliffs will be straight ahead. Almost directly across from (slightly downstream of) Cache Creek on the left is the Waterfalls Peace Country River Rats site (D03P03) on the right. If you stop at the coordinates, you should be able to hear the waterfall and find it about 15 m (50 feet) from the river. An underground stream, which flows year-round, emerges from the cliff, eroding shelves and holes in the rock. It’s a nice place to stop for lunch and explore.

Most of Bear Flat would be flooded in the creation of the reservoir behind BC Hydro's Site C dam. There are signs showing where the new waterline will be, but these are not easily visible from the water. The reservoir will be filled up to an elevation of approximately 461 m above sea level (normal high water level)

once completely filled, a process believed to take only one to two months. Four sections of highway 29, including the one you can see coming down the hill, will be flooded and have to be rebuilt farther up. Take a look at the elevation reading on your GPS and try to imagine where the new shorelines would be. All but the highest island near Hudson’s Hope (the left side of The Gates) will be submerged.

The geology of the Peace River Region is on display here. Since Farrell Creek, the bedrock along the shores has been in the Shaftesbury Formation. This formation is shale, and generally grey, but you can see striping of lighter grey and even orange in some places along the banks. Along one cliff around 53 km, a striking



contrast is visible between dark grey and orange bedrock. The orange layer is a ferruginous mudstone (containing iron).

After you complete the right-hand curve, watch for a possible campsite at about 58 km (D03P04). There's a steep but short path leading up the bank to a clearing among the trees. There are often elk hunters camped here, so if you're paddling in September, this spot might be taken! Elk are a large member of the deer family and have a dark neck and head and a lighter body and rump. Their distinctive, unearthly, bugling call can be heard all along this stretch of the river, especially in the evening in September. Elk were originally brought into this area from Yellowstone National Park in 1917-1920 and they have been thriving ever since. Elk hunting in



fall is a popular pastime for locals and tourists alike.

Around 63 km, you'll start to see some island-like shores on the right, which, on a topo map, look like downstream pointing “fingers.” These are from islands, when most of the channel between the island and shore have dried up. The next possible campsite can be found on one of these “fingers,” around 66 km, along river right. It is the Peace Country River Rats’ Limestone site (D03P05).

The end point of this guide is a very nice camping spot near the beginning of the island which starts at 70 km on river right – The River Rats have named it “Island’s End.” If you prefer, you can also stop about 100 m upstream (also river right). You could also go ~1.3 km farther to the downstream tip of the island and camp at another River Rats site, Eagle Nest.

START – Halfway River

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Hudson's Hope, BC, V0C 1V0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Hudson's Hope, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	29
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	Just east of Halfway River Bridge, turn south off Hwy 29. Follow gravel road/gravel bar to river.
Parking Instructions at Site	Park off gravel road near the Hwy.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Starting Point	10V Easting 0596720 Northing 6230654
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Starting Point	56° 12.658' N 121° 26.437' W



Accuracy of site coordinates	6 m
Altitude of Site in meters	430 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	uneven grassy & gravelly shore

END – Island’s End

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Charlie Lake, BC, V0C 1H0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fort St. John, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	97 (Alaska Highway)
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0623713 Northing 6232959
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 13.525' N 121° 00.276' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	416 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	gravelly landing with medium slope up to grassy campsite

Waypoints

D03P01 (Rotary campsite): 56° 13.941' N 121° 22.620' W / 10V Easting 0600610 Northing 6233125

D03P02 (Beaver House campsite): 56° 14.263' N 121° 17.185' W / 10V Easting 0606209 Northing 6233858 / elev 420 m

D03P03 (Waterfalls): 56° 15.830' N 121° 13.469' W / 10V Easting 069973 Northing 6236861

Peace River Paddling Guide

D03P04 (possible campsite): 56° 15.295' N 121° 10.629' W / 10V Easting 0612931 Northing 6235946

D03P05 (Limestone campsite): 56° 13.065' N 121° 4.341' W / 10V Easting 0619538 Northing 6231987

D03P06 (end point): 56° 13.568' N 121° 00.170' W / 10V Easting 0623821 Northing 6233043 / elev 416 m

Possible Campsites

There are 4 campsites maintained by the Peace Country River Rats in this guide’s section – Rotary, Beaver House, Waterfalls, and Limestone Campsite:

- Rotary (42 km), on the island, river left (waypoint D03P01)
- Beaver House (49 km) on the south side of island 4. Pass on the right side of the island and watch for the site on the left. (D03P02)
- Waterfalls (54 km) on the right shore, across from Bear Flat (D03P04)
- Hunter's camp (58 km), look for a trail leading up the bank (waypoint D03P04). Not a River Rats site.
- Limestone (66 km) along river right.

Emergency Road Access

Hwy 29 follows the river quite closely, so access would be along river left wherever possible, until after Bear Flats. Beyond the



60 km point, access is limited to one questionable trail downstream of the Wilder Creek on river left. If you have trouble in camp, it would probably be best to paddle downstream about 6 km to the Site C dam site (there is road access on the left shore).

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Images

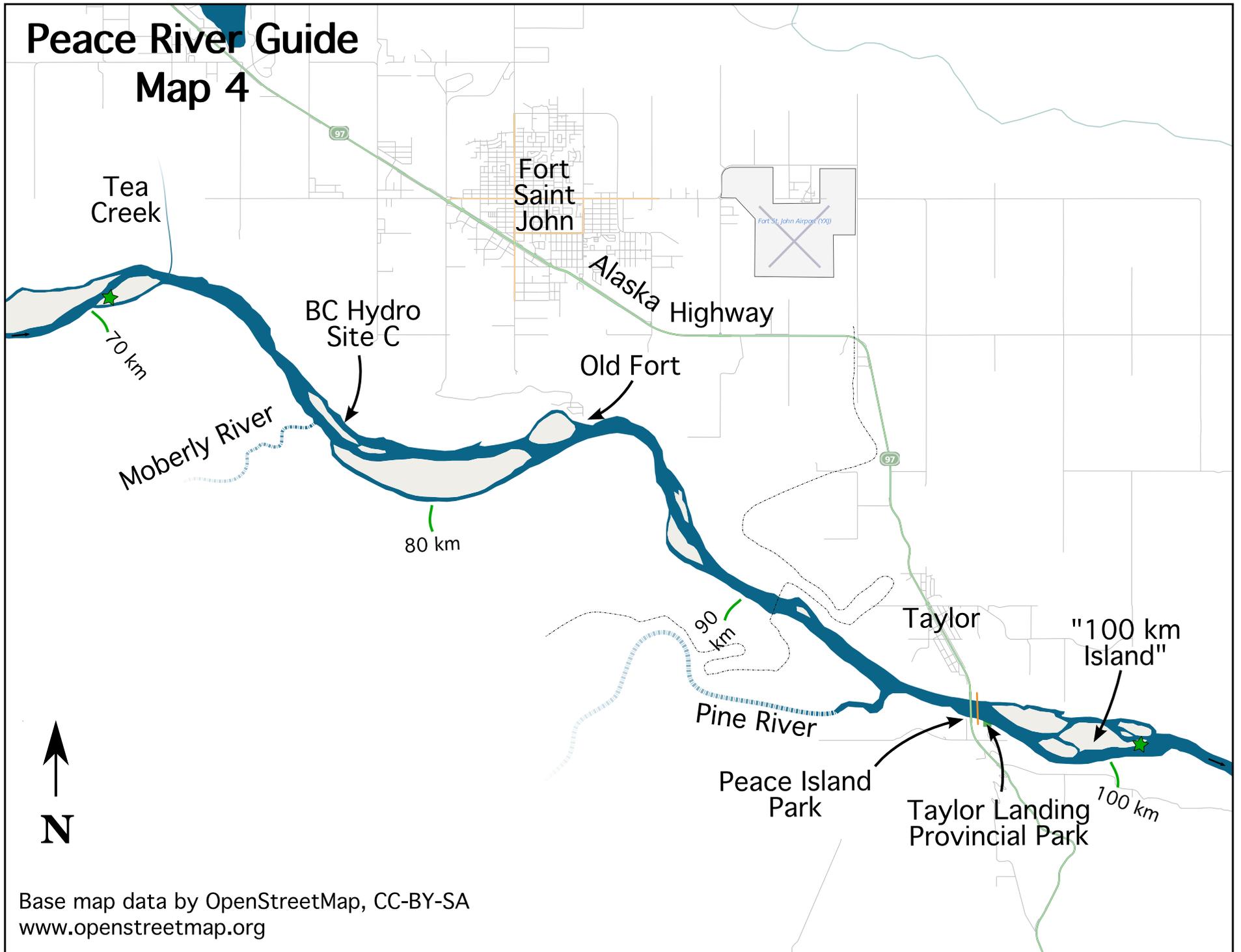
(All photos by Teresa Griffith)

Cliffs along the Peace River

Near Island's End campsite, facing downstream

Peace River Guide

Map 4



Base map data by OpenStreetMap, CC-BY-SA
www.openstreetmap.org

Guide 4

Island's End to 101 Kilometre Campsite

This guide was written in 2010. This river section may now be affected by construction of the Site C dam. Use caution!

Name of River Section	Island's End to 101 Kilometre Campsite
Paddling Time	3 - 6 hrs
Paddling Distance	31 km (70 km – 101 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	2-6 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	possible at Taylor, BC
Appeal to Families & Children	This section makes a great Day Two of a paddling trip with a taste of the wilderness and then a return to civilization (Taylor, BC).
Appeal to People with passion for topic	This section takes you through wilderness and industry, and past the Site C dam location -- an area that will be off-limits if the dam is approved.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	No
NTS maps required for this section	94 A (94 A/2)

Today, you'll be reminded of civilization, technology, and progress as you paddle under three bridges, cottages and pulp mills,

and through the proposed Site C dam area.

Within a few minutes of leaving camp, you'll pass from 121° West to 120° West, which will necessitate a map change, of course. A few minutes more and you'll paddle by Tea Creek on the left. At the mouth of this creek, a fort was built by explorer John Finlay in 1797, just 4 years after Mackenzie had come this way. Like Mackenzie, he was unsuccessful in finding a better route to the Pacific; successful surveyor David Thompson visited this fort in the winter of 1804 after walking from Fort Fork (near the town of Peace River) over the frozen river. Of all the forts on this part of the Peace, Fort St. John moved around the most. At the downstream end of the island you just camped on is Eagle Nest, a River Rats camp site.

Five kilometres into your day, you'll see the Moberly River valley on the right. To natives of the era when Alexander Mackenzie came this way, it was known as the Sinew River. Its current appellation refers to Henry John Moberly (1835 - 1931) who spent many years all over the Peace River country as a fur trader, off-and-on employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, hunter, and guide. In 1869, he built a house along the Peace somewhere between Dunvegan and Notikewin River called Moberly House, the first house on that stretch of the river. The next year, he went to Fort McMurray to establish as a steamboat landing for the HBC on the Athabasca River, which he operated until 1886. In summarizing his career, he said "during the years I was in the Hudson's Bay Company's Service, wherever there was opposition I was sent to

cope with it. Wherever an Indian camp was likely to be found I went. Thus I became thoroughly acquainted with the country from York Factory on Hudson Bay to Bella Coola on the Pacific coast, and from beyond the banks of the Saskatchewan to Hay River and Great Slave Lake."

The confluence of the Moberly River is the site of British Columbia's oldest non-native settlement. In 1794, one year after Alexander Mackenzie passed this area in his historic journey to the Pacific, a fur trading post was established by the Northwest Company on the Peace, just upstream of the Moberly. It operated until 1805, and a new fort was built the next year just downstream of the Beatton River. There were several other forts in different locations around Fort St. John, both south and north of the river, opened by the NW Co., Revillon Freres, Bredin & Cornwall and the HBC.

Immediately downstream of the Moberly, you'll paddle through the Site C dam area. The dam will be located about three-quarters of the way down the low-lying island near the river mouth (waypoint D04P01). You may see some fish traps – large aluminum cages with slow-rotating propellers – part of the ecological studies taking place during BC Hydro's stage 3: Environmental and Regulatory Review. You may also see and hear some engineering work or construction along the left bank. The dam would stretch 1120 m (3,670 ft) across the river, and rise 60 m (197 ft) above the river bed. Try to imagine that as you paddle by. If approved, the serious construction will begin in 2013 and river access will be

denied to canoeists, especially as the reservoir fills. As the water level rises, there will be a high degree of shoreline instability, which could result in landslides and seiches – tsunami-type waves – and in fact, the reservoir may never be stable enough to paddle. For certain, the area immediately upstream of the dam will be off-limits. Canoe trips would have to start below the dam.

Very near the center point of the dam and waypoint D04P01, there is a River Rats camp on the right shore, Birch Camp (D04P02).



As the river bends to flow due east (around 80 km), you'll notice steep hillsides on your left covered in a short, blue-green

shrub. I climbed a steep slope to pick a little and confirm that this is wild sage (*artemisia frigida*). It is wonderfully fragrant, and abundant along the Peace River valley, covering more hillsides as far north as Carcajou (see guide #20). This is one of the best places in Canada to see this plant thrive!



You'll paddle past the community of Old Fort St. John around the 84-km mark. The fort itself, built in 1860, burned down in 1973. Fort St. John was probably named after Father St. John, the first priest to set up a church anywhere near here, as early as 1803. There are some mansions perched on the hills, but also some more humble abodes. There is no public boat launch; all property along

the river is privately owned. There is a gravel bar near the middle of the river here, so you may want to navigate your way to the left (high) shore to take the curve. You'll see two prominent coulees (valleys) on the left; the one you'll pass first, directly north of Old Fort, is Bouffieux Coulee, named after George Bouffieux who homesteaded on the flat above this area in 1928. The second coulee, a little farther downstream, is named Crawford's Coulee, after Emily Loretta Crawford who homesteaded adjacent to Bouffieux in 1931. After the high bank on the left ends, you'll paddle along Beckwith's Flat (on river left) for the next 3-4 km, named after George Lewis Beckwith, who preempted (squatted on) this land in September 1931.

At kilometre 90, you'll pass under one of only two rail bridges



to cross the Peace. It was built in 1957 and the rail line has several switchbacks to deal with the steep slope of the valley – look on your topo map north and south of the Peace. You can clearly see the railway high up on the left bank if there is a train on it. The railway is shown as a dotted line on the included map.

As you approach Taylor, you'll see the mouth of the Pine River on the right, originally called the Epinette River (French for "pine"). Later, it was referred to as the South Pine and the Beatton River was called the North Pine. You may want to top up your water bottles before the murky waters of the Pine mix with the Peace.

Just after the Pine River confluence (D04P03), you'll paddle beside Peace Island Park. The river access is a boat launch on river right, just upstream of the highway bridge abutments. Be careful when you approach the boat launch, as it might be shallow in this area. The park has campsites, trails, a historic fort replica, boat launch, water pump, and picnic shelter. You could camp here if you're seeking company, but you will have to live with RV-style campsites (few trees) and traffic noise from the bridge nearby.

Taylor is a hub of activity and sights to see. It was named Taylor Flats after an early settler, Herbie Taylor, who did everything from trapping to farming to running a ferry. The name was later shortened to Taylor, but you can see the large flat on a topo map (river left). There are two bridges over the Peace here: the first, a highway bridge built in 1960 (D04P04) and then a pipeline suspension bridge, built in 1957. The highway bridge was

constructed to replace a suspension bridge which collapsed on Oct 16, 1957. The US army had built the suspension bridge in 1942 in the construction of the Alaska Highway, but the north abutment was built on a foundation of Cretaceous shale. Shale comes from mud that was deposited millions of years ago when this part of North America was covered by an inland sea. The resulting rock can turn back into mud when it is near the surface and wet, and often causes landslides. The first movement of the bridge's north tower was observed in 1952, and a survey was done to monitor the movement. In October 1957, after a period of rain, another survey was done and more movement was detected, along with cracks in the road leading to the bridge (from the north). On October 15, an alert truck driver noticed unusual settlement in the road. After an inspection, the road was closed by the army. Over the next 18 hours or so, slow movement was monitored and just after noon on the 16th, with 3,000 people watching, the 405-foot north section of the bridge collapsed, severing telegraph and telephone lines strung along the Alaska Highway, and causing traffic to be routed to a small ferry 16 km downstream and the rail bridge upstream.

Taylor has several oil/gas refineries/plants, a pulp & paper mill and a lumber mill. Taylor Landing Provincial Park is on the right about half a kilometre after the highway bridge (300 m after the pipeline bridge). This park has only the basics — a boat launch, toilets and parking facilities. After passing Taylor, plan to stay to the right of the next islands.

Today's end point is located at the downstream tip of “100-km

Island.” The main river channel passes to the right of the island, so you will see the spot on river left. It is a nice clearing at the top of a bank. The waypoint coordinates are in the river – paddle to the bank to find the camp spot.

START – Island’s End

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Charlie Lake, BC, V0C 1H0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fort St. John, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	97 (Alaska Highway)
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Starting Point	10V Easting 0623713 Northing 6232959
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Starting Point	56° 13.525' N 121° 00.276' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	416 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	gravelly landing with medium slope up to grassy campsite

END – 101 Kilometre Campsite

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Taylor, BC, V0C 2K0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Taylor, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	97 (Alaska Highway)

Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0648785 Northing 6223118
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 07.793' N 120° 36.366' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	398 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	from co-ordinates, paddle to left shore (on the island) and climb up the bank (8-10') to campsite

Waypoints

- D04P01 (Centre of Site C dam): 56 11' 40.45 N / 120 54' 44.772 W / 10V Easting 629530 Northing 6229696
- D04P02 (Birch Camp): 56° 11.586' N 120° 54.831' W / 10V Easting 0629448 Northing 6229530
- D04P03 (Pine River): 56° 8.544' N 120° 42.198' W / 10V Easting 0642699 Northing 6224305
- D04P04 (hwy bridge): 56° 8.207' N 120° 40.330' W / 10V Easting 0644653 Northing 6223745
- D04P05 (end point):** 56° 07.793' N 120° 36.366' W / 10V Easting 0648785 Northing 6223118 / elev 398 m

Possible Campsites

- Eagle Nest (~71 km) at downstream tip of island, river right. This site is maintained by the Peace Country River Rats.



- Birch Camp (78 km) on a flat on the right shore, about 700 m downstream of the Moberly River mouth (D04P02). This site is also maintained by the Peace Country River Rats.
- Peace Island Park, at Taylor, ~96 km, river right just before the highway bridge. Cost \$15-20/ vehicle. Call 250-789-9295 for information.

Emergency Road Access

Road access is infrequent, with road access down to the river at the Site C dam construction site (river left), through private land at Old Fort St. John, and on the right after Old Fort on the agricultural land (white on topo maps), but there wouldn't be much or any traffic on this road. Then there are three possible access points on river left:

- a trail near/under the rail bridge,
- around 92 km at 56° 9.287' N 120° 43.599' W
- about 200 m upstream of the Taylor bridges on the left at a building along shore (not very good access).

On river right, there's the boat launch at Peace Island Park, under the highway bridge, and a boat launch at Taylor Landing Provincial Park (river right, approx 300 m downstream of the pipeline bridge).

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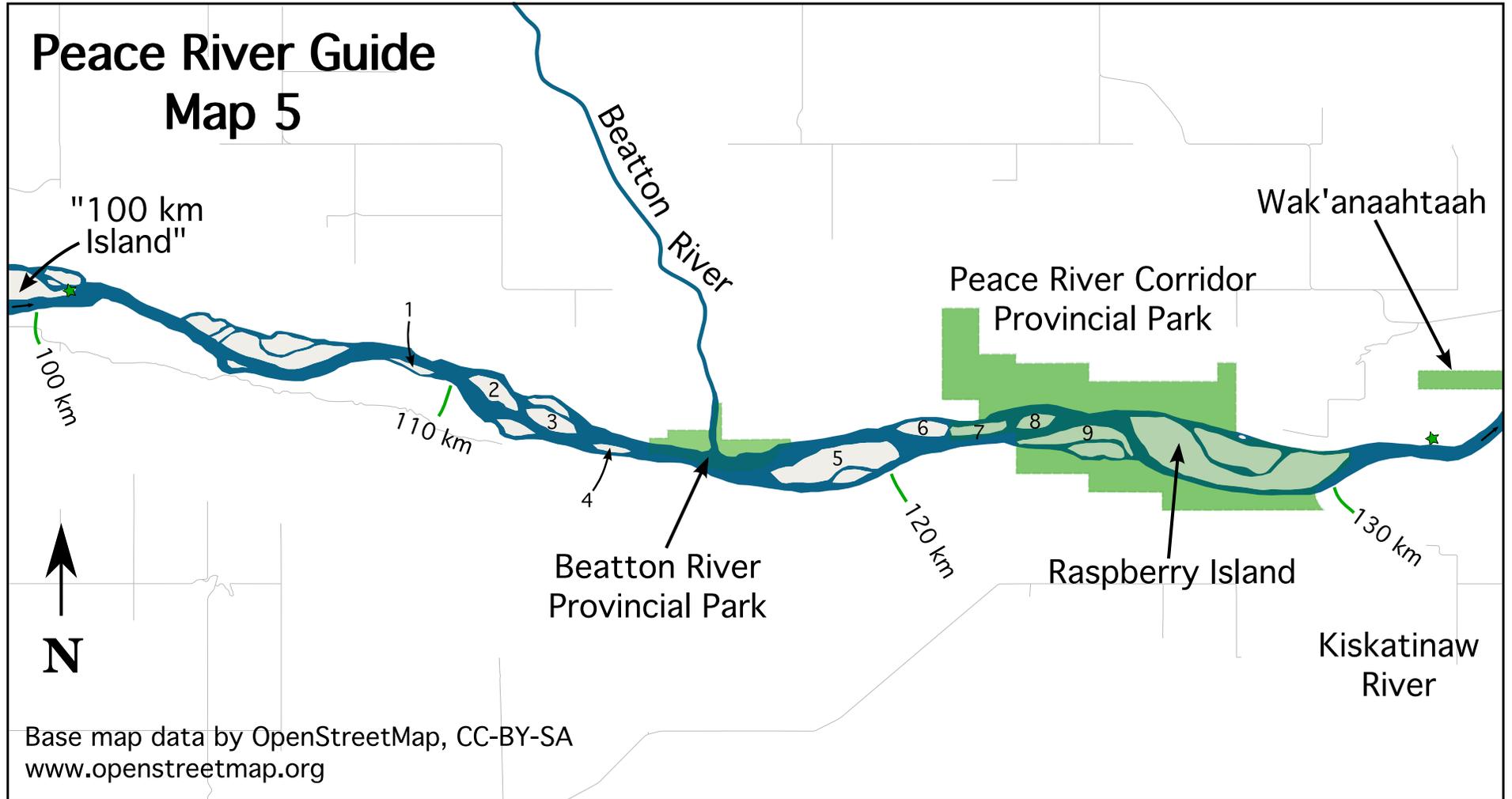
Images

Hillsides covered in wild sage (Photo by Teresa Griffith)

Prime Real Estate – Old Fort St. John (Photo by Teresa Griffith)

Taylor Rail Bridge (Photo by Carolyn Kristensen)

Peace River Guide Map 5



Guide 5

101 Kilometre Campsite to Driftwood Campsite

Name of River Section	101 Kilometre Campsite to Driftwood Campsite
Paddling Time	3.25 – 6.5 hrs
Paddling Distance	32 km (101 km - 133 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – small rapids associated with gravel bars
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	3-5 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	none
Appeal to Families & Children	This section is more remote than the others, excellent for leaving your technology behind and teaching kids to appreciate nature!
Appeal to People with passion for topic	A myriad of scenic islands awaits you, with gravel bars, forests, and bare cliffs along the most remote section so far.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	No
NTS maps required for this section	94 A (94 A/1, A/2)

Today's paddling takes you back into the peaceful, serene setting that the Peace River is known for. The shores of this reach feature spectacular rocky cliffs while the river shows you plenty of islands and channels. The left-hand shores for almost the whole day

Peace River Paddling Guide

are beautiful examples of differential erosion, creating spires and hoodoos.

Since The Gates (see guide #2), the shore bedrock has been composed of Shaftesbury Formation (grey shale) bedrock, but after Taylor, BC, outcrops of the Dunvegan Formation are starting to show. Dunvegan Formation is a younger layer comprising fine to coarse-grained sandstone, conglomerate, and shale (marine and non-marine). In general, sandstone resists erosion compared to shale (the Shaftesbury Formation), which results in hoodoos – upper rocks perched on spires that are being eroded out from under them. The same process creates the famous hoodoos near Drumheller, Alberta. These outcrops occur along the left bank for



the first 15 km or so of today's paddling.

Before long, you'll pass Palling's Flat – 103-106 km on the left. It appears as a white, dotted area on a 1:250,000 topo map. Around 109 km, you'll pass the first possible campsite (waypoint D05P01) on Island 1 (see the map for this guide).

After paddling 9 km, you'll come to the first grouping of islands. Take the left channel of the group of islands to stay in the main flow. Otherwise, you're likely to end up in a channel that's too shallow, especially if water levels are low. You can see a River Rats campsite (D05P02) on the side of the second large island, labelled 3 on the map. After Island 3, before and around Island 4, be alert for gravel bars which could create riffles or a constriction.

Shortly after passing these islands, you will see the lovely valley and confluence of the Beatton River (D05P03). Fill up your water bottles before you get there; the Beatton noticeably increases the murkiness of the water (don't drink the water without treating or filtering it, of course). Watch for gravel bars at this river mouth. There is a small river-access-only Provincial Park on either side of the Beatton (no



amenities). The North West Company established a fort here — about 500 yards upstream of the Beatton mouth — in 1806, named D'Epinette (Pine Fort). When the Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company amalgamated in 1821, the name was changed to Fort St. John. Unfortunately, there are no remains of the fort to be seen. The river itself was originally called the North Pine River, and its name was changed to honour Frank Beatton, an Orkney-born man who worked in this area for the HBC for 40 years. He was

known for being an advocate and mentor to the Beaver Indians in the early 1900's; Beatton later switched from fur trading to ranching.

The large island (2.5 km long) after the Beatton River mouth shows signs of dead trees at its downstream end. These trees were killed by forest fires in 2008 or 2009 – caused by either humans or lightning. It's not uncommon for fire to move quickly through, which results in somewhat-scorched dead trees still standing, rather than completely burned areas. Also, when firefighting action is taken quickly, the fire's impact is limited. There are also some dead (burnt) trees on the next island as well (on

river left) and a possible campsite (D05P04). There is reportedly a locally-used camping spot on the north river bank (the shore, not on the island) with firewood at about 121 km, but we did not see this for ourselves.

As you approach the next group of islands, you'll enter the Peace River Corridor Provincial Park. The park is an area set aside for conservation and does not provide any amenities. It is an important wintering habitat for deer (mule and white-tailed) as well as calving sites for moose (on the islands). There are 3 parts to the park: the main part, which you will paddle through; an area farther downstream and up high on the left shore called Wak'anahtaah, "a place to look at", which has beautiful hoodoos and rock formations; and the Alces River site (close to the BC/AB border) which has a lookout and picnic area.

Approaching the island-group at the west end of the Park (about 124 km), we chose to go right up the middle to start, with the skinny, hook-shaped island on our right (between Islands 8 and 9). We dodged shallow areas and followed the shape of the curve of Island 9. If you take this way, Raspberry Island will be on your left, and you can follow the right shore for the next 5 km, until you pass the islands. There is a nice camping spot on the first part of Raspberry Island (D05P05), which got its name from the wild berries that grow there. Keep an eye out for many interesting plants wherever you go exploring, such as prickly pear cactus.

Just after the 130-km mark, the Kiskatinaw River joins the Peace from river right. Kiskatinaw is Cree for "cutbank" and on



early maps, it bears that name. There is a second river another 2 km downstream and the destination campsite for today's paddling is directly across from it, just outside the Park's boundaries. I've named it the Driftwood Campsite – you'll see a dried-up island on river left, and part-way down the leading edge, a break in the trees and a pile of driftwood. It might have been a creek or channel at one time, or perhaps this gap was gouged out by ice during break up many years ago (before the Bennett Dam was built). Ice blocks have been known to mow down trees up to 2 feet in diameter. This site affords a nice grassy clearing high up off the river, without too steep of a climb. It is sheltered by trees on 3 sides, with the open side facing south and a beautiful view.

If you have time and energy to spare, you could also paddle 5 more kilometres to the Clayhurst Bridge and camp at the Blackfoot Park campground (or on the shore near it) located on river right, just downstream of the bridge. Look for the boat launch and then pull up on shore anywhere near there. This basic campground (with outhouses, fire pits, picnic tables) is just up the bank and in the trees on the flat, and you can camp closer to the water as well.

START – 101 Kilometre Campsite

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Taylor, BC, V0C 2K0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Taylor, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	97 (Alaska Highway)
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0648785 Northing 6223118
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 07.793' N 120° 36.366' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	398 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	from co-ordinates, paddle to left shore (on the island) and climb up the bank (8-10') to campsite

END – Driftwood Campsite

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Clayhurst, BC, V0C 1K0
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Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Taylor, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	64
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year Round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0678780 Northing 6220975
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 06.023' N 120° 07.533' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	391 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Climb up medium-steep riverbank near pile of driftwood. Camp on the flat.

Waypoints

- D05P01 (possible campsite): 56° 07.010' N 120° 29.090' W / 10V Easting 0656373 Northing 6221934 / elev 396 m
- D05P02 (Curl Camp): 56° 6.174' N 120° 26.122' W / 10V Easting 0659505 Northing 6220496
- D05P03 (Beatton River mouth): 56° 05.807' N 120° 22.625' W / 10V Easting 0663156 Northing 6219952
- D05P04 (possible campsite): 56° 06.130' N 120° 18.373' W / 10V Easting 0667538 Northing 6220720 / elev 394 m
- D05P05 (possible campsite, Raspberry Island): 56° 05.877' N 120° 13.462' W / 10V Easting 0672647 Northing 6220453 / 395 m
- D05P06 (end point):** 56° 07.793' N 120° 36.366' W / 10V Easting 0678780 Northing 6220975 / elev 391 m



Possible Campsites

- around 109 km, on the small skinny island (Island 1) on river right (waypoint D05P01)
- Curl Camp, 113 km, on the large island (Island 3), a Peace Country River Rats site (D05P02)
- Beatton river-mouth island: just south of waypoint D05P03. It might be too close to the water (low elevation) at times.
- Around 121 km, island on the left (Island 6). It is a large clearing, and the medium-steep slope of the shore minimizes walking distance between boat and tent (D05P04).
- Raspberry Island ~ 127 km, to the left of waypoint D05P05. Look for a space with evergreens on the left and silvery trees (probably Silverberry) on the right.

Emergency Road Access

All road access points in this reach are small, gravel roads/trails that are not likely to have much traffic. There appears to be a road or trail directly across from the starting campsite, on the south (right) shore, and another one about 1.5 km (1 mile) downstream from the starting campsite on the north (left) shore. Around 103 km, a road that roughly follows the river along the south shore comes close to the river (river right). Around 114 km, less than 1 km upstream of the Beatton, on river left, there is a road/boat launch. There is a road that leads to the north (left) shore

in the middle of the Raspberry Island grouping (approx 128 km).

Bibliography

The Big Dam Country, Bruce Ramsey & Dan Murray

calverley.ca

BC Parks: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/beatton_rv/#Location

Images

(All photos by Teresa Griffith)

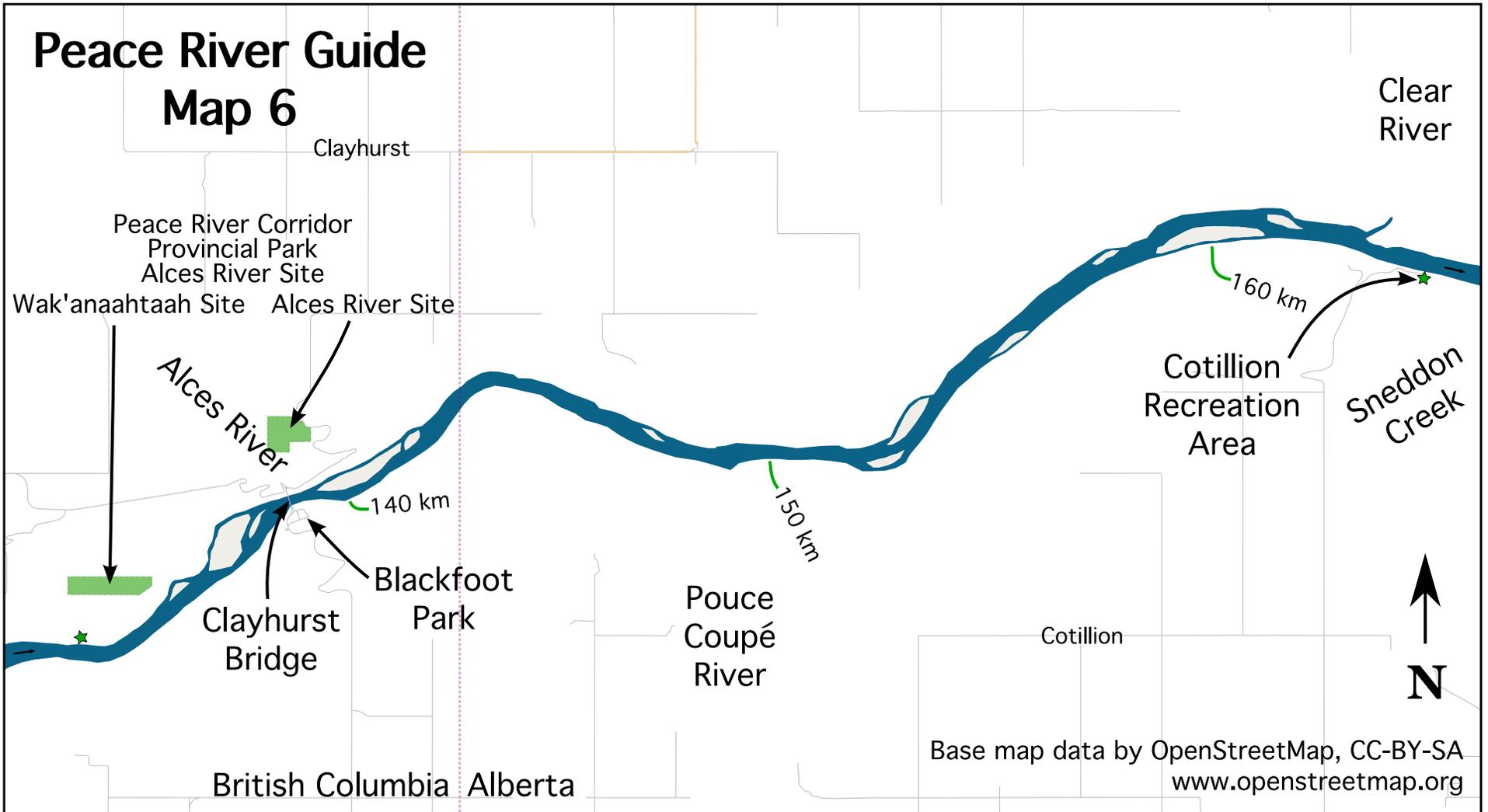
Hoodoos on the beautiful cliffs along the North bank

Mouth of the Beatton River

Kiskatinaw River valley in the distance (the closer of the two valleys)

Peace River Guide

Map 6



Guide 6

Driftwood Campsite to Cotillion Recreation Area

Name of River Section	Driftwood Campsite to Cotillion Recreation Area
Paddling Time	3 – 6 hrs
Paddling Distance	32 km (133 km – 165 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	2-5 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	none
Appeal to Families & Children	Experience wilderness paddling topped with rockhounding and camping luxuries at the Cotillion Recreation Area.
Appeal to People with passion for topic	Enjoy beautiful, serene paddling with minimal human contact on this stretch of the peaceful Peace River.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	No (but you could start at Clayhurst bridge instead)
NTS maps required for this section	94 A, 84 D (94 A/1, 84 D/4)

Today, you'll paddle another gorgeous stretch of river, with rock formations and eroded cliffs producing beautiful colours and shapes. You'll cross the border from British Columbia to Alberta, but you won't see the line – isn't it funny how we like to divide

things up on maps, but when you look around, it's all just one beautiful Earth?

The first notable thing you will paddle past today is the Wak'anahtaah, “a place to look at,” part of the Peace River Corridor Provincial Park. It is almost due north of the driftwood camp site, up high on the left bank. It's simply an area of cliffs and hoodoos within the first 4 km of paddling.

Not far from this site there is a gravel pit (56° 07.666' N, 120° 05.00' W) where many ancient bison bones have been found. The most complete Pleistocene Bison “medium horned” skeleton ever reported in Canada was found here by a local child in 1984, whose parents informed the North Peace Historical Association, who then contacted a specialist to excavate the bones. They have been dated to approximately 10,500 B.C. The bones are from an extinct bison, *bison bison cf. occidentalis*, which is similar to modern Wood Bison except for its larger horns.

The first big highlight of the day is paddling under the Clayhurst (Don Phillips) Bridge (waypoint D06P01). This area has always been a crossing, known as Rolla Landing, since the first settlers came to this area in the early 1900's (Rolla is a town/village south of the river). Pioneers built rafts and manoeuvred their way across the river on their own, or walked about 5-7 km into Alberta to cross the river on the scow owned by the Streeper family. This family had moved to western Alberta in 1918, and their homebuilt scow helped many settlers, and the mail, cross the river. The government was persuaded to put in a ferry at the Rolla/Clayhurst





crossing in 1939. The river was crossed by ferry until October 25, 1986 when the Don Phillips Bridge was opened. Leading up to the bridge, the current gets very churning as the river makes the sharp turn to the right (east). Watch for gravel bars on the left, near where the Alces River flows into the Peace.

High up on the left (north) shore is the location of John Ewaniuk's homestead. He, along with his family, was the first pioneer to the area, coming in 1930. Several other Ukrainian families came in 1931 and 32 and there were other English-speaking families that followed, too.

The Alces River on the left used to be called the Moose River, or Moose Creek. It was renamed to avoid confusion with another Moose River southeast of Mount Robson. The new name, Alces,

comes from the latin name for moose, *alces americanus*. Clayhurst was named after William Clay, one of the first settlers in this area north of the Peace in 1931.

Just after the bridge, you'll see a boat launch on the right – the most obvious sign of Blackfoot Park. This park has 10 rustic campsites with fire pits, picnic tables, outhouses, a swing set, and a raw water well. You can camp along the river here if you feel it's too far to walk to the actual camp sites. There may be a pile of driftwood on the shore, so make sure to land your boat before the pile, or even at the boat launch.

After passing the small island at 142 km (river left) and grey shale cliffs on the right, you'll pass from BC into Alberta – watch



your GPS to see when your longitude changes from 120 to 119, around 143 km. There is a distinctive hoodoo on a spire high up on the left bank which roughly marks the border. (See Guide #5 for more on hoodoos.) The cliff-forming bedrock for most of today is sandstone from the Dunvegan Formation and the more recessive rock is Shaftesbury Formation shale.

On the left, around 147-151 km, is Streeper's Flats; the scow for crossing was found along here. The area on river right from 140 to about 155 km is part of the Dunvegan West Wildland Provincial Park. This park covers an area totalling 20,968 hectares in 21 parcels of land, all found along river right, which you'll paddle beside off and on for the next 115 km. It is not indicated on the accompanying map due to its complex shape.

Around 147 km, you'll pass a spot where two creeks flow in opposite each other. The left is Moonlight Creek, and the right is unnamed. For the next 5 km or so, you may notice a decreased current as the river widens in this area.

At 149 km, the Pouce Coupé (pronounced "poos coo PAY") River joins the Peace from the right. There are many stories of where the name came from, including a chief or Indian trapper who cut his thumb and earned the name that way ("pouce coupé" is French for "cut thumb"). One source⁽³⁾ says that it is named after a Beaver Indian named Pooscapee ("poos ca PEE"), who was quickly nicknamed to "Pouce Coupé" by the French voyageurs. In the Beaver language, this word "Pooscapee" has a simple meaning: "a

small swamp, like behind a beaver dam." In any case, the river was named after an individual, injured or not, who was known in the early 1800s – explorer Simon Fraser mentioned him first in a journal entry in 1806. Just downstream of the Pouce Coupé River mouth is Maxwell's Landing.

At the 152-km elbow, there is an island to the right that isn't indicated on 1:250,000 topo maps (it appears as a gravel bar on the 1:50,000 map). It isn't a problem to pass to the left of it, and the island indicated on the left seems to have dried up and become part of the shore. After this elbow, river banks are somewhat unsuitable for camping for the next 7 km, however the islands around 159-161 km have many suitable camping spots.



Along the right shore after the elbow, there are white sandstone cliffs that are eroded to look like sponge toffee. This is an outcrop of bedrock of the Dunvegan Formation, from the Cretaceous period. The grey rock below it is part of the Shaftesbury Formation, a Cretaceous shale. There are a lot of places where you can see the shale below the sandstone (Dunvegan Formation) along the river from here to about Pratt's Landing. There are not a lot of places where you can see rock eroded so unusually; it is caused primarily by rainwater differentially eroding the sandstone.

Around 158 km, you'll see a very nice, wide pipeline right-of-way on both sides of the river where the trees were cut down (D06P02). All pipelines are mandated to be maintained – the trees and shrubs cut down periodically – and the major ones are patrolled regularly by airplanes or helicopters to ensure they are not leaking. Leaks are easily evidenced by dead vegetation or discoloured soil. There are only a few places where pipelines cross under the river; the line must be directionally drilled below the river bed, which is a very expensive process. There are actually three pipelines here, all natural gas from two different companies -- facts which you could determine yourself by climbing the banks and reading the markers. These pipelines vary from 27 cm to 91 cm (10" to 36") in diameter and travel for many kilometres from gas plants farther north. There are hundreds of thousands of kilometres of pipelines in Alberta altogether.

At 163 km, the Clear River joins from the left (although it may be completely dry). About 1.5 - 2 km downstream, you'll find

the mouth of Sneddon Creek on the right, and the location of the Cotillion Recreation Area. The name "Cotillion" comes from Cotillion Butte, a nearby round hill where sharp-tailed grouse perform their mating dance. The dictionary definition of "cotillion" is a formal dance, often where young ladies are presented to society or, from the French, a lively dance with complex steps and intricate patterns – not unlike the mating dance that male grouse perform.

If you land on the gravel bar that is at the mouth of Sneddon Creek (centre is waypoint D06P03) and start walking around, you should see truck tracks leading up the creekbed. Walk up the creek and look for the trail up the bank (D06P04) You'll follow this road for about 300 m and climb 14 m to reach the cabin (D06P05).



Maintained by Saddle Hills County, the cabin has electricity, running water, an outdoor shower, bathrooms, a telephone, and a beautiful wood stove for cooking on. You aren't supposed to actually camp in it — it's like a luxury group kitchen — but if it was raining, I don't think anyone would judge you too harshly, since you canoed over 160 km to get there! You do however have to walk about half a kilometre to get to it, which is a nice break from paddling. It's up to you if you think it's worth it, but the cabin is very nice. There are regular camp sites near the kitchen cabin, which include fire pits, fire wood, and picnic tables. If you choose not to hike up to the cabin, you may be able to find a suitable place to pitch your tent either before or after the gravel stream-mouth (although it is less-than-ideal camping terrain there) and just visit the cabin for a shower!

If you choose not to stop at Cotillion, you can proceed about 1.5 km farther and camp on the left shore, at the beginning of a flat. The slope is very gradual, so a small change in water level will result in a large change in distance to the river shore. When I last visited, there were cows on the flat, drinking water a little farther downstream, so I've dubbed it “Cow camp” (waypoint D07P01).

START – Driftwood Campsite

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Clayhurst, BC, V0C 1K0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Taylor, BC
County or Municipal District	Peace River Regional District
Nearest Primary Highway	64

Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	N/A
Parking Instructions at Site	N/A
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Year Round
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	10V Easting 0678780 Northing 6220975
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 06.023' N 120° 07.533' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	391 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Climb up medium-steep riverbank near pile of driftwood. Camp on the flat.

END – Cotillion Recreation Area

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Silver Valley, AB, T0H 3E0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Dawson Creek, BC
County or Municipal District	Saddle Hills County
Nearest Primary Highway	49
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	From Hwy 49, turn north on Rg Rd 115 (Pillsworth Rd) and follow it for 19.3 km (12 miles). Turn left on Twp Rd 812 and drive 1.6 km (1 mile). Turn north on Rg Rd 34 and drive approx 14.7 km (9.1 miles), then follow road as it curves down the valley. After 2.9 km, take the right side of the fork in the road, then go 1.3 km farther until you see the cabin on the right.
Parking Instructions at Site	Park near the cabin or at any of the camp sites.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Campsite open May 15 – Oct 15.
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0333008 Northing 6227999
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 10.061' N 119° 41.374' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	376
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Walk along gravel bar at mouth of creek for about 240 m, then follow the gravel road for another 300 m (up a medium-steep hill).

Waypoints

D06P01 (Clayhurst Bridge): 56° 7.560' N 120° 3.355' W / 10V
Easting 0682981 Northing 6223987

D06P02 (pipeline crossing): 56° 10.197' N 119° 47.114' W / 11V
Easting 0327080 Northing 6228487

D06P03 (end point, the Sneddon Creek mouth): 56° 10.061' N
119° 41.374' W / 11V Easting 0333008 Northing 6227999

D06P04 (trail up the bank): 56° 09.953' N 119° 41.418' W / 11V
Easting 0332955 Northing 6227800 / elev 378 m.

D06P05 (the Cotillion Cabin): 56° 09.975' N 119° 41.619' W / 11V
Easting 0332749 Northing 6227850 / elev 392 m

D07P01 (Cow camp): 56° 10.070' N 119° 39.160' W / 11V Easting
0335299 Northing 6227928 / elev 364 m

Possible Campsites

- Blackfoot Park, just beside the Clayhurst bridge (waypoint D06P01) on river right. The boat launch works fine and you can also take your boat out a little after the launch itself to be a little closer to the campsites. Beware of shallow areas and fairly strong currents.
- On the sides of any of the 3 islands around 160 - 161 km.
- Cotillion cabin. Campsites are nearby, just a little to the west. \$10/night for sites without electricity. The cabin closes officially on the October long weekend.

- Cow camp (waypoint D07P01), river left on the gravelly shore

Emergency Road Access

At the Clayhurst bridge, on either side, you could get out and climb up to the highway. About 4 km downstream of the bridge, on river left after you've passed all the islands (although there may still be a sand bar in your way), there is a gravelly area that leads to a small picnic area and then a road. The next access is from Cherry Point, river left, around 146 km. There is an undeveloped trail leading from the Clear River mouth as well, around 163 km, river left. There is road access at the end point, Cotillion Rec Area. There are two gravel quarries and a water plant not far from the campsite, so there is a little traffic.

Bibliography

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MacGregor, James G; *The Land of Twelve Foot Davis*; Applied Arts Products Ltd; Edmonton; 1952, p.160

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Images

(Colour photos by Teresa Griffith)

The Clayhurst Ferry (Glenbow Archives, PA-1815)

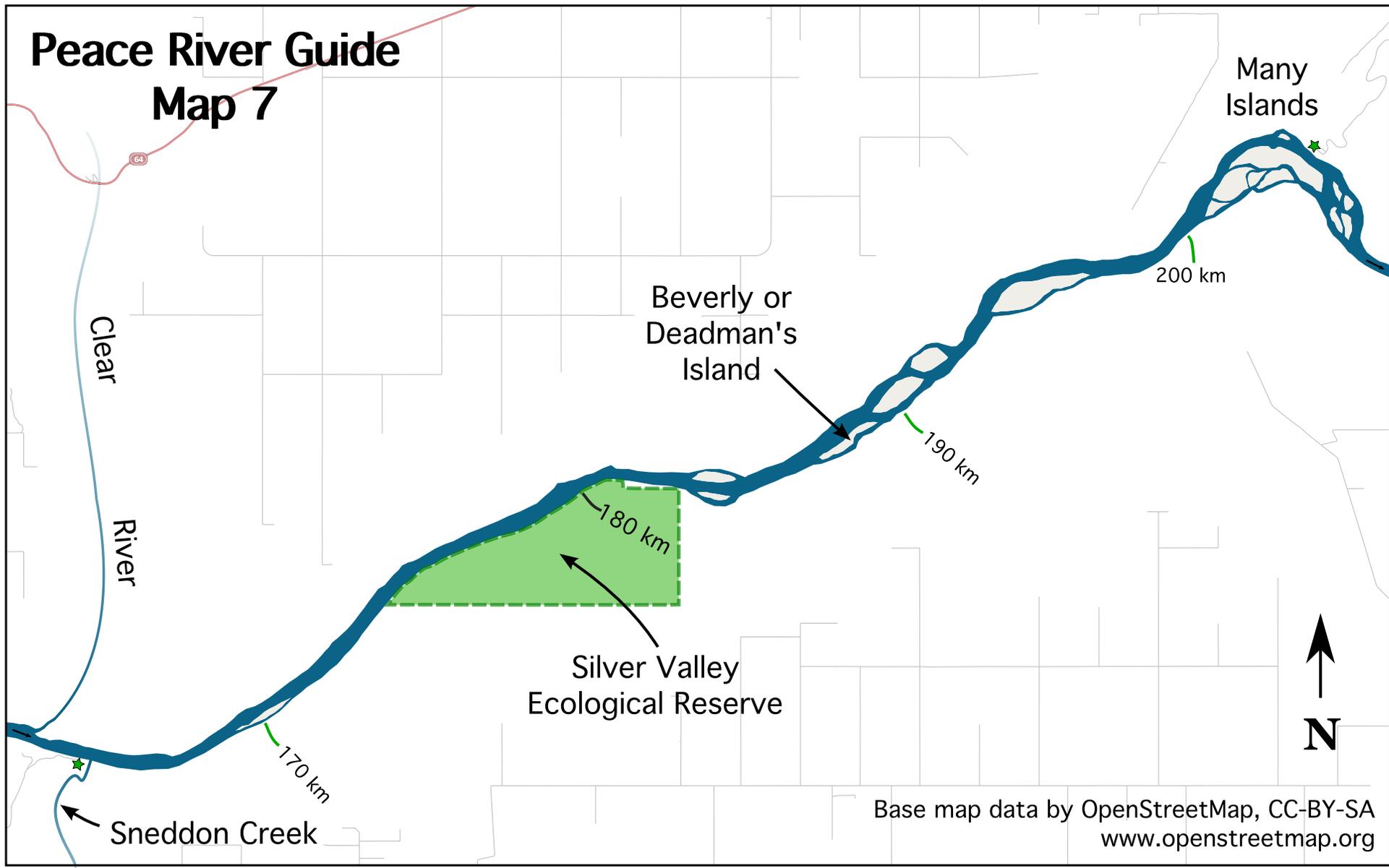
This rock eroded into a pointy shape roughly marks the border between BC and Alberta.

Cliffs on the right with a “sponge toffee” appearance

The cabin at the Cotillion Recreation Area

Peace River Guide

Map 7



Base map data by OpenStreetMap, CC-BY-SA
www.openstreetmap.org

Guide 7

Cotillion Recreation Area to Many Islands Park

Name of River Section	Cotillion Recreation Area to Many Islands Park
Paddling Time	4 – 8 hrs
Paddling Distance	40 km (165 – 205 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	2-5 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	Patchy at Many Islands Campground
Appeal to Families & Children	With established campgrounds at both ends, this section is great for people less interested in backcountry camping and more keen on roaring campfires!
Appeal to People with passion for topic	Today's section takes you past steep banks, open stretches and island vistas.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	Yes
NTS maps required for this section	84 D (84 D/4, D/3, D/6)

Today, the Peace River starts to feel more like a prairie river than a mountain one. The banks change; although they are still steep and, in places, towering, they are not as sheer and the rocks are embedded in sandy/gravelly cliffs. There are virtually no islands

until, not surprisingly, Many Islands – your destination for today. You'll paddle a little farther than the last several days – 40 km – but the campsite is worth it. There are no towns or villages on this reach, and minimal signs of people. Enjoy the peaceful wilderness paddling.

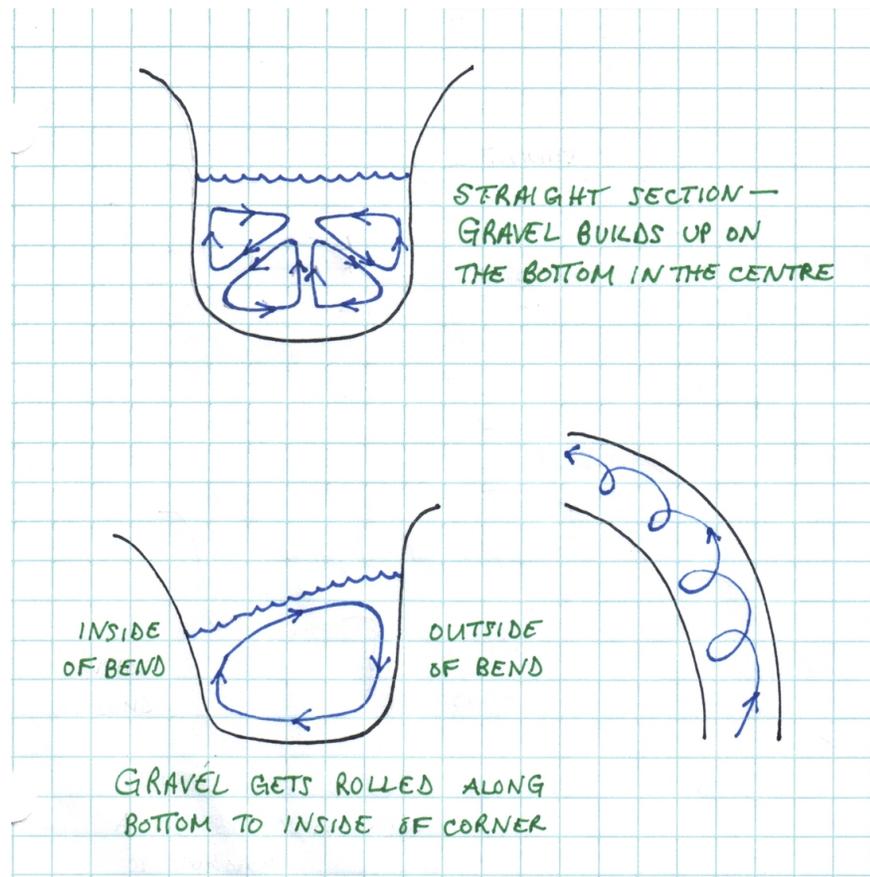
The Cotillion Rec Area is located at the mouth of Sneddon Creek. This creek was named after a decorated soldier from WWII, Flying Officer J. A. Sneddon. He was born in Edmonton on June 11, 1923, joined the RCAF in 1941 and was posted overseas in 1942. He completed 115 operational missions with 115 Squadron. On July 1, 1943, he received the DFM and was cited as a rear gunner of the highest order, and was later raised to a commissioned rank. He was reported missing after air operations on January 14, 1944.

After about 2 km of paddling, you'll go by a possible campsite dubbed the “Cow Camp” on your left (D07P01). It is at the beginning of the small flat, and there are sometimes cows pasturing nearby and drinking water from the river. The slope is shallow here, so you may have to walk a ways to find high enough ground to pitch your tent.

The Peace flows NNE all day today, with various small, unnamed creeks flowing in from both sides. There are not many gravel bars due to the river's straighter course. Gravel bars, and eventually islands, develop on corners in the river because of the secondary river current. You are certainly familiar with the primary current – that's what carries you along – but the secondary current

which flows diagonally cross-ways along the river bottom will roll pebbles and rocks toward the inside of the curve. These rocks gradually pile up and form bars and islands. Many people think that the water flows slower on the insides of the curves, where it subsequently “drops its load” of gravel, but a river like the Peace does not have the power to “carry” rocks in the first place. The secondary current along the bottom causes rocks to roll and

eventually pile up. The secondary currents are helicoidal (spiral-shaped) on a curve and can be quite complex. As the shape of the riverbed changes, they evolve too. Thus, gravel bars can in reality occur anywhere, and it's almost guaranteed there will be some type of bar or shallowing on the inner shore of any curve (see illustration). The group of islands and gravel bars at 200-205 km – named simply “Many Islands” – were created by this same mechanism. Notice the large curve on which they are located.



The island at 169 km is very close to shore and you may not notice it. About 3 km after the end of this island, the Silver Valley Ecological Reserve begins on the right shore. It is about 4,460 acres (1,805 hectares) of land set aside as undisturbed forest habitat, and the only access allowed is on foot (no motorized vehicles). Camping and making campfires is not allowed within the park, which is home to moose, mule deer, and black bears. For the botanists out there: several plant species have also been found here, well outside their normal range: drooping wood reed, turned sedge, striped coralroot, low milkweed, clustered broom-rape, alpine aster.

The banks along this stretch appear like eroding rock with outcrops of bare bedrock. Except for some rock near Hudson’s Hope, all the surficial rock you've paddled past so far is classified as fine-grained glaciolacustrine deposits (denoted on surficial geology maps by *fL*). Glaciolacustrine: *glacio* meaning “to do with glaciers” and *lacustrine* meaning “relating to a lake.” This means the sediment, silt, and clay were left behind by a glacial lake – glacier meltwater was kept in a lake because of the natural contours



of the land (hills and an ice dam). The Peace River incises these glaciolacustrine deposits for most of your journey, although from about 160 km almost all the way to Fort Vermilion, eolian, or wind-driven sand/sediments are common (denoted as *E* on geology maps), described as “sand and minor silt; dunes, blowouts and undulating plains; in most places overlies deltaic sediments, coast lacustrine sediments or glaciofluvial deposits.” In the Hudson’s Hope and Notikewin area, there are also a few areas of *Gp* glaciofluvial deposits, different from glaciolacustrine deposits because they are made by moving water (fluvial). *Gp* is described as “plain” deposits, “sand and gravel; deposited by outwash sheets, valley trains, and terrace deposits.”

Peace River Paddling Guide

The exposed bedrock you can see shows two distinct layers: a grey layer below a reddish-brown layer (see photo). The reddish-brown layer is sandstone from the Dunvegan Formation and the grey below is the marine shale of the Shaftesbury Formation. The Dunvegan is slightly younger than the Shaftesbury, and this is the lay of the exposed rock from about 170 km to Many Islands. Between the Alberta-BC border and 170 km, the Shaftesbury Formation peeks out here and there for a few kilometres, but the Dunvegan is continuous. There are slight white and red layers visible in places between the grey and orange which are the result of ancient soil-forming processes indicating that this part of the Dunvegan had been exposed to air for extended periods of time (during the Cretaceous).

Around 185 km, you’ll paddle by Campbell’s Landing on river left, just after passing the two opposing islands. Between 188-192 km, there is a series of islands. The first is known locally as Beverly Island or Deadman’s Island. Staying left of the first two then swinging right of the third works well. On 1:250,000 topo maps, there are 4 islands, but in reality the second and third are joined, and host a nice, large, grassy campsite. Gold was discovered in the vicinity of the second island. I wonder if that has anything to do with naming the previous island “Deadman’s,” but this is just speculation!

After the third island, a creek joins the Peace on river right; at one time, there was a sawmill located on the flat downstream of the creek, and logs were floated downriver to the mill. The current



speeds up as it passes through the constriction at 193 km.

Keep an eye out for small hunters'/trappers' cabins along this stretch of the river (up to Pratt's Landing). One cabin in particular, Moffat's cabin, can be seen on river left around 197-8 km. Although we didn't explore it ourselves, we heard it is not in great shape but would be a roof over your head at least.

If you see a lot of boats on the water, it could be because the Many Islands Poker Rally is taking place. In 2011, the 15th annual rally will take place as part of the Fun Days on June 24-26, but (in other years) it could also be scheduled for a weekend in July. Participating boats start at Many Islands Park, power upstream to collect cards at certain stopovers, and then head back to Many Islands.

As you approach Many Islands Park, watch for gravel bars and follow the left shore. You can't miss the large gravel boat launch of the camp site. You can tie your boat to the metal "hitching post" just above and downstream of the boat launch. You have two camping options: you can set up camp near the boat launch area, on a large grassy field, or you can walk a little farther and take a



proper camp site (\$10/night for unpowered sites). There are about five very nice ones along the shore, although the view is of an island and not the river. The camp sites include picnic tables, fire pits, fire wood, and flat mowed spaces! You have the opportunity for some conversation and interaction with other campers, and the local people are very friendly.

Additional Notes

Although this section is technically considered a "day trip," since both the start and end points have road access, you would have to drive over 200 km between the two points (one-way) to shuttle a second vehicle.

START – Cotillion Recreation Area

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Silver Valley, AB, T0H 3E0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Dawson Creek, BC
County or Municipal District	Saddle Hills County
Nearest Primary Highway	49

Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	From Hwy 49, turn north on Rg Rd 115 (Pillsworth Rd) and follow it for 19.3 km (12 miles). Turn left on Twp Rd 812 and drive 1.6 km (1 mile). Turn north on Rg Rd 34 and drive approx 14.7 km (9.1 miles), then follow road as it curves down the valley. After 2.9 km, take the right side of the fork in the road, then go 1.3 km farther until you see the cabin on the right.
Parking Instructions at Site	Park near the cabin or at any of the camp sites.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Campsite open May 15 – Oct 15.
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0333008 Northing 6227999
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 10.061' N 119° 41.374' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	376
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Walk along gravel bar at mouth of creek for about 240 m, then follow the gravel road for another 300 m (up a medium-steep hill).

END – Many Islands Park

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Cleardale, AB, T0H 3Y0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fairview, AB
County or Municipal District	Clear Hills County
Nearest Primary Highway	64
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	From Hwy 64, turn south onto Range Rd 80 (located 1.6 km east of Hwy 726 intersection). The road has switchbacks as it descends steeply into the Peace River Valley. Travel down this road for 7.5 km before reaching the park gate. Keep to the right and follow the road to the boat launch.
Parking Instructions at Site	Standard campground parking
Ownership of Site	Clear Hills County
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Officially open May 1 – Sept 30
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0367171 Northing 6243308
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates	56° 18.953' N 119° 08.850' W

of Ending Point	
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	356 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Walk up boat launch (medium steep) and along gravel road to campsite (not steep)

Waypoints

- D07P01 (Cow camp): 56° 10.070' N 119° 39.160' W / 11V Easting 0335299 Northing 6227928 / elev 364 m
- D07P02 (possible campsite): 56° 14.242' N 119° 25.771' W / 11V Easting 0349423 Northing 6235153 / elev 367 m
- D07P03 (possible campsite): 56° 15.497' N 119° 20.064' W / 11V Easting 0355396 Northing 6237277 / elev 374 m
- D07P04 (end point):** 56° 18.953' N 119° 08.850' W / 11V Easting 0367171 Northing 6243308 / elev 356 m

Possible Campsites

- At 183 km, on river left (D07P02). From the river, look for three light-coloured, obvious tree trunks. There is a fairly-steep bank, but you can find a flat spot to the left of the three tree trunks, or climb higher to the flat top of the bank. Once you are on shore, look for a poplar tree slanting out over the shore — there is a very nice spot under that tree, or on the bank above/behind that tree.
- Around 184 km you can camp on the islands on either side of the river. On river left, go one-quarter to one-third of the way down,

and on the river right, you can camp nearly anywhere along the island.

- At 190 km, along river right (the island) near D07P03.
- Many other possible sites on essentially any island you pass!

Emergency Road Access

After the islands at 184 km, on river left, there is a gravel road that goes up the hill. This is known locally as Campbell's Landing. It is a private road, but the landowners are friendly if you need to use the road. That is the only road access until Many Islands Campground.

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Images

(All photos and illustrations by Teresa Griffith)

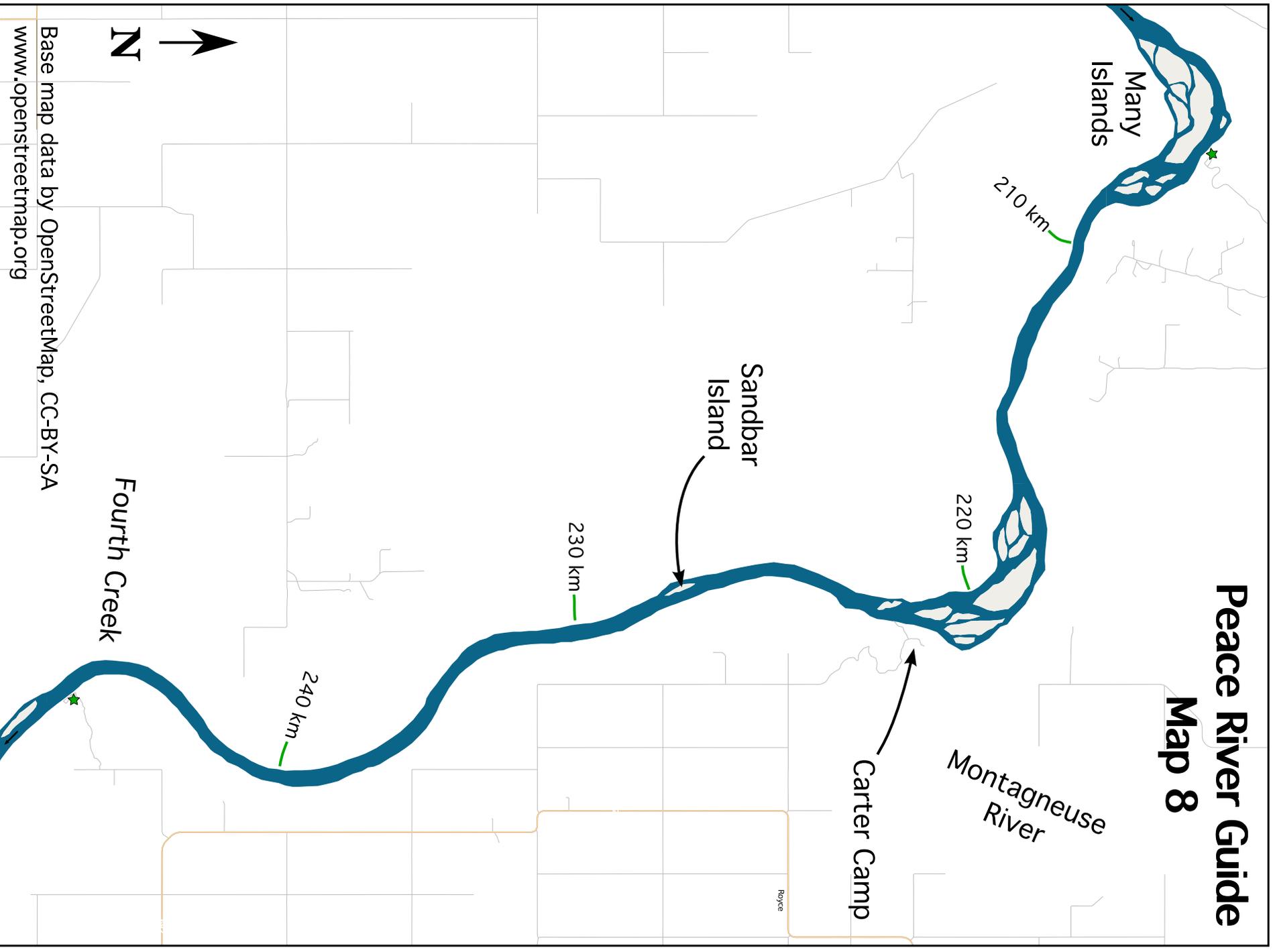
Cross-section of a river showing how secondary currents in a river work

Cliffs showing glaciolacustrine deposits

The Many Islands campground

Peace River Guide

Map 8



Base map data by OpenStreetMap, CC-BY-SA
www.openstreetmap.org

Guide 8

Many Islands Park to Pratt's Landing

Name of River Section	Many Islands Park to Pratt's Landing
Paddling Time	4 – 8 hrs
Paddling Distance	41 km (205 km to 246 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	3-5 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	patchy at Many Islands
Appeal to Families & Children	This is a nice, slightly challenging paddle, starting and ending at established campgrounds, with a great spot to explore at lunch time — Carter Camp!
Appeal to People with passion for topic	Towering banks dominate the river today, picturesque islands, and some sandbar dodging.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	Yes
NTS maps required for this section	84 D (84 D/6, D/7, D/2)

The shores get steeper as the river turns to flow primarily south on this 41-km reach.

From Many Islands, you can see the cliffs, on river left in particular, towering up to 900 feet (274 m) over the river once again. Their grey hues indicate that these strata represent marine shales from the Cretaceous period. For much of today's trip, the top

part of the valley is Dunvegan and the lower part Shaftesbury Formation. Later today, only the Dunvegan Formation will be visible. Although they aren't quite as sheer as they look from a distance, these cliffs are impressive. Both sides of the river have steep shores for about 9 km.

After about 14 km (2 hours) of paddling, you'll come to another bend in the Peace and the beautiful Montagneuse Islands. The river winds its way among and through them, and although the topo map shows a group of four islands to start, they are quite dried up and navigating between them would be difficult to impossible – only at flood levels would they have enough water. The main channel is left of these islands and then you can chose to take the channel left or right of the next – the largest – island. The main channel then passes right of the four islands clustered around the Montagneuse River mouth, which flows into the Peace from the east (left) around 221 km. It takes its name from the French word for “mountainous,” referring perhaps to the Clear Hills to the north or the Rockies to the west. Unfortunately, you won't see the mouth of the river itself, but its valley is quite pretty and visible from several kilometres upstream. There are extensive gravel bars in this whole area.

Just downstream of the Montagneuse River mouth/sandbar is Carter Camp (about 222 km). Follow the left shore/gravel island and look for the boat launch which is quite obvious (D08P01). Carter Camp can be reached by road by taking Hwy 685 west from Hines Creek. It was named after Art and Anna Carter, who settled

near the Montagneuse River mouth in 1917 and started cattle ranching and running cargo up and down the river. There are camp sites, a kitchen shelter, a playground, drinking water, fire pits, fire wood, hiking trails and a very unique grave.

On August 7, 1999, 22-year old Randy O'Donnell dove into the Peace River and never surfaced. Powerful downcurrents pulled him under and his body was never found. His family has erected a beautiful metal cross with an etched plaque in his honour and reminding those of us using the river to respect its power. The grave site is located at the top of the bank with a serene view of the river and islands. Once you have climbed the boat launch, the grave is down a trail to the left (D08P02).

After leaving Carter Camp, the river takes a fairly straight course to the SSE, with only a few islands.

We passed to the left of Sandbar Island at 227 km; it appeared closer to the right shore than in the center of the river as depicted on the topo maps.

As you continue paddling, the Dunvegan West Wildland Provincial Park covers the right bank all the way to Pratt's Landing, 24 km downstream. The plain at the top of the valley on the right is covered in bush and oil/gas sites, but on the left, the land has

been cleared for agriculture right to the edge of the valley. The land in the Peace River area is covered in a glacial till blanket (fine-grained soil left behind by glaciers), and is some of the best agricultural land in Canada. Wheat grown in the Peace River valley won first prize at the World Fair in 1876 (grown near Fort Vermilion) and 1926 (grown near Grande Prairie).



There is a cabin around 229 km, visible on river left (D08P03). Watch the right shore for interesting cliffs and even hoodoos. As you complete the right-hand curve from 235-242 km, you'll see some colourful layers in the cliffs on river right. The grey rock is shale, part of the Dunvegan Formation, which can consist of shale or sandstone (the Shaftesbury Formation is no longer visible). Shale is generally grey, but sandstone can be many colours, depending on the exact composition. The orange band is simply a layer of sandstone that contains more iron and was exposed to soil-forming processes during deposition. Look ahead for the entrance of Fourth Creek — probably named by an unimaginative surveyor and never renamed anything more interesting. It forms a lovely valley almost directly across

from today's destination, Pratt's Landing.

Pratt's Landing is a camp site owned/operated by the Municipal



little (400 m) farther downstream to the end of the campground. There is a path up the bank which leads much more directly to the camp sites and the kitchen shelter (D08P06); the path is shown in the photo below (keeping in mind this path may have been washed out by high water levels). The official boat launch is about 600 m farther downstream (D09P01), but doesn't hold any particular appeal for camping, except that it is an alternate landing spot if the campground is full on a weekend. Make sure to do a little rockhounding, as fossils can be found in the rocks along the shore.



District of Fairview and maintained by community groups. The landing was named after two brothers, Raymond and Frank Pratt, who arrived in the 30's and started farming at the top of the valley on the northeast side of the river (uphill from the campground). They had a trail down the bank and in winter, they would cross the river here to bring good quality logs over from the far side. Camping is free with all the usual amenities. You can stop at the main river access (D08P05) and camp on the grasses nearby, or go a

START – Many Islands Park

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Cleardale, AB, T0H 3Y0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fairview, AB
County or Municipal District	Clear Hills County
Nearest Primary Highway	64
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	From Hwy 64, turn south onto Range Rd 80 (located 1.6 km east of Hwy 726 intersection). The road has switchbacks as it descends steeply into the Peace River Valley. Travel down this road for 7.5 km before reaching the park gate. Keep to the right and follow the road to the boat launch.
Parking Instructions at Site	Standard campground parking
Ownership of Site	Clear Hills County
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Officially open May 1 – Sept 30
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0367171 Northing 6243308
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 18.953' N 119° 08.850' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	356 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Walk up boat launch (medium steep) and along gravel road to campsite (not steep)

END – Pratt's Landing

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Hines Creek, AB, T0H 2A0
Postal Code of nearest Community	T0H 2A0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fairview, AB
County or Municipal District	MD. of Fairview No. 136
Nearest Primary Highway	2
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	Travel west from Fairview on Hwy 64A/682 for 30 km. Turn left on the curve to take a gravel road for about 200 m, then take the right road (heading west). Go west for 1.6 km, then turn left and go south for another 1.6 km. Follow the road indicated by the

	Pratt's Landing sign (to the right) for about another 2.3 km to the fork in the road for the river access (right) or campground (left).
Parking Instructions at Site	There is space for one vehicle near the large wooden sign at the entrance to the campground, or else park near the kitchen shelter area.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Officially open May to October
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0380333 Northing 6213507
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 3.106' N 118° 55.286' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	347 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Gradual slope of boat launch up to the bank where path steepens somewhat.

Waypoints

- D08P01 (Carter Camp): 56° 14.573' N 118° 57.044' W / 11V Easting 0379110 Northing 6234824 / elev 357 m
- D08P02 (O'Donnell Grave) 56° 14.600' N 118° 57.005' W / 11V Easting 0379152 Northing 6234873 / elev 362 m
- D08P03 (cabin): 56° 11.073' N 118° 57.193' W / 11V Easting 0378772 Northing 6228337
- D08P04 (possible campsites): 56° 9.022' N 118° 56.495' W / 11V Easting 0379387 Northing 6224514 / elev 350 m
- D08P05 (end point):** 56° 3.106' N 118° 55.286' W / 11V Easting 0380333 Northing 6213507 / elev 347 m
- D08P06 (trail to campground): 56° 2.951' N 118° 55.004' W / 11V Easting 0380618 Northing 6213210 / elev 344 m
- D09P01 (Pratt's boat launch): 56° 2.710' N 118° 54.640' W / 11V Easting 0380983 Northing 6212753 / elev 349 m



Possible Campsites

- Carter Camp (D08P01), Camp sites (to the left or right after climbing the boat launch), a kitchen shelter, hiking trails, playground, etc.
- Around 232 km, on river right of D08P04.

Emergency Road Access

Around 213 km, there appears to be a road or trail to the water on river left (visible on *Backroads Mapbook*) but condition of

road is uncertain. Around 221 km, Carter Camp provides the only other road access until Pratt's Landing.

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Images

(All photos by Teresa Griffith)

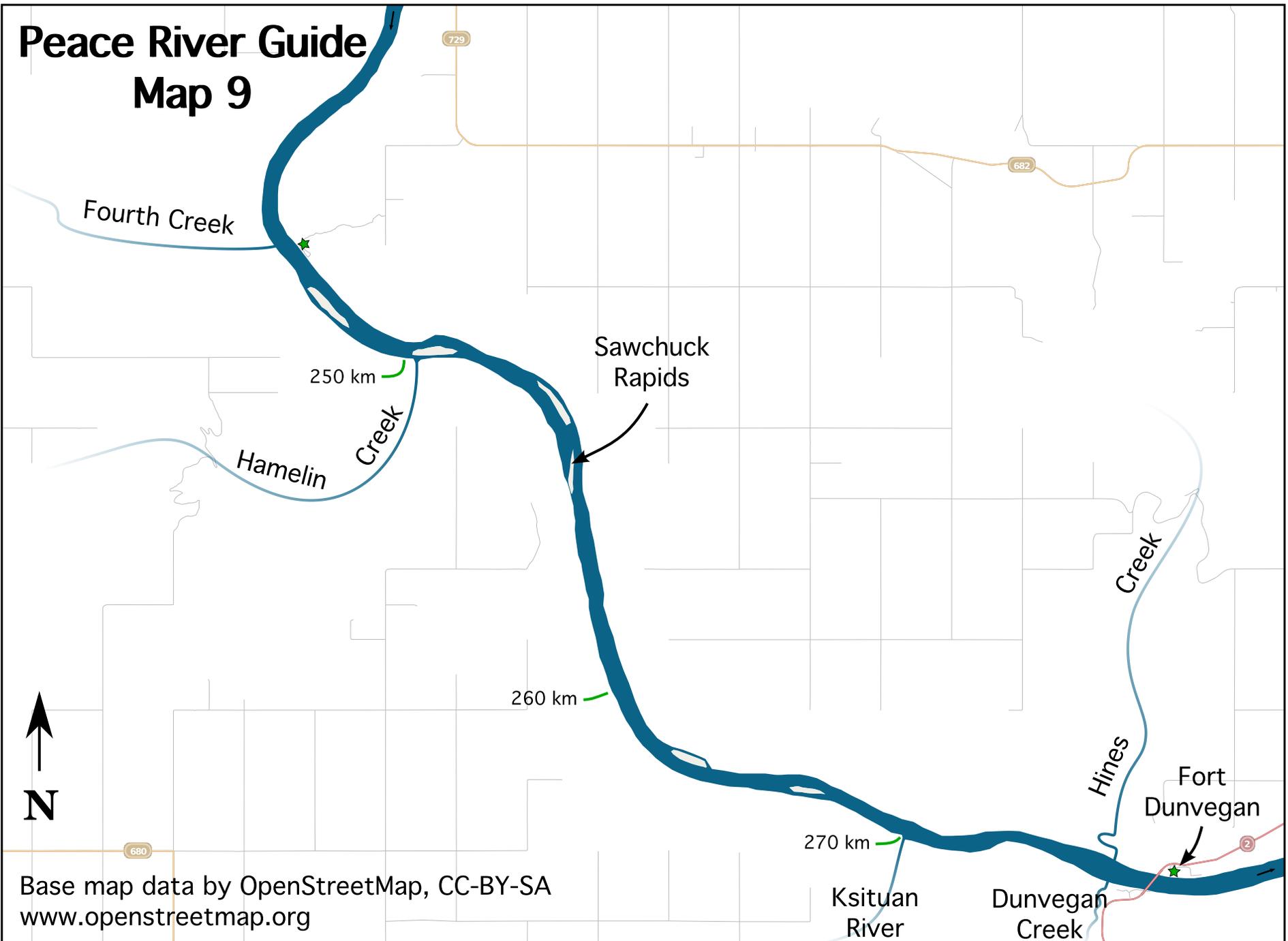
Randy O'Donnell's grave

Pratt's Landing – First access point

Pratt's Landing – the trail up the bank near the end of the campground

Closeup of the cliff opposite Pratt's Landing, showing layers in the sandstone

Peace River Guide Map 9



Base map data by OpenStreetMap, CC-BY-SA
www.openstreetmap.org

Guide 9

Pratt's Landing to Fort Dunvegan

Name of River Section	Pratt's Landing to Fort Dunvegan
Paddling Time	3 – 6 hrs
Paddling Distance	28 km (246 – 274 km)
Rapids (Class number)	Class I – no rapids
Portage	none
Typical speed of current on this section	3 – 6 km/hr
Mobile (cellular) telephone access	patchy at Fort Dunvegan
Appeal to Families & Children	This is a fantastic shorter paddle for families, with minimal distance to ferry a second vehicle, and a great historical park – complete with playground – at the end!
Appeal to People with passion for topic	Treat yourself to a shorter day on the water and reward yourself with a little historical exploration at Fort Dunvegan.
Scenic Appeal of River Section	★★★★★
Possible as a day-trip?	Yes
NTS maps required for this section	84 D, 83 M (84 D/2, 83 M/15)

Please Note: If you are starting your trip here, note that water access is easiest from the road at the first river access by following the right side of the fork just before the main sign and Texas gate. It is unnecessary to drive all the way to the boat launch. There is a fence all along the campground, between the sites themselves and

the water, thus preventing river access from any campsite except the last one, where there is a gap in the fence (not easy to carry a boat down).

Today, the Peace continues to treat you to incredibly high banks and beautiful bends. You'll have an easier day today, with only 29 km of paddling until you arrive at one of the most historical and interesting places to explore, Fort Dunvegan.

After departing Pratt's Landing, watch for the official boat launch on your left (D09P01) and a few kilometres later, a small island around 247 km, which you may not see up against the right shore. Around 250 km, two creeks join the Peace from opposite sides of the river – an unnamed creek from the left, and Hamelin Creek from the right. It isn't known for certain who Hamelin Creek was named after, but Hamelin was likely an early survey crew member, and this might have been named "third creek" originally. There is a nice area for rockhounding on the left shore, directly across from Hamelin Creek (D09P02).

Map alert! The 1:250,000 topo maps are not accurate regarding the islands shown from approximately 250 km to 260 km! There are two features that are not depicted — a low island/gravel bar on the bend around 253 km, along river left, and an extensive gravel bar around 255 km that has actually been named the Shawchuck Rapids. The first gravel bar is shown on 1:50,000 topo maps, and both are shown on the map which accompanies this guide. The rapids are right on the bottom edge of topo map 84 D (D09P03). The suggested course is hugging the right

shore prior to the low island and then crossing over to the left shore as soon as it is safe to avoid the rapids which extend from the right shore. This of course, could be different when you paddle, but be alert and try this alternating route. The rascal gravel bar is quite visible on Google Earth, which leads one to believe it isn't very transient. Note that waypoint D09P03 is the approximate centre of the gravel bar/rapid, not its beginning.

Just after you've passed the gravel bar, you might want to get your GPS out and watch the display change as you pass south of 56 degrees North latitude. This is also where you'll have to switch to your next topo map, 83 M. You'll paddle in the 55° N range for the next day and a half before passing back into 56° on day 10 (guide 10).

The first possible campsite is around 262 km, on river left, on the island. The first emergency road access is just after the island, also on the left, on the flat. There is a small island on river right around 267 km which is indicated, barely, on the 1:50,000 maps but not at all on the 1:250,000 maps.

Around 270 km, the Ksituan River joins the Peace from the right. The “k” is not silent on “Ksituan,” which is a form of the Cree word *sohkeciwan*, or *saskatchewan*, and means swift or strong current. By the time you are nearing the Ksituan River, you should be able to see the Hines Creek valley on the right. Hines Creek was originally named Muddy Creek by a surveyor in 1908, but four years later, the surveyor referred to it as Hines Creek, and noted that it had also been referred to as Island Creek. The creek and

settlement were named after a fur trader, Jack Hines.

Between the Ksituan River and Hines Creek, there is an unusual hole part-way up the cliff on the left, reminiscent of a mine. It is not a mine, however; it is a test hole built by the government while deciding on where to situate the hydroelectric dam that eventually became the WAC Bennett Dam near Hudson's Hope.

Once you pass the island/curve on the right, you'll be able to see the suspension bridge for the first time and the Dunvegan Creek



valley on your right. This is the valley that you see as you drive along Hwy 2 south towards Grande Prairie. On the left, you will see a few houses before you pass under the bridge, and one such house is the HBC Factor's house built in 1879, which you can tour by

speaking to the Dunvegan Visitor Centre staff. The area upstream of the bridge on the left shore is a day-use area called “The Maples” after trees planted by Rev. A. Garrioch who ran the anglican mission here between 1886-1891.

There is an extensive gravel bar on river left as you approach the bridge, which, at low water, also extends under the bridge itself. As you draw near, you should be able to see an old log building, St. Charles Church, perched on the left bank with a beautiful view. The access to the park is just downstream of the bridge, so prepare to come ashore 100-200 m after passing under the bridge, near the church. You'll find a road/boat launch between the bridge and the church (D09P06). You have two ways to reach the campground.



First, you can walk up the road and then to the right, past the visitor centre to the campground, about 400 m of walking in total. The second way is to walk a short ways downstream of the church and look for a trail up the bank here, which ends close to the rectory, the second historic log cabin (about 200 m of walking). You can download a map on the Dunvegan park here: http://www.albertaparks.ca/pubsandmedia/maps/Historic_Dunvegan_Camp_trail_Map.pdf

The Dunvegan suspension bridge was built in 1957-1960. The head engineer on the project was Albertan Ralph McManus, with two dozen engineers and a building crew of up to 60. The two towers are 70 metres (230 feet) high and weigh 320 tonnes; there's enough cable to stretch from Edmonton to Vancouver and back. The bridge is designed to flex; the deck will rise or fall up to a metre (3 feet) – dropping in summer and cinching up in winter. It is Alberta's longest suspension bridge, at 2375 feet (724 m) long, and the fourth longest suspension bridge in Canada. It took 3 years and 5 million dollars to build, officially opening on August 31, 1960. A suspension bridge was chosen over other types of bridges due to the high cost of building concrete abutments in the river. This design only required 2 such foundations. Unfortunately, the campground is quite close to the bridge/highway, which means you'll hear a fair bit of traffic noise.

Dunvegan is one of the most historical places in Alberta. It was an early fur trade post, established over 200 years ago in 1805 by Archibald Norman McLeod for the North West Company.

McLeod named the fort after his family's ancestral Scottish castle. It was one of the four most important centres in western Canada, the other three being Winnipeg, Fort Chipewyan and Edmonton. The fort gave the NW Company a strategic advantage over the HBC due to its westerly location. They traded extensively with the Beaver Indians of the area and staffing ranged from 6 officers, 45 men and their families, to 9 men with their families. The fort was a long-lasting one, surviving downsizing and company amalgamations, although it did close for a few years from 1825 to 1828 after five HBC employees were shot at Fort St. John (located at that time near present-day Taylor, BC). The natives were upset that the HBC was closing that fort and moving to Rocky Mountain Portage (Hudson's Hope). Guy Hughes, the clerk, had sent four men up the river to Rocky Mountain Portage and was shot shortly after. The four men were shot when they returned to Fort St. John the next day. To punish the Indians for this, HBC Governor Simpson closed Dunvegan for three years. Charges against the Indians were



dropped; the reason for the fort's move, over-hunting and over-trapping, was seen to be partly the fault of the HBC. Dunvegan remained open until 1918.

Fort Dunvegan became a missionary post as well as a fur trade site in 1841 with the arrival of the first missionary, Methodist James Evans. He did not stay long, but other missionaries followed, including Father Christophe Tissier of the Oblates who established the first permanent mission, St. Charles Mission, and whose church, built in 1885, and rectory are still standing – clearly visible from the river as you approach Dunvegan. Make sure you visit the church and its interior paintings done by Emile Grouard (later Bishop Grouard). The Anglicans also had a mission here, St. Saviour's, established in 1879. The Anglicans had little success and moved downstream to Shaftesbury in 1895. The Oblate mission did not last very much longer and, in 1903, St. Charles was abandoned in favour of a new church at Spirit River.

In 1985, the Knights of Columbus erected a beautiful statue of

the Virgin Mary, "Our Lady of Peace." Stop in at the visitor centre to learn much more of the history of this fort.

Please note that camping at Fort Dunvegan is \$27/night (price in 2010) and reservations are recommended (1-877-537-2757/Reserve.AlbertaParks.ca). Since you're so independent by now, you can, of course, camp almost anywhere if the park is full.

START – Pratt's Landing

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Hines Creek, AB, T0H 2A0
Postal Code of nearest Community	T0H 2A0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fairview, AB
County or Municipal District	MD. of Fairview No. 136
Nearest Primary Highway	2
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	Travel west from Fairview on Hwy 64A/682 for 30 km. Turn left on the curve to take a gravel road for about 200 m, then take the right road (heading west). Go west for 1.6 km, then turn left and go south for another 1.6 km. Follow the road indicated by the Pratt's Landing sign (to the right) for about another 2.3 km to the fork in the road for the river access (right) or campground (left).
Parking Instructions at Site	There is space for one vehicle near the large wooden sign at the entrance to the campground, or else park near the kitchen shelter area.
Ownership of Site	Crown
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Officially open May to October
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11V Easting 0380333 Northing 6213507
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	56° 3.106' N 118° 55.286' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	347 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Gradual slope of boat launch up to the bank where path steepens somewhat.

END – Fort Dunvegan

Nearest Community with Postal Code	Rycroft, AB, T0H 3A0
Nearest Community with a Tourist Booth (VIC)	Fairview, AB
County or Municipal District	Municipal District of Fairview (Dunvegan Provincial Park)
Nearest Primary Highway	2
Turn by turn directions from Primary Highway	Follow Hwy 2 to Dunvegan Provincial Park exit on the north side of the Peace River. For direct river access, turn right on road before Visitor Centre and follow it to the river.
Parking Instructions at Site	Park in main parking lot near Visitor Centre
Ownership of Site	Province of Alberta
Access to Site (when open/accessible)	Officially open April 1 to mid-October
UTM Coordinates of Ending Point	11U Easting 0399979 Northing 6198578
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates of Ending Point	55° 55.332' N 118° 36.035' W
Accuracy of site coordinates	5 m
Altitude of Site in meters	346 m
Describe Terrain from River to Site	Gravel beach, then walk gradual slope up road or climb up bank near buildings on a steep trail.

Waypoints

- D09P01 (Pratt's boat launch): 56° 2.710' N 118° 54.640' W / 11V Easting 0380983 Northing 6212753 / elev 349 m
- D09P02 (possible campsite): 56° 1.955' N 118° 52.529' W / 11V Easting 0496689 Northing 6409537 / elev 253 m
- D09P03 (Sawchuck Rapids): 56° 0.516' N 118° 49.192' W / 11V Easting 0386531 Northing 6208531 / elev river level
- D09P04 (possible campsite): 55° 57.008' N 118° 47.453' W / 11U Easting 0388170 Northing 6201977 / elev 339

D09P05 (possible campsite): 55° 55.825' N 118° 40.274' W / 11U Easting 0395587 Northing 6199596 / elev 339 m

D09P06 (end point): 55° 55.332' N 118° 36.035' W / 11U Easting 0399979 Northing 6198578 / elev 346 m

Possible Campsites

- Approx 250 km, across from Hamelin Creek (D09P02)
- Near 262 km, river left, near beginning of island, left of D09P04
- Just downstream of the mouth of Ksituan River, about 268 km, to the right of D09P05

Emergency Road Access

Around 251 km (about 1 km downstream of Hamelin Creek), on river right, there is a gravel road leading, eventually, to the community of Spirit River. Around 263 km, on the left, there appears to be a road leading to the water about 500 m downstream of the end of the island (where the trees end). There is also a boat launch at the Dunvegan Bridge, river right, across from the fort.

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Images

(Colour photos by Teresa Griffith)

The Dunvegan suspension bridge as seen from the river

The old church at Dunvegan as seen from the river

Fort Dunvegan, photo taken after 1909. Notice the ferry cable strung across the river. (Alberta Historic Sites, Reference Collection)

