

Rivers of Newfoundland Database

Region:	River:	NTS Sheet:	UTM Type:	Zone:
Burin Peninsula	Pipers Hole	1M/16	NAD27	21

River Description:

This is a great play run. Lots of good surf waves and a good hole at the right levels. Plus, a few nice rapids just for variety.

Difficulty Rating:	Hardest Rapid:	Flow Information:
III	IV	Early spring (April) and late fall (November) are the seasons for this run. http://scitech.pyr.ec.gc.ca/waterweb/

River Levels:

Low	0.8	to	1.25
Medium	1.25	to	1.6
High	1.6	to	3.5

How to get there:

Put-in	Northing:	Easting:
	5313471	702687
From the take-out hike along the old trail bed along the north side of the river. The hike is about 2.0 km and the put-in is recognized when you reach the big steady. All the rapids can be seen from the trail during the hike in.		
Take-out	Northing:	Easting:
	5311874	703665
Located 28 km south of Goobies on RD. #210 is an old Provincial Park. The turn off is on the right hand side of the road. If you miss the turn you'll pass over the river a few hundred meters later. Follow the park road to where it ends and park in one of the campsites. Camping is available. On the river the take-out is recognized by the old bridge. If the gate is locked the river can be paddled into the estuary and the take-out can be done beside the highway.		

Gradient:

Section:	Max
Distance:	1.70 km
Elevation Loss:	33.5 m 110 ft
Gradient:	20 m/km 104 fpm

Detailed Description of the River

First Descent: (19??) Jim Price et al.

Kudos to John Smeda and Kayak Newfoundland and Labrador for sorting out the access issues to Pipers Hole River. Thanks to these dedicated paddlers, members of KNL now have access to the municipal park at Swift Current. I think it is important that avenues of communication are opened and maintained within these communities. Micro-hydro projects are already a reality in Quebec and British Columbia. Last year Newfoundland also re-opened their list of proposed micro-hydro projects and many excellent paddling rivers had the grade for hydro. Maintaining good relationships with communities and sharing our passion for their natural resources will, in the long run, help protect these rivers for the future. So, when you're at Pipers this fall and next spring rejoice that you don't have to walk so far and take home a little extra garbage to help show our dedication to the river and its space. Access keys can be obtained from Mark Simpson (739-1724) and Darren McDonald (738-

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Piper's Hole is the first river that Jim Brown and Michael Wrinch introduced me to when I first got to Newfoundland. It was highwater, we hiked in on the snow, and the water was bitterly cold, but what a fun trip. Jim promised me that river was even better at lower levels. I was sceptical, but I must admit this is a great play river at low to medium levels and fun river running at higher levels. All of the rapids on this river can be scouted during the hike into the top of the river. The first rapid is obvious, stop hiking when you reach the big steady.

The first drop (III+IV) is at the end of the steady, somewhat intimidating looking and has caused much consternation. The line is simply down the middle and work your way a bit to the right of center. Of course this line involves punching a tricky hole. A multitude of variation exists and should be explored on this rapid. Three things to watch out for are the excellent surf waves at the top, the marginal play hole below the first ledge, and the nasty hole on river left at the bottom of the rapid. The river right eddy at the bottom of this rapid is exceptional for stern squirts and cartwheels. Immediately below the rapid is a flat, river wide wave. This is ok surfing. Longer boats catch it easier, but there is a spinning pile that is good for very short boats. Don't wear yourself out on this wave the best stuff is yet to come.

A little further downstream on river left is a small fluffy, breaking wave. This is a great wave for spinning and front surfing. It is shallow which limits cartwheels to the short boats, but they can be done. The eddy line here is very powerful for cartwheels and stern squirts. This spring I'm going to explore its potential for downtime. Peeling out from the eddy here starts you onto a descent into some nice class II+ wave trains. There are lots of eddies along both sides of the river and a few spots that are good for wavewheels and kickflips. As you're approaching a left bend above a distinct ledge there is a wave that will "elevator" you straight into the eddy on river right. This is a good thing. Behind this wave is the prime playspot on Piper's Hole. There are three waves, each one exists at different water levels. Each of these waves offers crazy spins and blunts (the extreme limit of my playboating skills). When you blow off the waves make for river right and work your way back up the eddies. Plan on spending a lot of time at these waves.

Below the waves eddy hop along the river right bank, following the main flow of the water. Below the ledge in river center is a great big eddy. River left also has a sneak route into this eddy. Tucked into the corner, beside the eddy, are some steep, fast, and fun waves, now called Ruth's Waves. Surf here, its worth it. But beware, lurking downstream is a monster ledge hole (the rodeo hole - IV-). This hole can be avoided using several options. A. Don't flip over, B. Surf the soft, angled hole above the big hole and attain the eddy, C. hit the river right eddy above the hole, D. run the tongues on the left and right, or E. run the guts of that hole and see what happens (most people don't even slow down).

This is the rodeo hole and it is a big one. There is a big steady below this hole so don't be afraid to swim here. This is one of the easiest places to perform a rescue on the river. It is a big chunky hole with spots to cartwheel, spin, loop, and get worked in. It is much friendlier at lower water levels. In fact it offers a serious beating at high water when you lose control in it. This is the type of hole that rips arms out of their sockets, please, please, try and low brace in this hole.

The playboating pretty much ends at this point and the river becomes slightly more difficult. At the end of the steady there is an island to scout on, both channels have been run, but the river left channel (III+) is the easier of the two routes. It starts with a 2 m boof into a 90 degree corner, behind which is an eddy. The river is very narrow through here winding down and over a small ledge. Boof the ledge into the river right eddy and take a breath. The next move is a long traverse across squirrely water in front of two very large holes. Eddy out beside these holes and peer in, its quite spectacular. They are safe to play in, but these are examples of full depth hydraulics. When you

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get worked you will bounce off the bottom and it hurts.

A small steady follows the two holes and leads to a river wide series of ledges. The most common line is over the river left side of the center ledge (IV) and there are equally exciting lines down the river right ledges too. The river left channel provides a class III sneak around the meatier ledges and deposits you safely at the bottom of the river. A short section of boogy water brings the exhausted boater to the final rapid of the day, under the bridge (III). This is essentially a fun wave train on river left. Hitting the river left eddies allows for one last surf wave to be played on, a short, fast, dynamic, fun surf. The take out is immediately after the bridge on either the river right or left banks, depending on how much walking you want to do. At high water there is a decent surf wave a bit further downstream that is worth checking out.

All in all a great play run.