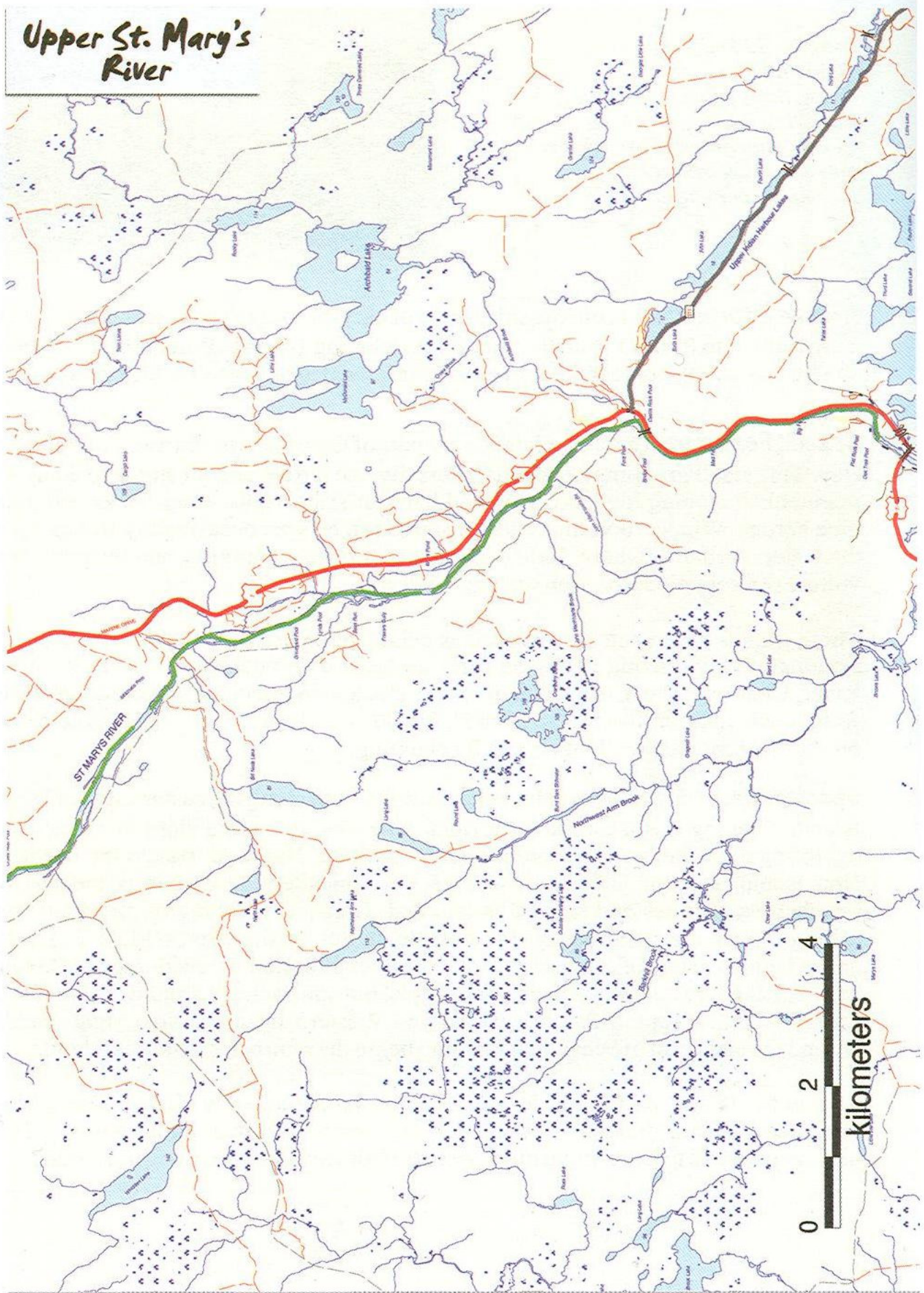


Upper St. Mary's River



West Branch St Marys River to Sherbrooke Village

Length: 40.4 km, one-way

Time: 2 days

Type: freshwater river

Facilities: none

Closest Amenities: Sherbrooke

Rating: experienced



Access Information: From Sherbrooke, travel 16 km east on Highway 7 to Melrose. Turn left onto Route 348 towards Glenelg, New Glasgow and Caledonia. Travel 28 km to Caledonia and launch from the Caledonia bridge.

Special Features: St. Mary's River took its name from Fort St. Marie, built by the French in 1654, in what is now the lower end of Sherbrooke Village. Erected to protect both French fishermen and fur traders along these shores, the fort was captured by the British in the late 1660's. A British regiment is reported to have spent the winter in tents along the river between Sherbrooke and Sonora, an area that became known as Canvas Town. Sherbrooke, the trade center of the area, was a community built on the fortunes of timber, gold and tall ships. The river was the main source of industry and transportation for many years, providing a good livelihood to many families for generations. Salmon fishing has always been prominent on this river and continues to attract anglers from all over the world. Many prominent people have spent their vacations on and about the St. Marys River, including English nobility, politicians and sports figures, including Babe Ruth! Today, tourism remains a key industry for this region rich in history and natural beauty.

Description: Entering the water at the bridge in Caledonia, the first section of this route (approximately 22 km) will be along West River St. Mary's, the western branch of the upper section of the St. Mary's River. Much of the land along this part of the river is privately owned and you will notice several areas where tree harvesting has taken place. The areas surrounding this region are prime woodlands and home to most Nova Scotia wildlife species. Be observant of salmon, deer and moose along the way. The river will wind and turn for several kilometres, passing through the villages of Upper Smithfield and Glenelg. As you pass beyond Glenelg, watch for another branch of the river on your right. This is East River St. Marys, the sister branch of the river. At this point, the two branches merge and the remainder of the trip follows the main portion of the St. Mary's River. Moving in a southeasterly direction, the river straightens and flows toward Waternish. Between Waternish and Stillwater, the river is flanked within a short distance by Highway 7 on your left, and a local highway on your right.

