

CANOEING THE WILD RIVERS OF FLORENCE COUNTY

Pine and Popple Rivers Canoe Trips



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by the personnel of the
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Introduction to Pine-Popple Wild Rivers Canoe Maps.

The Pine and Popple Rivers wind their way through a portion of Wisconsin that is very rural. Much of the land adjacent to the rivers is owned by public entities, or the forest products industry and development along the rivers is minimal.

Various maps and guides are available for assisting canoeists along the Pine and Popple Rivers. It is intended to provide a level of detail in map work not available in work done by others. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to the rivers.

This series of maps was digitized from 7.5" topographic maps. Certain features shown on the maps may not be visible when canoeing the river. As an example, these maps show various tributary creeks. At the point where these creeks join the rivers, their junction may be obscured by vegetation, or in some instances may be sufficiently small, so that it is easily overlooked.

The Upper Pine is claimed by avid canoeists to be an enjoyable and worthwhile adventure. Canoeists are able to see the development of a slow moving stream meandering through swamps to where the stream begins to move faster, acquire more rapids and falls and become a more mature river.

Navigation on the rivers should be a studied combination of map reading and river reading. What may be a small rapids to one person may be a relatively large one to another. There is no substitute for direct experience of the river in order to know its hazards. These maps do not note every rapids or rock garden that may exist on the river. More detailed information on rapids may exist in other literature available from various vendors.

Running times for river trips are not given because these will vary based on how aggressive a canoeist desires to be in pursuing the run, the volume of water in stream and amount of obstructions which may be encountered along the way.

Private property along the shore of the river is found in various places and every effort has been made to correctly identify these parcels. Please respect these private property parcels.

National Forest policy along the Pine River restricts management activities within ¼ mile along either side of the Pine and Popple Rivers within the national forest. Within ¼ mile of the rivers, prohibited activities include new road construction and some types of forest management. A limited amount of thinning has occurred in red and white pine and hardwood forest types. All timber harvesting is prohibited within 150 feet of the river.

Sustainable forest management is actively conducted on the DNR owned lands in the river corridor. This forest management activity is driven by the need to promote successional trends to longer lived tree species while at the same time maintaining aesthetic qualities for the river user. Maintenance and promotion of structural and compositional diversity and protection of watershed values are high priorities for all forest management work.

PINE RIVER CANOE TRIPS

SEE MAPS 1&2

Canoe trails on the Pine River from FR 2182 (Haystack Road) to Hwy. 55 (section 1), and from Highway 55 to FR 2169 (Stevens Lake Road) (section 2) (**MAP 1 & 2**).

This is the headwaters of the Pine River. The surrounding area is very natural and the stream is overgrown and may be obstructed by beaver dams and windfalls. Much of the valley in which the stream runs is open marsh or alder thicket. White and Red pine, white birch, aspen and upland hardwoods may be visible in the distance. Occasionally, however, the uplands meet with the river's shore. The current is slow and the stream meanders almost continuously. Wildlife sightings should be common.

This is a portion of the river that only the most adventuresome and dedicated canoeists should attempt. The distances between access points are long both in time and distance and because paddling will be needed to make time, a physically demanding stretch of river. There are no free rides here.

SECTION 1. (Not mapped)

Put – in: Haystack Road (FR 2182).

Put – in to: *Kimball Creek on left is 1.03 miles.
*Windsor Dam Rd. (FR 2174) is 2.61 miles.
*McDonald Creek on left is 4.98 miles.
*Wildcat Creek on left is 7.26 miles (**MAP 1**).
*North Branch Pine River is 11.58 miles.

Take – out: Highway 55.
Total river distance is 12.07 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put – in: Highway 55.

Put – in to: *Zepp Road is gated ½ mile east of Highway 55 and should not be considered as providing an access site.
*FR 2444 and Pine Creek on right is 5.96 miles.
*Kingstone Creek and rapids just below mouth of creek is 9.60 miles (**MAP 1 & 2**).
*CCC camp rapids is 11.47 miles.
*Rapids is 12.89 miles.

Take – out: Stevens Lake Road (FR 2169) (**MAP 2**).
Total river distance is 12.98 miles.

APPROXIMATE WIDTH OF STREAM

At FR 2182 (Haystack Rd.) 30 feet.

At FR 2174 (Windsor Dam Rd.) 20 feet.
At Highway 55 40 feet.
At FR 2444 25 feet.

SEE MAPS 2 and 3

Canoe trails on the Pine River from FR 2169 (Stevens Lake Road) to Chipmunk Rapids Campground.

In this stretch of river, the Pine River valley narrows substantially and the open marshes and alder thickets common on the Pine from FR 2182 give way to steeper banks, faster water and more rapids. White and red pine, spruce, balsam, white birch and aspen are common along the shoreline.

Private land is more common on this portion of the river. Care should be exercised, and as elsewhere, private land respected.

Parking along Hwy. 139 for river access is available but limited.

SECTION 1.

Put – in: FR 2169 (Stevens Lake Road) (**MAP 2**).

Put – in to: *Stevens Creek on left is 1.5 miles.

Take – out: Highway 139.
Total river distance is 2.61 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put – in: Highway 139.

Put – in to: *Railroad bridge is .90 mile.
*Johnson Creek on left is 1.03 miles.

Take – out: FR 2133 (Fay Lake Road).
Total river distance is 1.59 miles.

SECTION 3.

Put – in: FR 2133 (Fay Lake Road).

Put – in to: *Fay Lake Outlet on right is 2.47 miles.
*Reisner Lake Outlet on left is 2.65 miles (**MAPS 2 & 3**).
*Unnamed stream on left (on curve – FR 2156 visible) is 4.97 miles (**MAP 3**).
***Chipmunk Rapids is 5.17 miles.**
*Unnamed stream on left is 5.69 miles.
*FR 2156 (Halsey Lake Road) is 5.73 miles.

Take – out: Just below Halsey Lake Road (wooden bridge) at artesian well on right side below Chipmunk Rapids. Chipmunk Rapids is a ½ mile long rock garden. **(MAP 3).**

Total river distance is 5.75 miles.

APPROXIMATE WIDTH OF STREAM

At FR 2169 (Stevens Lake Rd.) 60 feet.

At Highway 139 80 feet.

At FR 2133 (Fay Lake Road) 75 feet.

SEE MAP 3 AND 4

Canoe trails on the Pine River from FR 2156 (Halsey Lake Road) **(MAP 3)** to the Goodman Grade **(MAP 4)**.

This section of the Pine is characterized by abundant natural scenery and wildlife. Just west of Snake Tail Rapids is the western boundary of the state's Pine-Popple Wild River Project. At western boundary of the state's Pine-Popple Wild River Project. At this point the surrounding forests are owned by Lake Superior Land Company and is so denoted on the maps. This forest is also known as the Goodman Timber. One of the distinguishing features of this forest is that the forest land within this ownership has never been clear cut. As a result, where upstream the timber types have tended towards pine, spruce, white birch and aspen, here the predominant timber types tend toward upland hardwoods, including hard maple, yellow birch, and basswood. Eastern hemlock is a very common species.

Meyers Falls is a mandatory portage on the right. The falls should be approached with caution and at the first indication of approach a landing should be made on the right bank.

ONE SECTION.

Put – in: FR 2156 (Halsey Lake Road). Put – in is at artesian well parking lot (Chipmunk Rapids) **MAP 3.**

Put – in to:

*Grub Hoe Lake outlet on right is 1.46 miles.

***Snake Tail Rapids is 3.51 miles.** Snake Tail Rapids is .4 miles long in several stages and should be scouted from the left bank. The lower stage should be scouted and portaged from the right bank.

*Lake Seventeen outlet on right is 3.72 miles.

*Lauterman Creek outlet on left is 4.67 miles.

*Kieper Creek outlet on left is 6.8 miles.

*Robago Lake outlet on right is 6.9 miles **(MAP 3).**

***Meyers Falls is 8.48 miles. Portage is on right (MAP 4).**

*Wakefield Creek on left is 8.92 miles **(MAP 4).**

Take – out: Goodman Grade **(MAP 4).**
Total river distance is 9.56 miles.

SEE MAP 4

Canoe trails on the Pine River from the Goodman Grade to the Hwy. 101 bridge.

This portion of the river is characterized by two major features that limit/influence canoeability.

The first is **Bull Falls**. Although this is not generally considered a mandatory portage, it should be scouted before any attempted running. Down stream from Bull Falls, a long stretch of rapids also must be scouted before any navigation is attempted across them. **ALL FALLS AND RAPIDS SHOULD BE SCOUTED BEFORE ANY APPROACH IN A WATERCRAFT.**

The second is “The Flats”, a stretch where the river widens substantially and is therefore much shallower (this area is specially noted on **MAP 4**). In addition to being shallow, the river also becomes braided. In some years one particular channel is navigable, and in other years a different channel may be navigable. When water levels make the rest of the stream readily canoeable, this portion may be one where walking may be necessary.

Generally, the scenery on this portion of the river is spectacular. Forest management on the stretch between the Goodman Grade and the Bessie Babbet Lake outlet has been such that the area appears much as it did before the settlement of the area after the Civil War.

Because Section 2 is easily reached from the put-in pint at the end of Thompson Road, it is a very popular one with many people. This includes canoeists and people rafting or tubing on a summer day.

A staff gauge has been installed at the Pine River and Hwy. 101. This gauge is just downstream from the bridge and on the left side. The numbered gauge divisions are in feet. A minimal water level of 1 is necessary for any sort of a pleasant trip down the river. Given the cautions above, a reading above 2 may be considered a free ride. There are of course conditions where reading may be much higher and navigation of the river may be dangerous because of high water. During the spring flood of 1996, the reading on this gauge was above 7.

SECTION 1.

Put – in: Goodman Grade. The Goodman Grade access site can be reached from either the north side from State Highway 70 or from the south side from either Price Lake Road or Patten Lake Road and North Shore Road. Both of these access sites cross Lake Superior Land CO. Land and accessibility may be limited by logging operations or by road conditions.

Intermediate Put – in: Below Bull Falls with access from Price Lake Road.

Put – in to: ***Bull Falls is .9 mile. Portage trail is on right (MAP 4).**
 *Gas pipeline corridor is 3 miles.
 *Seven Mile Creek on left is 4.06 miles.
 *Bessie Babbet Lake outlet on left is 5.42 miles.

Take – out: North end of Thompson Road.

Total river distance is 6.21 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put – in: North end of Thompson Road.

Put – in to: *Meyers Creek on right is 1.5 miles.
 *Intermediate take-out on right is 2.67 miles.
 *Seidel Creek on right is 2.8 miles.

Take – out: Hwy. 101

Intermediate Take – out: .45 mile north of Hwy. 101 on Thompson Road.

Total river distance is 3.08 miles.

SEE MAP 5

Canoe trails on the Pine River from Hwy. 101 to the Pine Flowage.

This section of the Pine River is characterized by a lack of easy road access once on the river and by the presence of LaSalle Falls and the rapids below it. A portage trail marked by a sign marks the start of the **mandatory portage** above the falls. Portage is on right side. Although access points exist at the confluence with the Popple River and .4 mi. downstream, the roads leading to these access points may be washed out or in poor condition. Beaver activity on the outlet from Jutra Lake can also be a problem.

Water levels vary substantially during the canoeing season. Canoeability can be ascertained by a gauge installed at the Hwy. 101 put – in point. Gauge is on left side downstream from bridge. A reading of 1 on the gauge is the minimum necessary for a reasonably pleasant canoe trip. Readings below 1 will result in having to walk at least a portion of the river trip.

The Pine River from Hwy. 101 to, but not including the flowage, is known as a high class trout stream with natural reproduction and supplemental stocking of trout. Fishermen should consult the current editions of the Trout Fishing Regulations and Guide. **ALL FALLS AND RAPIDS SHOULD BE SCOUTED BEFORE ANY APPROACH IN A WATERCRAFT.**

SECTION 1.

Put – in: Hwy. 101 bridge (**MAP 5**).

Put – in to: *Popple River on right is 1.3 miles

Take – out: 200' downstream from confluence with Popple River.

Total river distance is 1.3 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put – in: End of White Birch Road.

Take –out: .4 mile south of end of White Birch Road.

Total river distance is .4 mile.

SECTION 3.

Put – in: Take-out point of SECTION 2 above.

Put – in to: *Jutra Lake outlet on right is .4 mile.

*Log Cabin on right is .9 mile.

*Unnamed stream on left is 1 mile.

***Portage trail above LaSalle Falls is 2.4 miles. Portage trail is on right. A 12” x 18” sign with crossed paddles marks the location of the beginning of the portage.**

*End of portage trail below LaSalle Falls is 2.8 miles.

Take – out: WE ENERGIES site #34 on north side of Pine Flowage.
Total river distance is 4.4 miles (MAP 5).

SEE MAP 6

Canoe Trails on the Lower Pine from the Pine Flowage to the Menominee River.

Canoeing on this stretch of river has in the past been influenced by water levels varying naturally and also water releases from power operations at the Pine Hydro project. The hydro project is being currently being managed in a run of the river mode. This mode of operation results in the dam having less affect on fluctuations in river levels than it used to. This entire stretch of river is known as a warm water fishery, with the dominant species of fish being northern, bass, and walleye. Except for the driest years, this stretch of the Pine River can usually be used for canoeing during the entire season.

SECTION 1.

Put – in: Powerhouse (over railing). Alternate put-in at end of portage trail on north side of river. Portage trail starts on Pine River Road .1 mi. north of flowage (**MAP 6**).

Take – out: County Highway N bridge.
Total river distance is 1.9 miles.

SECTION 2. (The “OXBOW TRIP”)

Put – in: County Highway N bridge.

Take – out: .4 mile north of bridge on County High. N.
Total river distance is 3.6 miles.

SECTION 3.

Put – in: Take-out point of SECTION 2.

Put – in to: *Johnson Creek entrance on left is 1.1 miles.

Take – out: Johnson Creek Road access site.
Total river distance is 2.3 miles.

SECTION 4.

Put – in: Johnson Creek Road access site.
Put – in to: *Pine Creek on right is 1.1 miles.
*LePage Creek on left is 1.6 miles.
*Lake Ellwood outlet on left is 3.1 miles.

Take – out: WE ENERGIES site #5.
Total distance is 3.5 miles.

SECTION 5.

Put – in: WE ENERGIES site #5.

There is no designated take-out point downstream from the put-in point. However, this section can be used by both canoeists and boaters with the take-out point being the same as the put-in. This is a slow moving section of water with water levels being somewhat influenced by the water level on the Menominee River.

Total river distance from put-in point to the Menominee River is one mile.

POPPLE RIVER CANOE TRIPS

SEE MAP 7

Canoe trails on the Upper Popple River between Highway 139 and FR 2159 (Newald Tower Road).

Throughout much of its run from Highway 139 to the Morgan Lake area, the valley in which the stream runs is open marsh or alder thicket. The current is slow and the stream meanders extensively. White and Red pine, white birch, aspen, and upland hardwoods may be visible in the distance. Occasionally, however, the uplands meet with the river's shore. Wildlife sightings should be common.

Canoeing on the Popple River is limited to parts of the year when either spring runoff or substantial precipitation have raised water levels sufficiently so that canoeing is possible.

Canoeists generally begin runs on the Popple River at FR 2398. Nevertheless, the stretch between Highway 139 and FR 2398 is mapped for those who wish to try.

SECTION 1.

Put-in: Highway 139.

Put-in to: *Unnamed stream on right is 1 mile.
*Martin Creek on right is 3.81 miles.
*Unnamed stream on left is 6.06 miles.

Take-out: FR 2398 (Twin Rivers Road).

Total river distance is 7.36 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put-in: FR 2398 (Twin Rivers Road).

Put-in to: ***First Rapids** is .85 mile. **First Rapids** is a very shallow rock garden.
*Unnamed stream on right is 1.90 miles.
*Riley Creek is 2.98 miles.
*Morgan Creek and **Burnt Dam Rapids** is 5.64 miles.
Burnt Dam Rapids consists of 2 short rapids (**MAP 7**).

Take-out: FR 2159 (Newald Tower Road) (**Maps 7 & 8**).

Total river distance is 6.11 miles.

APPROXIMATE WIDTH OF STREAM

At Highway 139 is 35' wide.

At FR 2398 (Twin Rivers Road) is 55' wide.

At FR 2159 (Newald Tower Road) is 35' wide.

SEE MAP 8

Canoe trails on the Popple River between Nicolet Forest Road 2159 (Morgan Lake Road) and Highway 101.

For an accurate reading of canoeability on the Popple River, a staff gauge, installed at the bridge at Hwy. 101 and Popple bridge abutment facing the river, on the left side. According to local canoeists, a reading on the gauge of 2.0 is considered the minimum necessary for a decent run on the river. A reading of 2.5 is considered very good and a reading of 3.0 is considered excellent. (Note: These readings are really volume readings of river flow, in cubic feet per minute.) These readings are used to gauge portions of the Popple River.

It should be noted that when water levels are higher, it is also true that the river runs faster and that this makes for a more difficult run on certain portions, **especially rapids.**

FR 2159 crosses the Popple River twice. At the upstream crossing the town road is named Newald Tower Rd. At the downstream crossing the town road is named Morgan Lake Road.

SECTION 1.

Put-in: FR 2159 At Newald Tower Road.

Put-in to:

- *South Branch Popple River on right is .2 mile.
- *Unnamed stream on left is 1.4 miles.
- ***Unnamed Rapids.** Rapids is in two pitches.
- *Rock Creek on right is 2.47 miles.
- *Mud Creek on right is 2.92 miles.
- *Goodman Grade is 4.33 miles.

Take-out: FR 2159 At Morgan Lake Road.
Total river distance is 4.7 miles.

SECTION 2.

Put-in: FR 2159 At Morgan Lake Road.

Put-in to: ***Little Bull Falls is .44 mile. Portage is on left.**

NOTE: PORTAGE IS ON PRIVATE LAND. A rapids follows the falls for about ¼ mile downstream.

- *Unnamed stream on right is .93 mile.
- *Unnamed stream on right is .95 mile.
- *Unnamed stream on right is 2.03 miles.
- *Unnamed stream on right is 2.07 miles.
- ***Big Murphy Rapids is 2.10 miles.**
- *Unnamed stream on right is 2.6 miles.
- ***Nine-Mile Rapids is 3.25 miles.**
- *Hendrick's Creek on left is 4.11 miles.
- ***Big Bull Falls is 4.5 miles. Portage is on left.**
- *Unnamed stream on left is 4.87 miles. West River Road is visible at this point.
- *Unnamed stream on right is 5.13 miles.

Take-out: Highway 101 wayside downstream from bridge on left.
Total river distance is 5.27 miles.

SEE MAP 5

Canoe trails on the Popple River from Hwy. 101 to its confluence with the Pine River, and then to the Pine Flowage.

The narrative for **MAP 8** for the Popple River regarding the gauge at Highway 101 and the Popple River may apply to this portion of the river also.

These sections of the Popple River are characterized by a lack of easy access and by the presence of waterfalls. Canoeing on this section of the Popple River may also mandate canoeing on the Pine River, from its confluence with Popple River to the Pine Flowage. If this is done, **LaSALLE FALLS, A MANDATORY PORTAGE WILL BE ENCOUNTERED.** Although access points exist at the confluence with the Popple River and .4 mi. downstream, the road leading to these access points may be washed out or in poor condition. Beaver activity on the outlet from Jutra Lake can also be a problem.

The Popple River is a coldwater trout fishery, with limited stocking to supplement natural reproduction. The current edition of the Trout Fishing Regulations and Guide should be consulted prior to fishing on this stream. **ALL FALLS AND RAPIDS SHOULD BE SCOUTED BEFORE ANY APPROACH IN A WATERCRAFT.**

ENTIRE SECTION FROM HIGHWAY 101 BRIDGE TO THE CONFLUENCE WITH THE PINE RIVER.

Put-in: Highway 101 wayside.

Put-in to:

- *Unnamed stream on left is 1.1 miles.
- *Lamon-Tangué Creek on right is 1.7 miles.
- *Washburn Falls is 2.4 miles. Portage is on right.**
- *Unnamed creek on left is 4.2 miles.
- *Woods Creek on left is 4.5 miles.
- *Jennings Falls in 4.9 miles. Portage is on right.**

Take-out: On the Pine River at the end of White Birch Road. Take-out is 200 feet downstream from confluence of the Pine and the Popple.
Total river distance to confluence of the Pine River is 6.3 miles.

PINE RIVER

SECTION 1.

Put-in: End of White Birch Road.

Take-out: .4 mile downstream of end of White Birch Road, on right.
Total river distance is .4 mile.

SECTION 2.

Put-in: Take-out point of SECTION 1 above.

Put-in to:

*Jutra Lake outlet on right is .4 mile.

*Log Cabin on right is .9 mile.

*Unnamed stream on left is 1 mile.

***Portage trail above LaSalle Falls is 2.4 miles. Portage trail is on right. A 12" x 18" sign with crossed paddles marks the location of the beginning of the portage.**

*End of portage trail below LaSalle Falls is 2.8 miles.

Take-out: WE ENERGIES site #34 on north side of Pine Flowage.
Total river distance is 4.4 miles.

