

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN RIVER SYSTEM

Canoe & Kayak Trail

Nepean River / Colo River / Hawkesbury River



Land and Property
Management Authority

www.lpma.nsw.gov.au

WELCOME

Welcome to three canoeing and kayaking opportunities on the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System.

The Hawkesbury River has numerous sections and tributaries which are well suited to recreational canoeing and kayaking. It offers spectacular scenery and an abundance of wildlife.

Crown and Council Reserves provide places where the public can get access to the river to start or finish your trip.

The Hawkesbury-Nepean River System

The Hawkesbury River is formed by the confluence of the Grose and Nepean Rivers just north of Penrith in New South Wales. The Grose River rises near Mt Victoria in the Blue Mountains, and the Nepean River near Wollongong some 80 kms south of Sydney. The Nepean River is joined by the Warragamba River south of Penrith. These two rivers together capture much of the water for the city of Sydney and the Sydney Basin. The largest of the dams is Warragamba Dam on the Warragamba River just up stream from its junction with the Nepean.

Canoe trails

There are three Canoe and Kayak adventures described in this booklet

- Nepean River Canoe and Kayak Trail (up to 50 kms)
- Colo River Canoe and Kayak Trail (30 kms)
- Hawkesbury River Canoe and Kayak Trail (83.5 kms)

Each of these trips has its own characteristics and you will be sure to find one that meets your needs.

Degree of difficulty

Significant falls of rain in the catchments of any of these rivers can change their water quite quickly. The changes are quite short lived however and for most of the time these three canoe trails are slow moving flat water with no rapids, and are quite suited to recreational canoeists with beginner skills. Some degree of endurance will be required on the longer reaches, particularly if a head wind or tide is encountered.

The upper reaches of the Colo can be quite shallow after dry spells, but the bottom is sandy and easy to walk towing your canoe.

The Hawkesbury River is popular for speed boating and skiing. These activities can create real problems for canoeists and speed boats alike. It is best to canoe the popular areas when speed boating activity is low.

It is also advisable to plan canoeing on the Hawkesbury and lower Colo River to coincide with the tide.

Canoe and kayak trail maps

The canoe trail maps have been prepared by the Land and Property Management Authority to show the public where they can gain

ABOUT GPS (Global Positioning System)

GPS coordinates have been used to locate critical points along the river. These Coordinates are based on the GDA datum.

- Your GPS should be set up to Datum Mode: GDA (or WGS), Position: UTM/UPS, Units: Metric, and North Reference: True.
- The coordinates will only refer to the Zone you are in. You must state the zone if contacting emergency services. The Hawkesbury River Zone is 56.

access to the water. With this and the other information provided, you can plan your canoe/kayak trip.

Public access to the river is provided by public or Crown reserves. Some of these reserves have public facilities such as toilets and boat ramps. The location of these reserves is shown on the maps but they have also been given a GPS Coordinate so that you can find them from the water.

There are numerous riverside caravan parks, tourist parks and ski resorts along the river where you can also get access to the river and obtain accommodation. These are commercial businesses and day use fees may apply.

Advice from Maritime Services

NSW Maritime is the State Government Authority responsible for marine safety and the regulation of commercial and recreational boating. The following information is supplied for the information of canoeists and kayakers on the Hawkesbury River system.

- The Hawkesbury River is closed to all boating craft on four occasions each year while aquatic events are held. The times and dates are available on the Maritime Services website, www.maritime.nsw.gov.au
- Canoeists should obey basic river rules and travel on the right hand side of the river.
- To improve visibility to speed boats canoeists should wear bright coloured clothing, and if operating at night should carry a navigation light.
- When crossing ferry cables always cross behind the ferry not in front of the ferry.
- Speed boat wash will cause a problem to canoeists. Ensure your splash skirts are in place to avoid swamping, or chose times when speed boats are not operating.
- Canoeists should wear a PDF (Personal Flotation Device), and consider carrying a V-Sheet (international distress signal) and or a pressure pack air horn to attract attention if you need help.

Further information

- Penrith Valley Visitor Information Centre (Penrith) – Ph 1300 736 836
- Sydney Hills Visitor Centre (Dural) – Ph 1300 884 881
- Hawkesbury Visitor Information Centre (Windsor) – Ph 1300 362 874
- www.paddlensw.org.au

NEPEAN RIVER

The waters of the Nepean River are best accessed from riverside reserves at Penrith. However with a bit of effort access to the river can be gained from the reserve at the junction of the Warragamba and Nepean Rivers. Between Penrith and the Junction Reserve is 25kms of spectacular non tidal water that can be paddled in both directions. The wall of the enormous Warragamba Dam is visible just a kilometre or so upstream from the Junction Reserve

Degree of difficulty

Except after significant rain, the water is flat and non tidal and suited to beginner canoeists. The greatest difficulty will be with wind and the water conditions it causes. Wind speed and direction on the day should be used to determine how far you can travel and return safely.

Start/Finish

Tench Reserve, Penrith

The Tench Reserve is on the eastern bank of the river between the M4 and Penrith. It can be accessed from the M4 via Mulgoa Road and Jamison Road

Landing

Boat ramp
GDA 56 283443/6261610

Public facilities

There are toilets, lawns, shade and shelter
The reserve is closed at night

Camping

Not permitted on reserve

Accommodation and meals

Available in Penrith

Start/Finish

Nepean Rowing Club or The Weir Reserve, Penrith

The rowing club and weir reserve is on the eastern bank at Penrith just north of the old Great Western Highway bridge over the Nepean for the. From Penrith turn right just before crossing the bridge

Landing

Rowing Club Landing or natural beach
GDA 56 285390/6263621

Public facilities

Behind the Nepean Rowing Club is a reserve with toilets, a shelter and car park. The reserve is closed at night

Accommodation and meals

Available in Penrith (1 km)
Alternate pullout at the boat ramp in the Tench Reserve
GDA 56 283443/6261610

Start/Finish

Junction Reserve, Wallacia

The Junction Reserve is at the end of Nortons Basin Road. This road is accessible off Silverdale Road at Wallacia. The road ends at a car park, and an 800m walk down the fire trail leads to the water

Landing

Natural, find a spot
Approx GDA56 278996/6250930

Public facilities

None

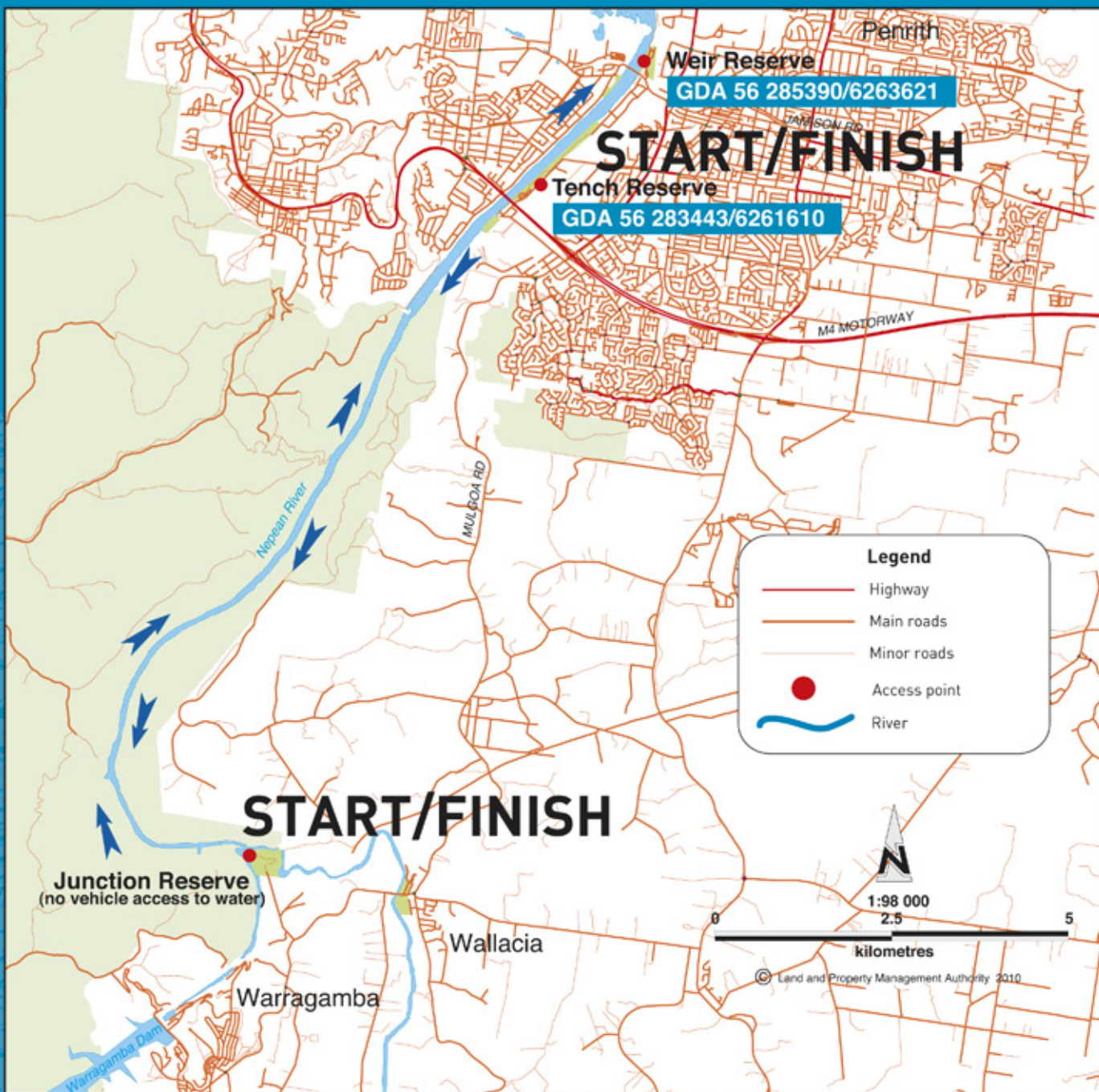
Camping

Not permitted on reserve



NEPEAN RIVER

TENCH RESERVE / NEPEAN ROWING CLUB TO JUNCTION RESERVE



COLO RIVER

The lower reaches of the Colo River are tidal and can be paddled in both directions with the tide. However the upper reaches are best travelled with the current ie downstream. The canoe trail is described here as if you were paddling down stream, starting at the Upper Colo Recreation Reserve and finishing at the Skeleton Rocks Reserve at Lower Portland.

Degree of difficulty

After rain the Colo River can rise quite quickly but normally it is a slow and quite shallow in the upper reaches. The bottom is sandy and there are no rapids.

The lower sections are tidal and quite suited to beginner canoeists. It pays however to paddle with the tide. For Hawkesbury Tides see http://www.tide-times.com.au/localtime_NSW/Sydney_Northern_Beaches/Other/Hawkesbury_River_-_Gunderman.html or just Google Hawkesbury tides.

Getting to the start

The Upper Colo Recreation Reserve can be reached by vehicle from the Putty Road either by taking the Comleroy Road, or the Upper Colo Road. Both have gravel surfaces and are narrow and winding so take care.

CAUTION

The bridge over the Colo is a low level bridge so if there has been recent rain clearance under the bridge may be reduced. Please check this as you go across. If there is not enough clearance for you and the canoe you should start your trip from below the bridge by launching from the parking area on the northern side. Otherwise proceed to the Upper Colo Reserve where there are excellent facilities.

Start

Upper Colo Reserve

Landing

GDA 56 289364/6299825

Camping

Camping is permitted (fee payable)

Facilities

Toilets, drinking water, shelter, barbeques and tables

Vehicle access

Via Upper Colo Road and Hulberts Road

Accommodation and meals

None locally, nearest Kurrajong, Richmond or Windsor



COLO RIVER

UPPER COLO TO COLO

1

Destination

Colo Reserve under the Putty Road bridge

Distance by river

16 kms

Paddling time

5-6 hrs

Landing

A small ramp just downstream of reserve
GDA 298237/6298639

Hazards

Upper Colo Bridge – At a river level of over 1.3m canoeists will have difficulty getting under this low level bridge. Portage around or start from below the bridge.

Difficulty

At low levels parts of this section can be shallow and you may need to drag your canoe short distances. The river bottom is sandy and this is not difficult. The water is suited to beginners

Public facilities

Car park, toilets, shelter and lawn

Camping

Not available on the reserve. Over the river is Colo River Holiday Park with an excellent sandy beach and camping facilities

Vehicle access

via the Putty Road

Accommodation and meals

Colo River Holiday Park

COLO RIVER

COLO TO LOWER PORTLAND

2

Destination

Skeleton Rocks Reserve

Distance by river

14 kms

Paddling time

Approx. 4-5 hrs depending on the tide

Difficulty

Deep flat tidal water, ideal for beginners but plan the trip to go with the tide

Public landing

GDA 312773/6304891

Public facilities

Boat loading ramp, toilets and car park

Camping

Not permitted

Vehicle access

Via west Portland Road

Accommodation and meals

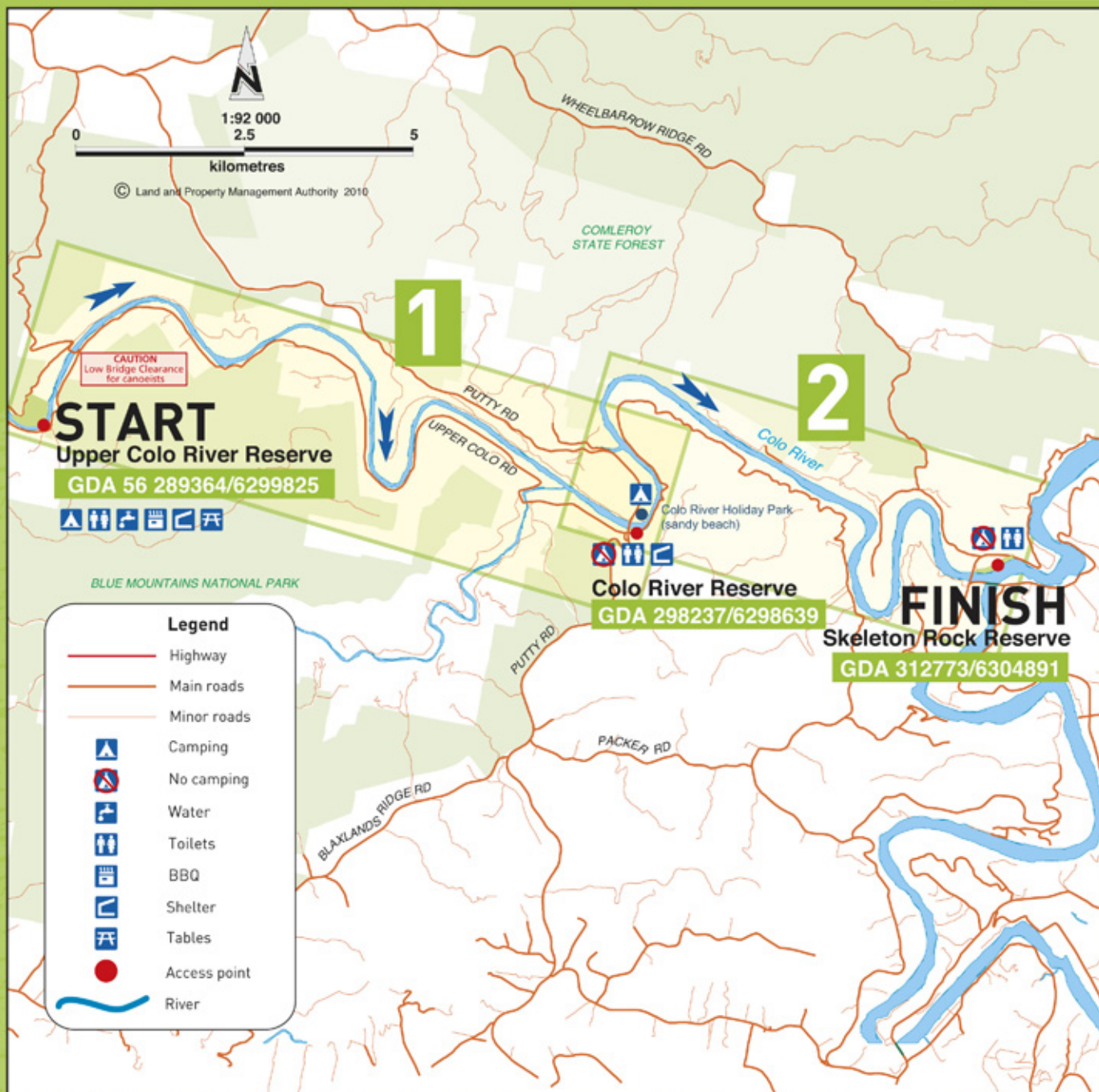
Wilberforce, Windsor or Wisemans Ferry



COLO RIVER

UPPER COLO TO LOWER PORTLAND

1-2



HAWKESBURY RIVER

Yarramundi to Wiseman's Ferry

This canoe trail can be travelled in any direction, but it is best travelled with the tide.

Tide times can be checked on http://www.tide-times.com.au/localtime_NSW/Sydney_Northern_Beaches/Other/Hawkesbury_River_-_Gunderman.html or just Google 'Hawkesbury tides'

For the purposes of this booklet it is described as travelling downstream.

Degree of difficulty

Hawkesbury River Canoe and Kayak Trail is rated as flat water. It is suited to beginner canoeists. However the river is tidal and can be affected by wind, both of which can add to the difficulty of paddling.

Beware of ski boats

The Hawkesbury is the playground for Sydney water skiers and there are times that canoeists should avoid if they want good water, some peace and quiet and a degree of safety. The ski boats are most active during the summer months, particularly the school holidays and weekends.

Which section to paddle

Which section of the river you decide to paddle will depend on many factors. This booklet shows you the public and private access points, and the distances in between to help you plan your trip. Getting a car to the other end is also a consideration so the booklet shows the network of roads along the river. Some of these roads are narrow and winding so take care

Getting to the start

Yarramundi Reserve is at the junction of the Grose and Nepean Rivers.

From Sydney take the Windsor Rd to Windsor and then Richmond, then the Castlereagh Rd to Agnes Banks. Take the Hawkesbury Road across the Nepean and turn into Yarramundi Reserve.

From the Blue Mountains take the Hawkesbury Road at Springwood and turn into the Yarramundi Reserve just before crossing the Nepean River.

Start

Yarramundi Reserve

Landing

Public Beach access to River
GDA 56 286482/6278807

Public facilities

Car park, shelters, closed at night

Camping

Not permitted

Vehicle access

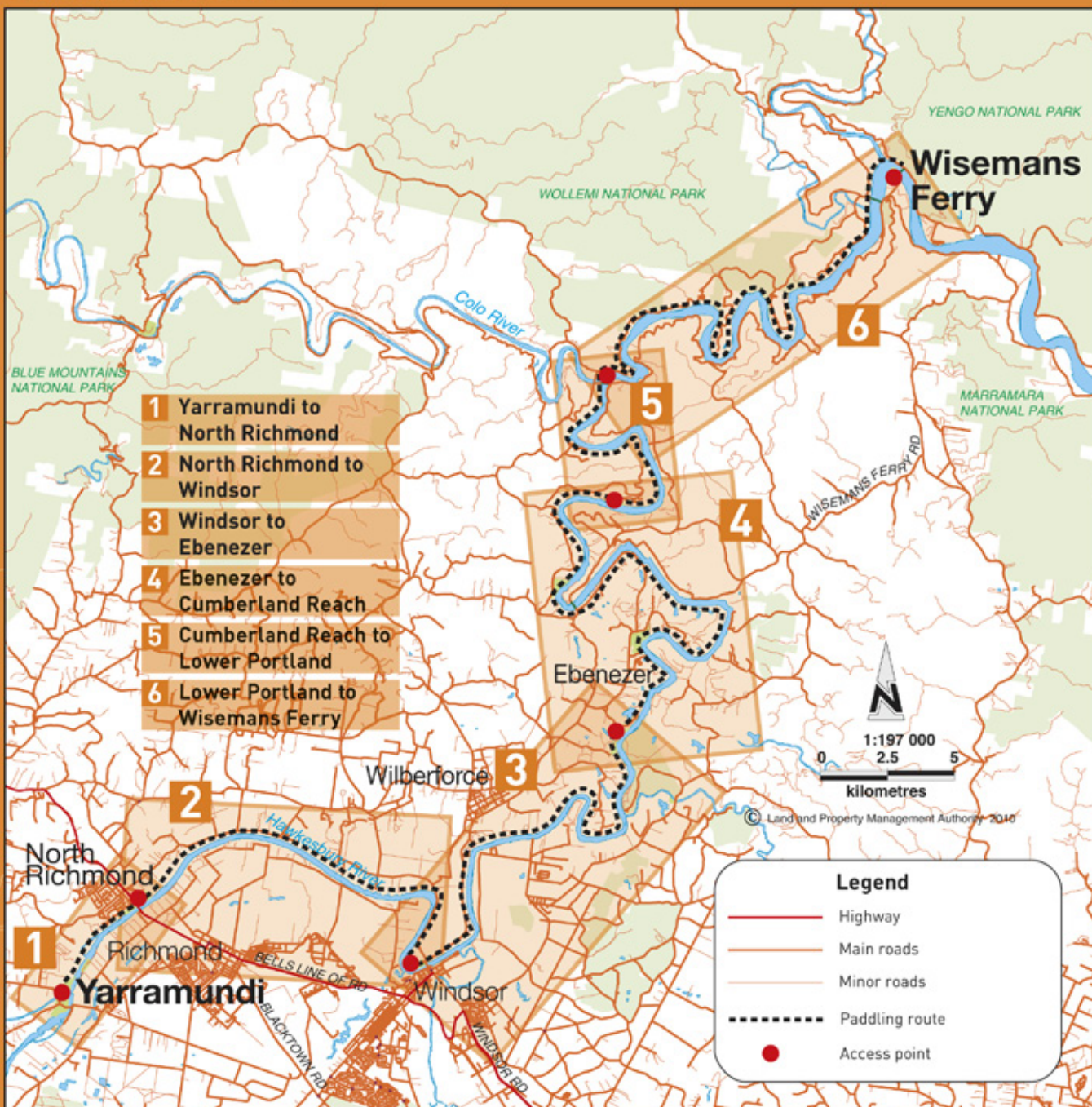
Via Hawkesbury Road

Accommodation and meals

Nearest in Richmond (5.5 kms)



HAWKESBURY OVERVIEW MAP



HAWKESBURY RIVER

YARRAMUNDI TO NORTH RICHMOND

1

Destination

Hanna Park at North Richmond

Distance by river

4.0 kms

Paddling time

1-2 hrs

Hazards

- At times there is aquatic weed in this section of the river. Ensure you wear a PDF at all times
- About 1.5 km from Yarramundi is a rock bar, where the water is shallow. Portage may be necessary to avoid damage

Landing

Beach and jetty

GDA 56 288848/6281648

Public facilities

Car park, toilets, shelters, BBQ, lawns

Camping

Not permitted

Vehicle access

Via Beaumont Ave

Accommodation and meals

In North Richmond (1.0 km)

HAWKESBURY RIVER

NORTH RICHMOND TO WINDSOR

2

Destination

Macquarie Park at Windsor

Distance by river

13.5 kms

Paddling time

4-5 hrs

Hazards

At times there is aquatic weed in this section of the river. Ensure you wear a PDF at all times

Landing

Public beach

GDA 56 297539/6279569

Public facilities

Toilets, car park, shelter and tables.

Camping

Not permitted

Vehicle access

Immediately across bridge on Wilberforce Road

Accommodation

in Windsor (1.0 km)

Meals

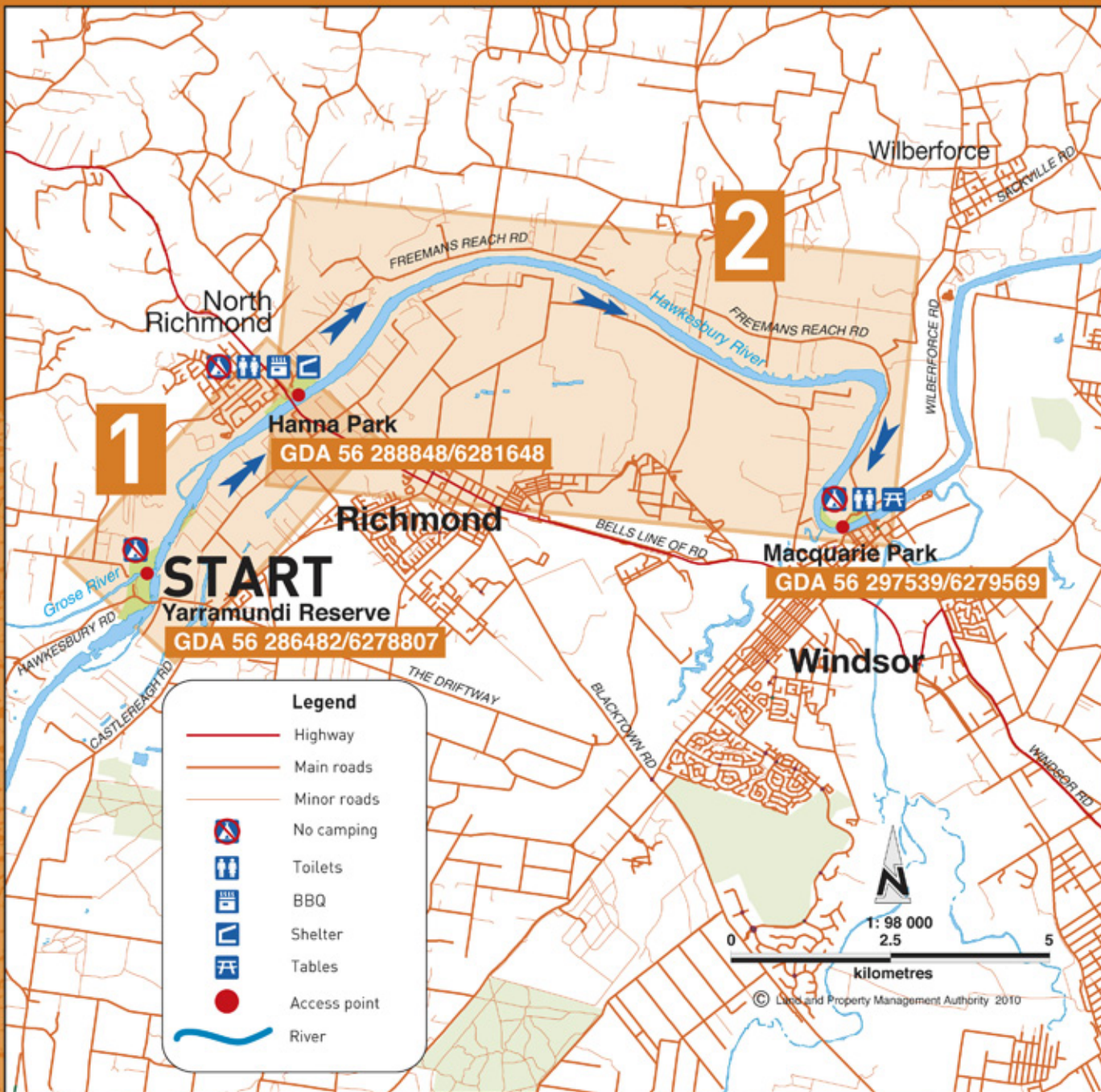
There is a seafood restaurant at the reserve or meals over the bridge in Windsor



HAWKESBURY RIVER

YARRAMUNDI TO NORTH RICHMOND / NORTH RICHMOND TO WINDSOR

1 2



HAWKESBURY RIVER

WINDSOR TO EBENEZER

3

Destination

Ebenezer Church Reserve

Distance by river

15.5 kms

Paddling time

4-6 hrs

Landing

Beach

GDA 56 304027/6287129

Facilities

Toilets, shelters

Camping

Camping not permitted

Vehicle access

Via Tizzana Road and Coromandel Road

Accommodation and meals

At Wilberforce and Windsor

Alternate landings

1. Cattai National Park, Beach, GDA 56 304069/6284806
Toilets and Camping available please book with NPWS
Phone 4572 3100. Fees apply
2. Cattai Reserve. On the Cattai Creek where the Cattai Road crosses the Cattai Creek. GDA 56305646/6285064. Car park, shade, no facilities
3. Hawkesbury Riverside Tourist Park, Beach, GDA 56 300082/6283531
Phone 02 4572 3733

HAWKESBURY RIVER

EBENEZER TO CUMBERLAND REACH

4

Destination

Holmes Drive Reserve

Distance by river

21.5 kms

Paddling time

6-7 hrs

Hazards

Take care crossing the Sackville Ferry cables. Pass behind the ferry when it is moving

Landing

GDA 56 304094/6294301

Facilities

Boat ramp

Camping

Camping not permitted

Vehicle access

Via Laws Farm Road and Holmes Drive

Accommodation and meals

Wilberforce and Windsor

Alternate landings with accommodation and camping

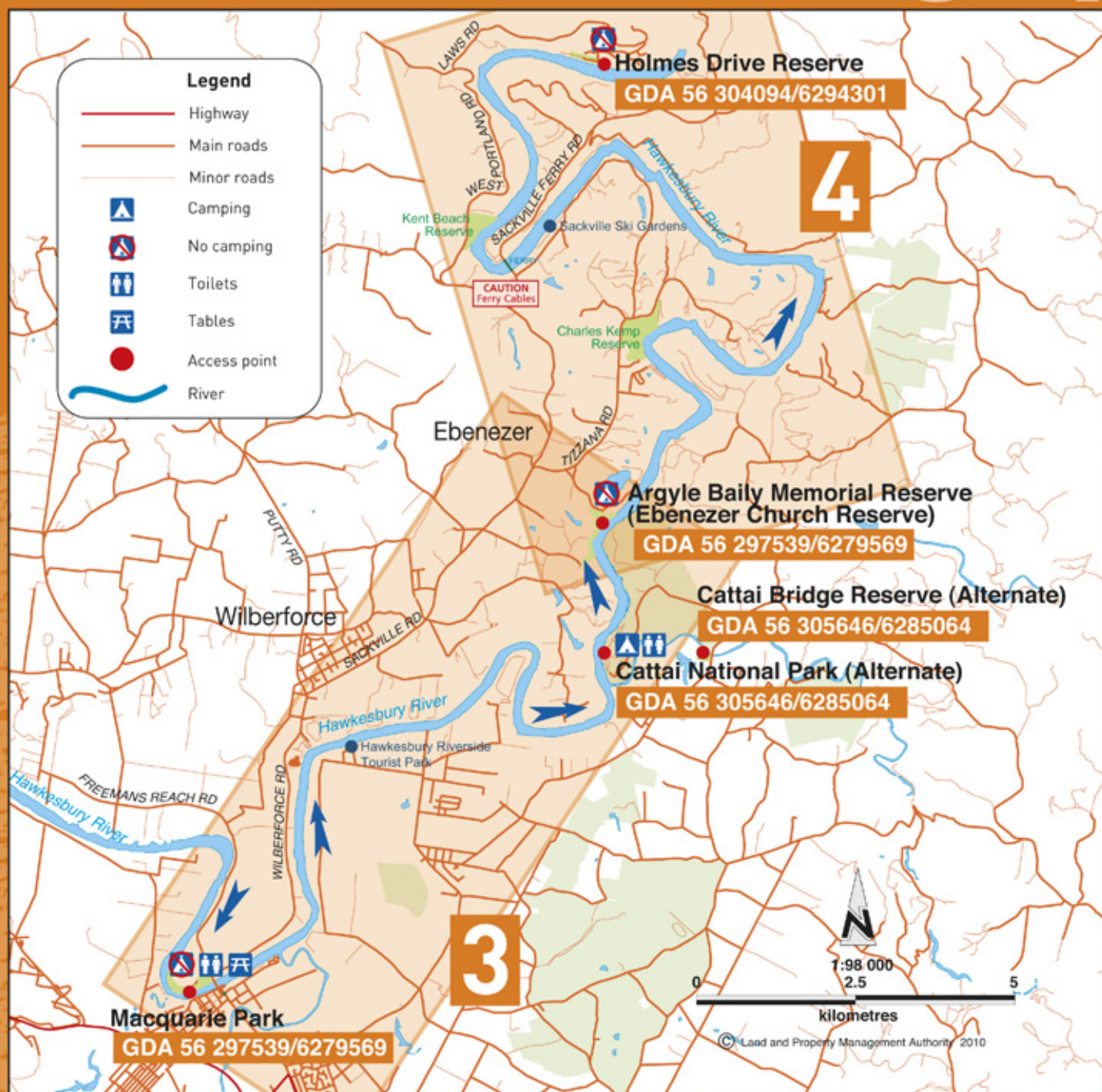
1. Sackville Ski Gardens, Beach, GDA 56 303254/6291756
Phone 4579 1036



HAWKESBURY RIVER

WINDSOR TO EBENEZER / EBENEZER TO CUMBERLAND REACH

3-4



HAWKESBURY RIVER

CUMBERLAND REACH TO LOWER PORTLAND

5

Destination

Skeleton Rocks Reserve

Distance by river

9 kms

Paddling Time

3-4 hrs

Hazards

Take care crossing the Lower Portland Ferry cables. Pass behind the ferry when it is moving

Landing

GDA 56 303452/6298287

Facilities

Toilet, boat ramp

Vehicle access

Turn right off the West Portland Road immediately after the bridge over the Colo River

Camping

Camping not permitted

Accommodation and meals

At Wilberforce or Windsor

HAWKESBURY RIVER

LOWER PORTLAND TO WISEMAN'S FERRY

6

Destination

Wisemans Ferry

Distance by River

20 kms

Paddling Time

6-7 hrs

Hazards

Take care crossing the Webb's Creek Ferry and Wiseman's Ferry cables. Pass behind the ferry when it is moving

Landing

GDA 312773/6304891

Facilities

Toilets, tables, kiosk, beach landing, and shade

Vehicle access

Turn left into car park just before the ferry

Accommodation and meals

Available at Wisemans Ferry

Alternate landings with camping and accommodation

1. Clifton Lodge Resort, beach, GDA 56 306757/6298890
Phone 02 4575 5220
2. Leets Vale Caravan Park, beach, GDA 309271/6299246
Phone 02 4566 4444
3. Carinya Ski Ranch, beach, GDA 56 311350/6301804
Phone 02 4566 4280



CUMBERLAND REACH TO LOWER PORTLAND / LOWER PORTLAND TO WISEMAN'S FERRY



SAFE CANOEING CHECKLIST

Before you go

- Always check the river levels BEFORE your trip. Daily river levels are available on www.waterinfo.nsw.gov.au
- Always let someone know of your trip plans and ensure your support vehicle is aware of your intended rendezvous point and how to get there
- Canoeists/kayakers should be proficient in moving water. Beginners and children should become competent canoeists/kayakers on still water before attempting moving water
- GPS coordinates have been supplied to help you locate the reserves. Set up your GPS for the GDA datum and enter the coordinates of the reserves in advance
- Ensure you have enough fuel, food and water for the trip

On the river

- Make sure you have all your gear when you set off as the river's flow may be too strong to paddle back upstream
- Avoid travelling alone and stay in contact with other canoes/kayaks in your group
- Be alert for hazardous overhanging trees and snags
- If you capsize, hold on to your canoe or kayak until you can beach safely. If the water is freezing leave your craft and head for the bank immediately
- If in doubt about a rapid or obstacle ahead pull into the bank and check on foot
- Mobile phone reception is not always reliable along the canoe & kayak trails
- To avoid overheating, paddle early in the morning or late evening with a break in the hottest part of the day
- To fish in NSW waters, you must pay a fee and carry the receipt showing payment. For more information visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Safety gear

- A high visibility Personal Floatation Device - Type 2 with a whistle attached should be worn at all times on the water
- Hat and sunscreen
- Map, compass and GPS
- Spare paddle and repair kit
- Adequate drinking water and food for 5-8 hrs
- A first-aid kit and basic knowledge of CPR
- Waterproof containers for food and warm/dry clothing
- Appropriate footwear for water and rocks
- All canoes/kayaks should have fixed buoyancy with securing loops at each end
- A rope or throw line should be carried for rescue purposes

At the campsite

- Practice low impact camping – take out what you take in
- Do not drink the river water without boiling or treating it. Carry adequate supplies of drinking water with you
- Light fires in fire places provided and extinguish completely before leaving. Observe any fire bans that are in place
- Bury your waste at least 50 m from the river if there are no toilets
- Do not interfere with vegetation, gates, fences or stock
- Do not use soaps or detergents in the river
- Respect other canoeists/kayakers and campers

**Canoe & kayak trail is published by
NSW Land and Property Management Authority**

This booklet is designed as a reference guide only and is not to be used as a teaching aid. Canoeists/kayakers use the trail at their own risk.

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Hawkesbury River

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