





Lake Shikotsu
Northern Shoreline


支笏湖北湖岸 Canoeing Map 1:25000





6 hrs
Time

16km
Distance

7.5/10
Difficulty

5/5
Remoteness

5/5
Water clarity

May-Oct
Best season

The impossibly pristine Lake Shikotsu (支笏湖) is a dramatic caldera lake just under one hour's drive south from Sapporo City. This 16km paddling route along the northern shoreline, under the imposing bulk of the active volcano Eniwa-dake (恵庭岳, 1320m) is arguably one of the more rugged sections of shoreline on the lake. It's a very hefty day out, but you'll paddle past the Marukoma Onsen, and along the way there's a small fine-gravel beach with hot spring water flowing just beneath the sand - bring your shovel. The ultimate destination is the abandoned Okotan settlement, destroyed by a mudslide. With a good weather forecast, this is a very pleasant day out.

LOCATION
Lake Shikotsu is a large caldera lake about 40km south of Sapporo City, the capital of Hokkaido. The put-in/take-out is at the bustling tourist trap that is Poropinaï (ポロピナイ), at the northeastern corner of the lake.

GENERAL NOTES
This lake-shore canoe route has great variety – established as well as wild onsen hotsprings along the shoreline, a curious echo-chamber rock formation, fine-gravel beaches, exceptionally clear water, and the curious abandoned lake-side resort at the end of it all. Okotan – the destination at the far end of the route – would be



suitable for an overnight rough camp for keen campers. Note however that the shoreline is well within the Shikotsu-Toya National Park, so no tents are allowed. Any overnight stays would have to be bivvying under the stars. It goes without saying that paddlers should practice leave-no-trace bivvying – if you light a fire, make sure it's out, and spread ash out well. No firepits or fire debris should remain.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES
We'd recommend allowing a full day (about 6 hours) for this route. This will give time to stop in at the various curiosities along the way, and allow for any unforeseen circumstances.

Starting from the bustling Poropinaï tourist

beach, paddle south along the shore towards Marukoma Onsen (丸駒温泉). Just before Marukoma, at around the 2.5km point, is the old ruins/foundations of Ito Onsen. The old onsen tubs in the rocks still remain (but not the hot water). We've heard there's still hotspring water flowing from the rocks just north of the tubs, but we didn't find it. Another 200m on from the Ito Onsen ruins is Marukoma Onsen. This hotspring facility is an upmarket affair, with open-air baths facing the lake. For modesty's sake, give this a wide berth.

Another 1km on from Marukoma Onsen, and you'll arrive at a small gravel beach, around here, where visitors can dig their own hot-spring baths in the gravel, right on the lake-



edge – this spot is only accessible by canoe. If no one has visited recently, there's unlikely to be any sign of previous activity. From here, it's another 4km of paddling, around Cape Okotan, to the old Okotan resort/campground. At the 5km point, look out for a cove-like cliff. If you're about 50m out from the shore, this can create some great echos. Once you're at the Okotan resort/campground, you've now got another 8km of paddling to get back to Poropinaï. Make sure to start early in the day!

TRANSPORT
By car | There is plenty of parking at Poropinaï.
Public transport | Poropinaï is not accessible by public transport.

SAFETY NOTES
Do not take this route lightly. This route is extremely remote by Hokkaido standards. There are no access roads to the lake beyond Marukoma Onsen, and the shoreline is steep and rocky. The old road (Route 78) from Okotan Lake to Lake Shikotsu is washed out, impassible to all traffic. Like all large lakes, Lake Shikotsu can transform from a mirror-smooth pond to a white-capped ocean in a matter of minutes. No one should attempt this route without a very favourable wind forecast. If Windy.com is forecasting gusts of anything more than 12 knots (20km/h) from the east, west, or south, then we strongly recommend giving this route a miss. We had 20 knot (33km/h) winds from the south (mercifully a tailwind) on the way back to Poropinaï, and this required extremely careful and strong ruddering to manage the swell. Lake Shikotsu is an extremely deep and therefore cold lake – even in the height of summer, hypothermia is a real risk for ill-equipped paddlers. This is also a long route on flat water – good paddling fitness is key.

ONSEN NEARBY

Bring shovels, and dig your own onsen hole in the gravel at the small beach at the 4km point – the water is warm enough to have a nice soak. If you can get back to the put-in at Poropinaï before 3pm, then consider visiting



LAKE DETAILS

This route is on Lake Shikotsu (支笏湖), or *Si-Kot* in the Ainu indigenous language. The lake is a natural lake, about 7.8km wide and 12km long. It has a shoreline of 40km and a maximum depth of 363m (265.4m average). The lake is at 246m above sea level and water visibility

Marukoma Onsen (丸駒温泉, 1,000yen per person), which has an amazing lake-side open-air bath that changes in depth according to the current water level in Lake Shikotsu.

GUIDE OPTIONS
If you'd rather do this route with an experienced open-deck canoe guide, then talk to the friendly folk at Canoa Guide House, at Lake Shikotsu Village. They've got staff who can communicate in English. See the online route guide for links. ■

Japanese Map Glossary		
Romaji	Kanji	English
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

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

Please visit the full route guides for GPS files, interactive maps, and extra safety notes: <http://hokw.jp/shikotin>



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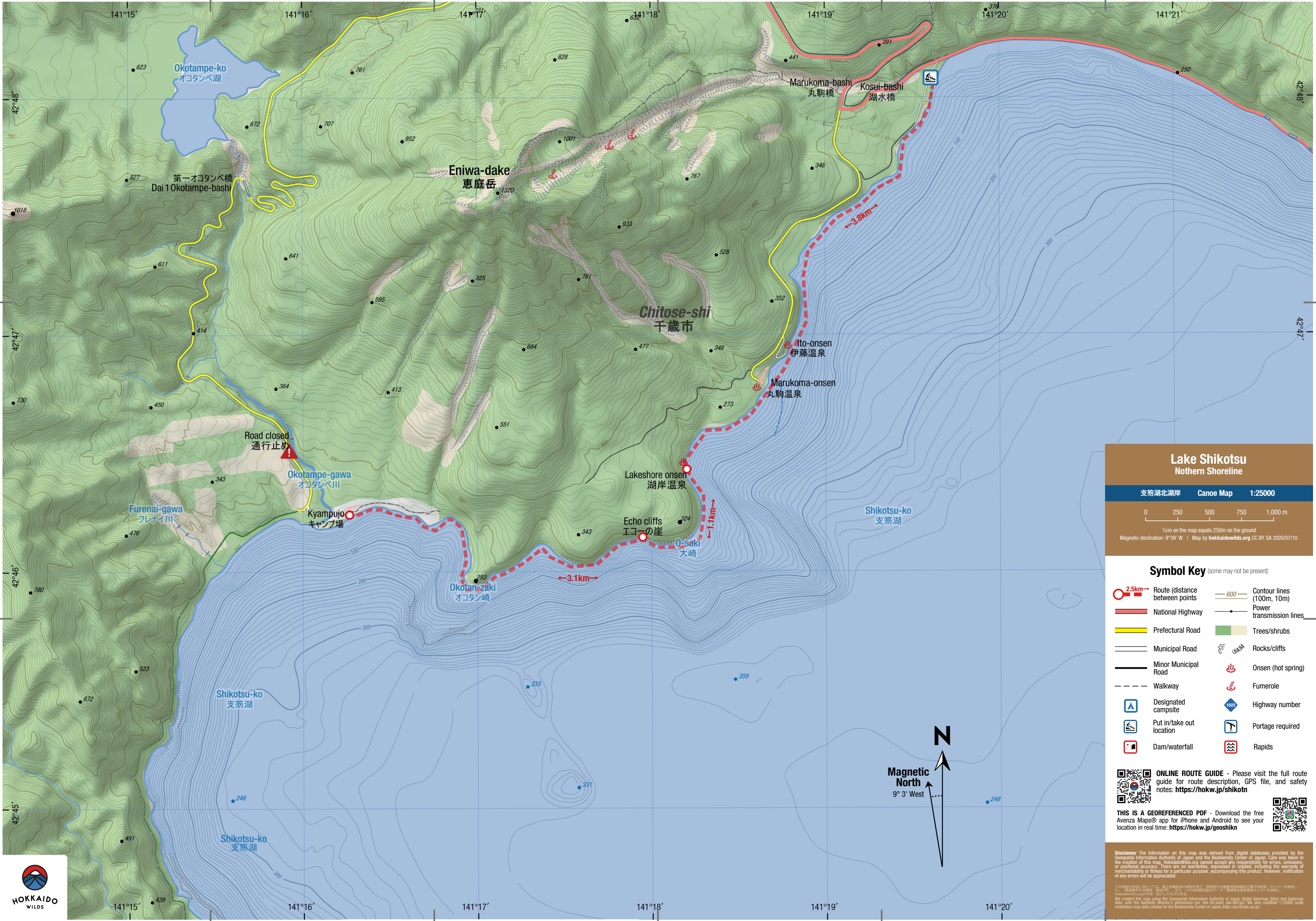
MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson

hokkaidowilds.org 2020/07/11

MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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Lake Shikotsu
Northern Shoreline

支笏湖北湖岸

Canoe Map

1:25000

02505007501,000 m

1cm on the map equals 250m on the ground

Magnetic declination: 9°39' W | Map by hokkaidowilds.org CC BY SA 2020/07/10

Symbol Key (some may not be present)

2.5km

Route (distance between points)

National Highway

Prefectural Road

Municipal Road

Minor Municipal Road

Walkway

Designated campsite

Put in/take out location

Dam/waterfall

Contour lines (100m, 10m)

Power transmission lines

Trees/shrubs

Rocks/cliffs

Onsen (hot spring)

Fumerole

Highway number

Portage required

Rapids

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE - Please visit the full route guide for route description, GPS file, and safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/shikotn>

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HOKKAIDO
WILDS

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We created this map using the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan digital basemap (tiles) and basemap data, with the Authority director's permission (no. Hei-30-jishi_da-867pt). We also modified 1:25000 scale vegetation map data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp/>).

PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Load your printer with A3 printer paper (297mm x 420mm). If you've only got Tabloid or Ledger size (279mm x 432 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.



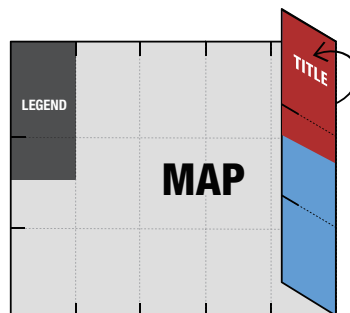
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

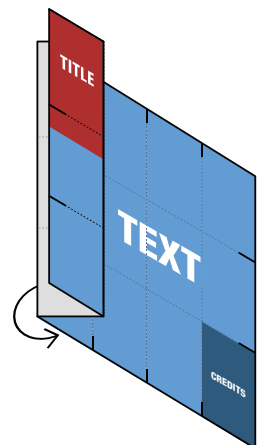
1



2



3



4



5



6



7

