



Chitose River (Usakumai to Chitose Station)

千歳川 (上) Packrafting Map 1:25000



0 250 500 750 1000m

1cm on the map equals approx. 250m on the ground
Magnetic declination: 9° 29' W

Map by hokkadowilds.org/Rob Thomson CC BY-SA 2019/07/16

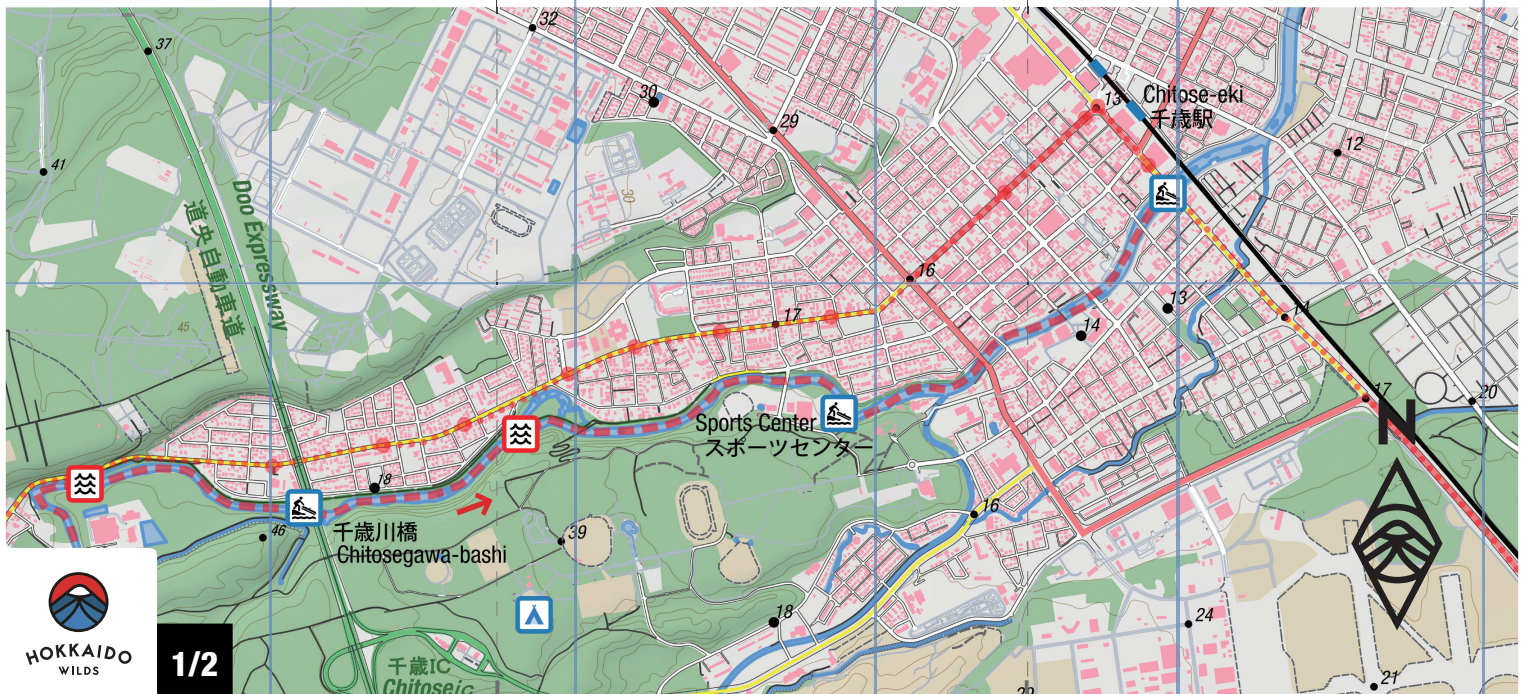
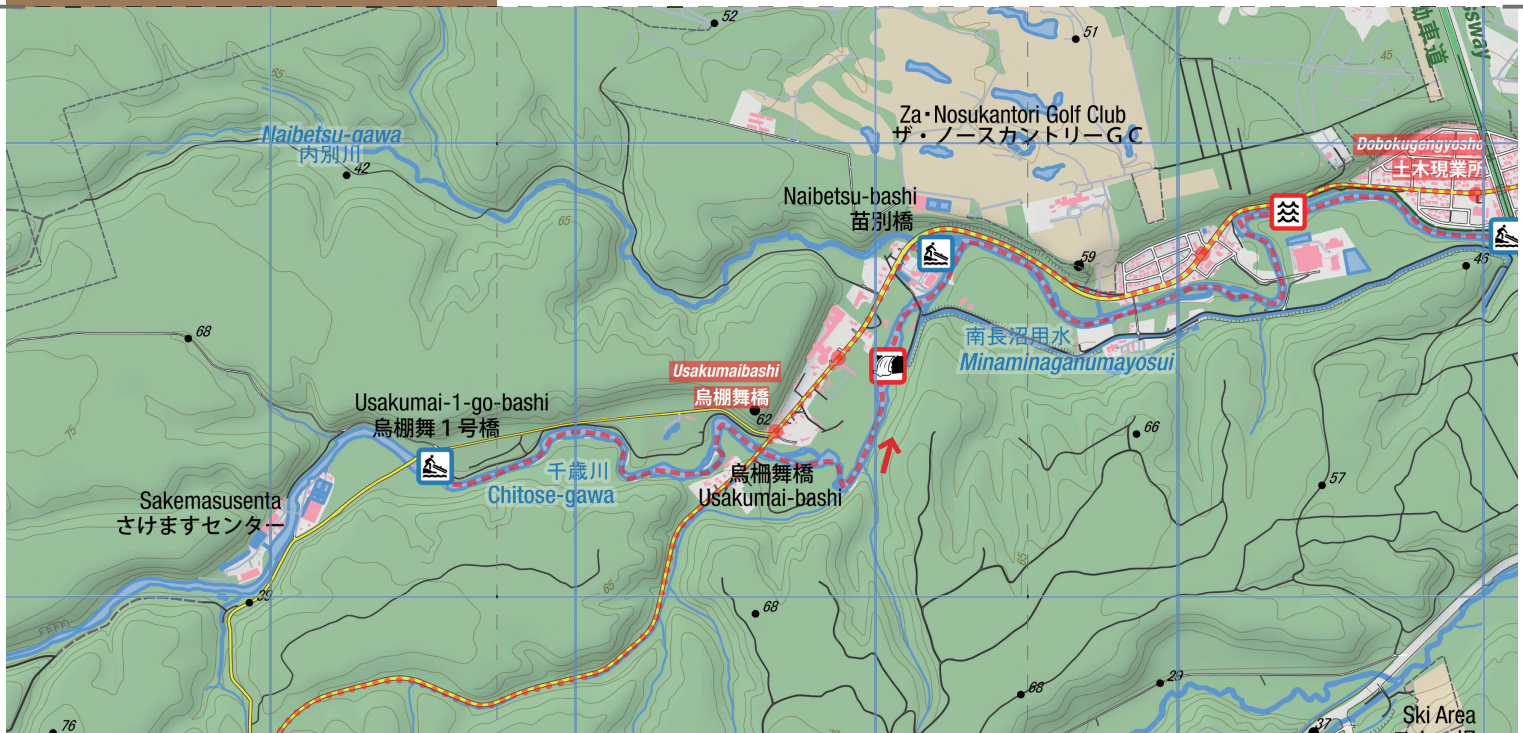
Symbol Key (some may not be present)

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | Route (flow) | | Contour lines (100m, 10m) |
| | National Highway | | Power transmission lines |
| | Prefectural Road | | Trees/shrubs |
| | Municipal Road | | Rocks/cliff |
| | Minor Municipal Road | | Onsen (hot spring) |
| | Walkway | | Fumerole |
| | Bus route (bus stop) | | Highway number |
| | Put in/out location | | Designated campsite |
| | Waterfall | | Hut |
| | Rapids | | Portage required |

この地図の作成に当たっては、国土地理院長の承認を得て、同院発行の基礎地図情報及び電子地形図(タイル)を使用した。(承認番号 平 30 情使、第 867 号)。また、1/25,000 縮尺図 GIS データ(環境省生物多様性センター)も使用し、hokkadowilds.org が作成・加工したものである。
This map uses the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan digital basemap (tiles) and basemap data, with the permission of the Authority's director (permission no. 平 30 情使、第 867 号)。It also uses modified 1:25,000 scale vegetation map GIS data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan, Ministry of the Environment (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp>).

Japanese Map Glossary

Romaji	Kanji	English
bashi/hashi	橋	bridge
bunki	分岐	junction
cho	町	town
dake/mine	岳/峯	peak
eki	駅	station
goya/koya	小屋	hut
hinangoya	避難小屋	shelter
ike	池	pond
kawa/gawa	川	river
kako	火口	crater
ko/mizumi	湖	lake
kyo	峡	gorge
numa	沼	pond
onsen	温泉	hot spring
sawa	沢	stream
taira/daira	平	plateau
tani/dani	谷	valley
taki	滝	waterfall
toge	峠	pass
yama/san/zan	山	mountain



Chitose River



(Usakumai to Chitose Station)

3hrs Time	2.56 Gradient (mpk)	Class I Difficulty
8.6km Distance	5/5 Water clarity	May-Oct Best season

This section of the Chitose River (千歳川) is arguably the most beautiful and accessible on this pristine, crystal-clear waterway. In mid-summer, expect to be gliding over white blooming underwater flowers. In all seasons, you'll be sharing the river with impressive yamasei crested kingfishers. As such, this section of the river has long been known as an established canoe and kayak route. The accessibility of this route with public transport is second to none - perfect for mellow packrafting.

LOCATION

The put-in location is a popular gravel parking spot just down from the Usakumai-1go Bridge (烏棚舞橋1号橋), accessed via a gravel road leading to the Salmon Hatchery. The turn-off is marked by a sign that points to the Meon Garden Cafe, just past the Birdwatching Cafe on the main Route 16 heading towards Lake Shikotsu. The take-out location for this route, if you're in a packraft, is the bridge on Route 258 that runs through Chitose City, just before the train line bridge. If you're in a canoe, it would make more sense to take out much further upstream, at the fine gravel beach just after the hard right bend in the river, just after you see the Chitose City Sports Center for the first time on the right. There is a short, 20m walking track connecting

the river with the sports center car park (free parking).

GENERAL NOTES

A quick look at the map will tell you, this is an incredibly accessible route: Chitose JR train station, bus stops, even an international airport (New Chitose Airport) are close by. Once on the river, however, you'll feel far away from these civil conveniences. As a typical chalk stream river, Chitose River is ultra clear and is the only river that runs out of Lake Shikotsu, some 25km upstream. Multiple hydro-electric dams upstream – the last only 2km upstream from the put-in location – mean that it is not feasible to canoe the entire way from the lake.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

At a very leisurely paddling pace, taking time to look at the scenery along the way and scouting the two or three very short white-water sections, this route will likely take up to three hours.

Broadly speaking, this route can be split into halves, separated by the Meisui-koen Park (名水公園 - an awkward take-out possible) about 3km from the put-in location. The first half involves more hazards, such as downed trees and the weir at the 2.2km point. The second half of the route involves fewer sharp bends, is closer to civilization, and the two 1m or so drops are perfectly manageable.

The route starts just downstream from the Usakumai No. 1 Bridge, where there is a large gravel parking area. This is a common area to start from for all river users. Pretty much straight away, the river is not mucking around, and most people who know the Chitose River as the meandering, clear, benevolent river will likely be taken aback somewhat by the speed of the flow. In less than 1km, there is the first of a couple of sharp bends with tree-trunks and branches protruding from the outer edge of the bends, waiting to pin down the unwary paddler. As a rule, keep to the inside of the bends where possible.

There are a few small islands in the river, where decisions need to be made on which branch to follow. The first island will accept either side, but the second is best to take the right branch, as the left side leads straight into very low hanging strainer trees.

At the 2.2km point is the weir – under no circumstances should paddlers approach the water intake at the right-hand side. Sidle up to the left-hand bank of the weir just before the wide fish ladder, and assess your options. The portage is short – only 20m or so on a clear path – so that is the health-and-safety recommended option. If you choose the fish ladder descent, keep to the center of the first two drops, and pull to the left to re-center for the remainder.

The remainder of the route is relatively straight forward. There are two fun 1m drops along the way, where first-timers are advised to pull up to the left-hand bank and scout before tackling. The first of these (the Jakago drop 蛇籠の落ち込み) used to be the largest, but has lost its steepness in recent years.

The take-out point for packrafters traveling by public

transport is the bridge on Route 258, just before the main JR train line bridge. This is the most feasible take out point that's only a few minutes walk from Chitose JR Train Station. This spot is not particularly scenic, but the cycleway drops down under the bridge, so this helps with clamoring out of the boat and onto the bank.

TRANSPORT

By car | There is ample, free parking at both the put-in location and the take-out location at the sports center.

Public transport | A taxi from Chitose JR Train Station (7.4km) will likely cost just over 2100yen. Tell the driver you want to go to Meon Cafe in Rankoshi-chiku (蘭越地区にあるMEON農苑カフェ), which is about 850m before the put-in location on the gravel road. From the cafe, you can tell the driver to keep driving a little further. The closest paddlers will get to the put-in location by public transport is the Usakumai Bridge Bus Stop (烏棚舞橋バス停), serviced by a Chuo Bus from Chitose JR Train Station. From there, it's a 1.2km (about 15min) walk to the put-in location. Buses run from Chitose JR Train Station 4-6 times a day, with the earliest leaving the station at 8:51am. The trip takes about 20 minutes, and costs 320yen one way. From the take out point under the bridge on Route 258, it is a 5 minute walk to Chitose JR Station.

SAFETY NOTES

Perhaps it is the clarity of the water, but Chitose River deftly belies its power – it is a deceptively fast-flowing river. This makes the fallen-tree littered bends, the weir part way through, and any other obstacle more dangerous than they might look from the shore. Also note that despite having a solid 25km or so to warm up, the water temperature on this section of the river isn't much above that of Lake Shikotsu – expect nothing much more than 5°C in early spring, and not much more than 10°C in the height of summer.

ONSEN HOTSPRINGS NEARBY

The closest onsen to the Chitose City Sports Center is the Fujiya Onsen (千歳乃湯えん, 420yen per person) on the opposite side of the Chitose Aoba Park. There is also an old-school sento public bath close to the Chitose JR Train Station. ■

EXTRA DETAILS

Difficulty notes: Overall difficulty: 6/10 | Number of portages: 1 (20m) | Overall portage difficulty: 1/5 | Remoteness: 2/5
River Details: This route is on the Chitose River (千歳川), which is a Class A (一級河川) river, 107.9km in total length. This section of the river is between 10m and 25m wide, with a normal flow rate of around 2m/s to 4m/s.

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

Please visit the full route guide for GPS file, live water levels, and extra safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/chitose>



Disclaimer The information on this map was derived from digital databases provided by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan and the Biodiversity Center of Japan. Care was taken in the creation of this map. HokkaidoWilds.org cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy. There are no warranties, expressed or implied, including the warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, accompanying this product. However, notification of any errors will be appreciated.

MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson

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MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Load your printer with A4 printer paper (210mm x 297mm). If you've only got Letter size (215.9mm x 279.4 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achieve an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

STEP 2

Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

STEP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

STEP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

STEP 5

For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

STEP 6

You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

STEP 7

Click "Print".

PLEASE PRINT AT 'ACTUAL SIZE' (NO SCALING)

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.



Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size", and Pages 1-4 are selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

