

“An epic Northeastern Ontario Paddling Experience!”



You may already know about the great fishing in French River, but did you know that there are Pukaskwa pits found here in the French River Delta? If you didn't know about that, here are 10 things that you might not know about paddling routes in the historic French River in Northeastern Ontario.

1. The French River was named as Canada's first Heritage waterway in 1986, and then designated as one of Ontario's Waterway Provincial Parks. It spans 110km from Lake Nipissing to the Georgian Bay in Lake Huron. The Park consists of 300+ backcountry campsites and with its many historic canoe routes, it is quickly becoming a top destination in Northeastern Ontario for all types of paddlers' and outdoor enthusiasts.



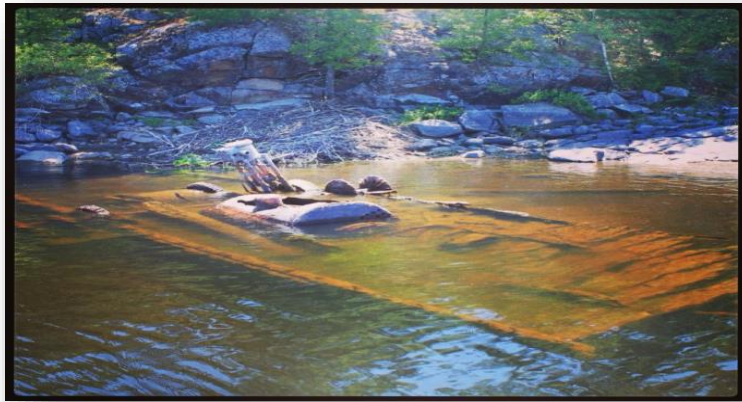
2. The French River Provincial Park has a “no reservations” permit system. A permit is required and can be purchased from various operators in the French River area, but all campsites are on a first come, first serve basis, which allows outdoor enthusiasts the freedom to explore without the pressure of reaching a certain destination or campsite. The Park is accessible for all ages and all levels of paddling and outdoor experience. All you require is just a love of the outdoors and a need for adventure.

3. The French River Delta (also known as the “Lower French River”) has direct access to Georgian Bay and consists of around 100 unique backcountry campsites, 3 Lodges with rental cottages available for accommodations and privately owned cottages, some dating back to the early 1900s. While there is a lot of water open to motorboats, there are many remote channels and routes that can only be explored by canoe or kayak.



4. Hartley Bay Marina, the only access point directly on the French River Delta, was established in 1952 and has been run by three generations of Palmers'. When we first arrived in Hartley Bay, the only access to the marina was by train. Today, with road access, we provide secure launching and parking facilities, cottage rental accommodations, canoe and kayak rentals, equipment rentals and outfitted paddling packages, and any trip planning advice.

5. Artifacts and relics from the times of the Aboriginals, the Voyageurs, the logging days and lastly from fishing and tourism, can be found today!! Watch where you step and keep your eyes open. For centuries, different cultures and industries have made the French River their home and during those times things have been dropped, forgotten or just left behind along its shores, portage routes and in its waters. You'll never know what you will find.



6. Alligators spotted at the Dalles Falls! From 1870-1920, Logging was the major industry on the French River and Alligator boats were used to maneuver the logs through the River and over land. They were considered one of kind and were credited for mechanizing the forestry industry and some have been left to remind us of busier times on the River.

7. Village of Coppennanning. The site has been named as one of Ontario's Ghost Towns and is located just below the Dalles Falls. Once home to over a thousand people during the summer months at the peak of the logging days, now abandoned and dismantled, evidence of the town still remains. From the French River, site can only be accessed by canoe or kayak.





8. Pukaskwa Pits. These rock lined pits were left by early aboriginal inhabitants dating back to 3000-8000 BCE. While their purpose is unconfirmed but it is believed that they were used as hunting blinds, food storage, as seasonal dwellings or as spiritual sites. Today these intriguing rock formations can be seen near to the Georgian Bay waters accessible through the Old Voyageur paddling route.



9. Group of Seven inspiring scenery! It is well known that around 1912, Tom Thompson painted in the French River, but did you know that the French River has been inspiring artists long before that? Francis Anne Hopkins painted in the French as early as 1839. Famous for their Northern Ontario landscape artistry, the Group of Seven is known to have painted in Lake Nipissing and in Killarney and while it has yet to be confirmed if they had painted in the French River, some wonder “how could they have not?” Paddle the remote channels and see for yourself!



10. The best of both worlds! Meander through the historic channels of the French River to the awe inspiring serene waters of the Georgian Bay. Located in the Georgian Bay is the Bustard Islands and their lighthouses. Considered one of the most unspoiled and remote islands in this region, it is definitely worth the paddle by canoe or kayak across this body of water.

Explore on your own, stay in one of our modern Northern Ontario cottages or join us on a guided paddling adventure. The French River is the perfect place for anyone looking to truly discover Canada's Canoe Culture in Northeastern Ontario.



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