



Takinosawa to Shimukappu

Mukawa River


鵜川（滝の沢〜占冠）Paddling Map 1:25000






5.5hrs

Time




4.9

Gradient (mpk)




Class II+

Difficulty




14km

Distance



4/5

Water clarity



May-Sep

Best season

The upper reaches of the Mukawa River 鵜川 above Shimukappu Village 占冠村 offer a relaxing paddle punctuated with just a couple of enjoyable CII+ rapids. This section of river is always close to roads, but you'd never know it - the river is shrouded in deep forest, with plenty of bird life. There's one exposed bedrock rapid in particular that is perfect for repeating as many times as you can handle - the carry back up to the top of the rapids is an easy walk.

LOCATION
The Mukawa River is a major waterway flowing from deep in the northern Hidaka Range in western-central Hokkaido, southwards out to the Pacific Ocean east of Tomakomai on Hokkaido's southern coast. This section of the Mukawa River starts about 15km upstream from the small mountain village of Shimukappu.

Put-in: Put in just below the railway bridge east of the exit of the Shimukappu Tunnel 占冠トンネル. There's a gravel road running right off the main road, just opposite the large parking area on the left.

Take-out: A good spot to take out is on the river left just after the Shimukappukawa-bashi bridge 占冠川橋, about 800m downstream of the Bedrock Rapids. There's a gravel road running from the main road down to a gravel area on the riverbed. If you'd prefer to get closer to Shimukappu Village center, then it's possible to take out on the river left just before Chitose-bashi bridge 千歳橋 or on the river right immediately after Chitose-bashi bridge.

GENERAL NOTES
As far as river paddling goes, this far upper section of the Mukawa River doesn't get much action. The lack of attention is misguided, however. It's lovely, relaxing part of the river, with some fun, uncomplicated rapids along the way which keep things interesting. The river is lined with trees, and the small bluffs and cliffs along the way are nice. Well worth paddling if you're at a loose end in the area, and the more committing and difficult downstream sections don't appeal.

Paddling even further upstream on the Mukawa: Further upstream than this section becomes difficult on the Mukawa due to downed trees across the river. The river narrows considerably, making paddling difficult, and certainly dangerous in high water.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES
This section of river can be smashed out in a few hours, but if you make a day of it, the bedrock rapids at the 9km point can be a fun play spot for a few hours.

After putting in under the railway bridge,

there's a fairly shallow (in summer conditions) CII swift about 100m downstream, wrapping around the first bend. From there, you'll enjoy a forest-lined paddle along a fast-flowing river with just a few swifts here and there until the 3km point, where the 'Old Road Rapids' begin. This stretch of about 500m is a CII+ rapid with plenty of rock-dodging involved. In a packraft it's great fun, and at normal water levels the water flow is relaxed enough that even if you do tip out, you'd be able to stand up and get back onto your raft. In higher water, the boulders will be covered, and it'll be a fun wave-ride.

From the Old Road Rapids, it's another 6km of relaxing paddling until the Bed Rock Rapids. This pushy CII+ rapid/slider twists its way down the bedrock, and will challenge lesser skilled paddlers to keep upright. It's easily scouted, and it's easy to walk back up the riverside on the river left to repeat.

Beyond the Bed Rock Rapids, paddlers will just enjoy the remaining float to one's preferred take out option.

RIVER DETAILS

This route is on Mu-kawa (鵜川), or Muk-ap in the Ainu indigenous language. The river is a Class A (一級河川) river, 135km in total length. This section of the river is between 4m and 20m wide. The gradient for this section of river is 4.9 mpk (25.87 FPM).

TRANSPORT
By car: There is plenty of parking at the put-in – we recommend dropping gear at the river-side, and parking in the large paved parking area on the main road. At the take-out closest to Shimukappu Village on the river left, there's a large gravel area where you can park your car. For the take-out 800m downstream from Bedrock Rapids, there is limited parking – perhaps three cars at a pinch.

Public transport: There is no public transport to this route.

SAFETY NOTES
Be aware that the large catchment area above


the Mukawa means that the river does rise quickly with rain.

ONSEN NEARBY
If you're headed back to Shimukappu, then we'd recommend Yunosawa Mori-no-shiki Onsen 湯の沢森の四季温泉 (550yen). There's no outdoor baths, but the attached restaurant has great food at a reasonable price. If headed east towards Tomamu, the enigmatic hot pools in the sprawling Tomamu Resort complex are worth visiting – Kirin-no-yu 木林の湯 (900yen). The pools are not natural hot springs, but the whole Tomamu Resort is such a curiosity, they're worth a visit. ■

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/mukshimu>




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MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson

hokkaidowilds.org 2023/06/10

MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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Symbol Key

- 2.5km

Route (distance)

National Highway

Prefectural Highway

Municipal Road

Minor Road / Track

Bus route / Stop

Municipal boundary

Land contour lines (100m, 10m)

Trees / No trees

Cliffs / Bluff / Rocks
- Put-in/Take-out

Rapids / Dam/Weir/Waterfall

Portage required/ Bridge

Parking / Onsen

Shop / Public toilet

Campground / Campsite (no facilities)

Buildings

Shrine / Temple

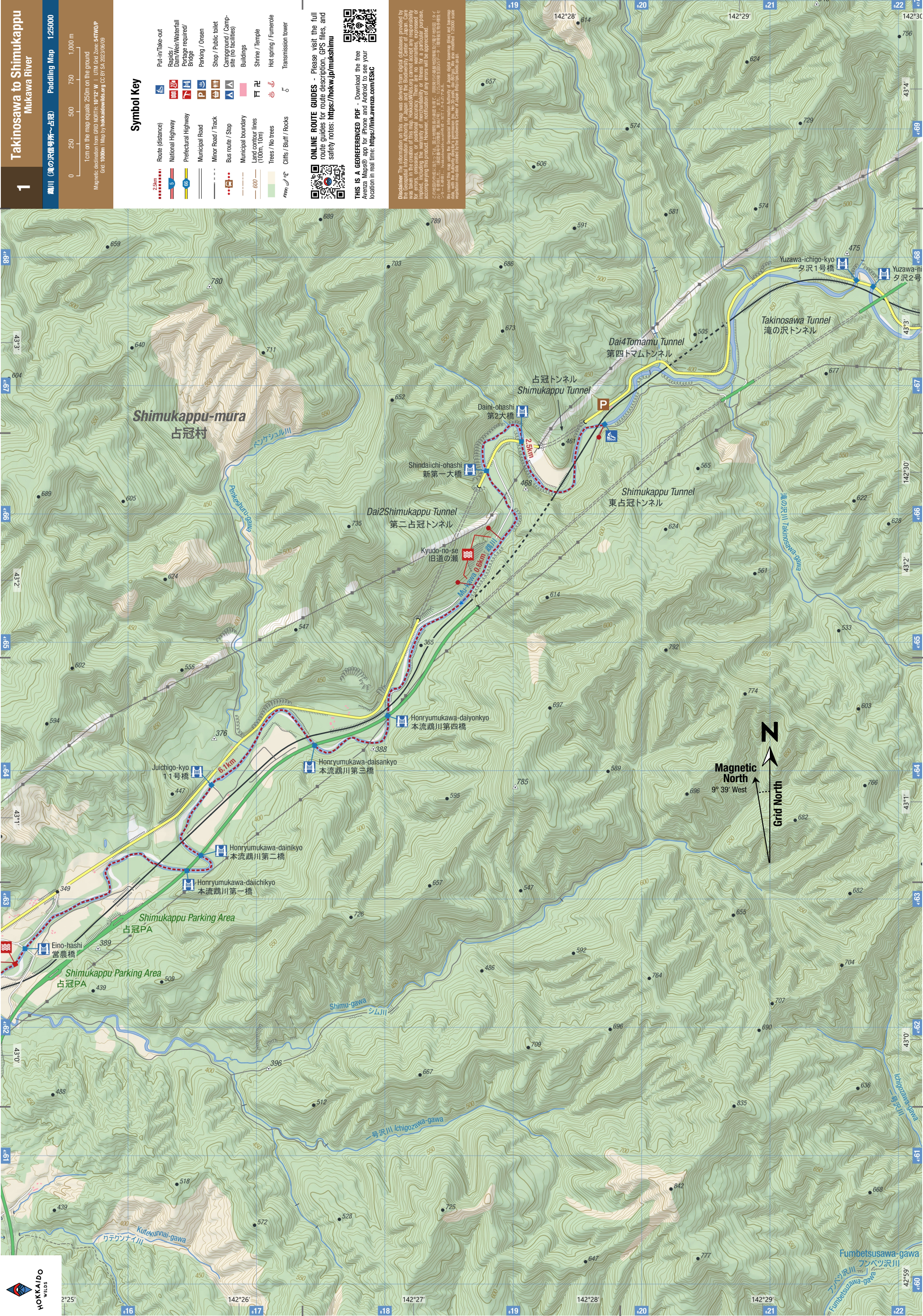
Hot spring / Fumerole

Transmission tower

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDES - Please visit the full route guides for route description, GPS files, and safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/mukashimu>

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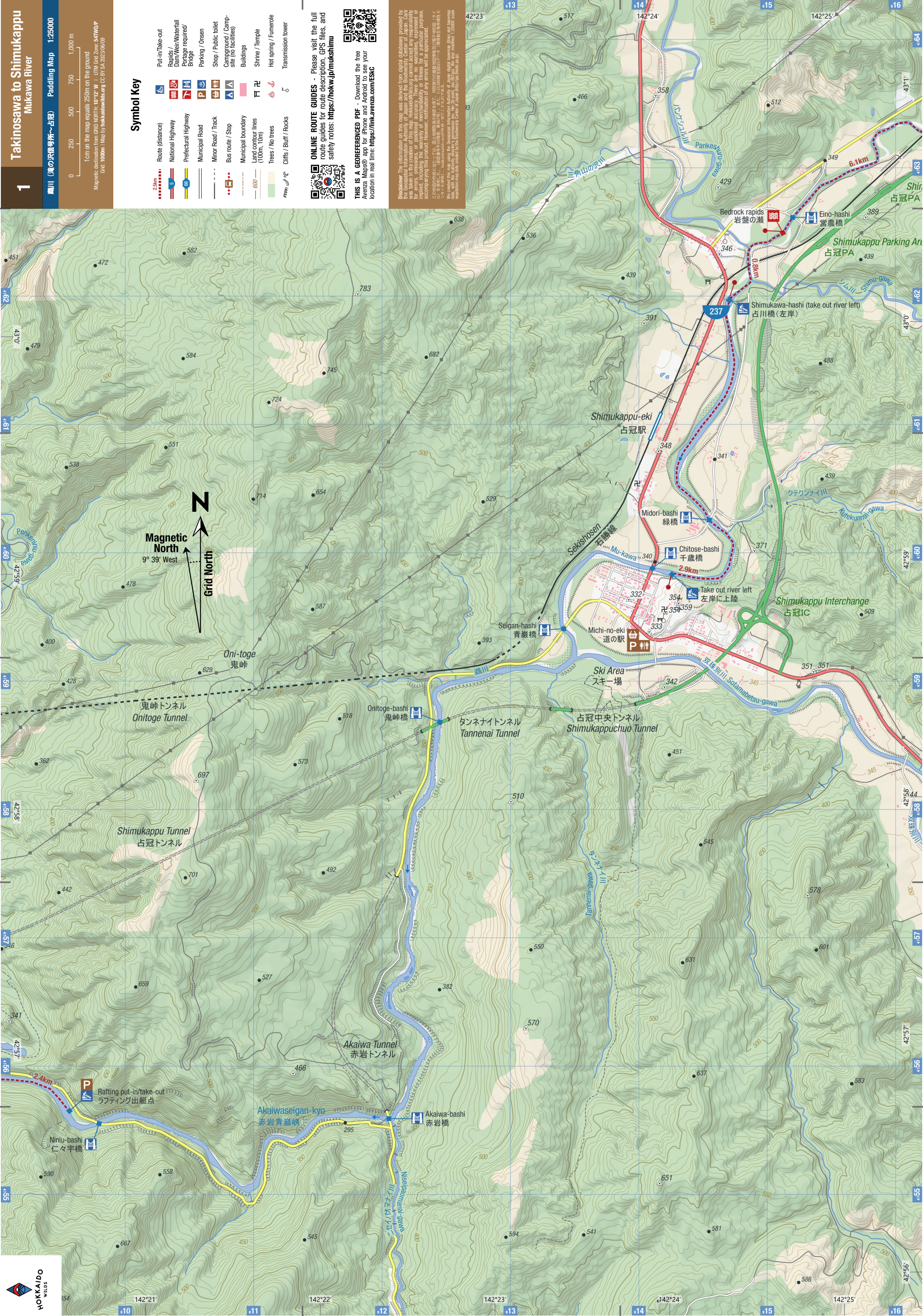
Symbol Key

	Route (distance)		Put-in/Take-out
	National Highway		Rapids / Dam/Weir/Waterfall
	Prefectural Highway		Portage required/ Bridge
	Municipal Road		Parking / Onsen
	Minor Road / Track		Shop / Public toilet
	Bus route / Stop		Campground / Campsite (no facilities)
	Municipal boundary		Buildings
	Land contour lines (100m, 10m)		Shrine / Temple
	Trees / No trees		Hot spring / Fumerole
	Cliffs / Bluff / Rocks		Transmission tower

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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.



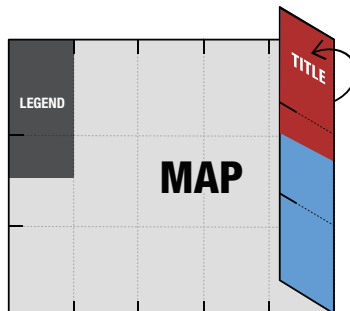
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

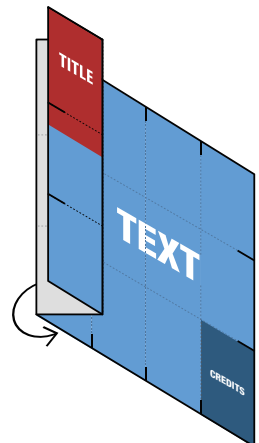
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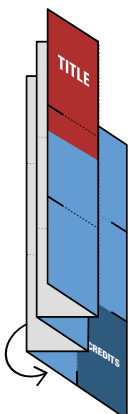
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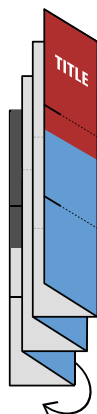
3



4



5



6



7

