

# MENOMINEE RIVER (ME1)

**Put-in** Niagara, Mill Street Landing  
**Take-out** Piers Gorge Road Access  
**Distance** 2.9 miles  
**Approximate Time** varies  
**Most Difficult Rapids** Class 4

**Elevation Drop** 40 feet  
**Average Gradient** 13.8 feet per mile  
**Minimum Suggested Flow** 1000 cfs  
**Water Level Info / Phone** Little Quinnesec Falls Dam  
 715.251.8230

## Paddlers Notes

**89.6 Mile Mill Street Landing, Niagara River:** The river flows wide and moderately fast as it passes scenic, high cliffs on the left bank. Homes dot the right bank for the first mile or so. **Shuttle:** In Niagara, on River Road (Highway 141), turn north onto Pine Street and you will see the parking area straight ahead. A small park overlooks the river with beautiful views of the cliffs on the Michigan side. A cement walkway leads down to river. Hand carry access, parking, trailer turnaround, pit toilet.

**88.1 Mile 4th Pier, Sand Portage Falls (Class 2)** The river passes an old mill on the left bank before splitting around a small island. The main channel flows down the wide right fork. Rapids begin in the main channel near the lee of the island with plenty of fun wave action.

The best wave action occurs at levels above 1800 cfs. At these levels, several fun surfing waves develop down the left fork, near the lee of the island, just above where the two channels converge. The first is a fun surf-wave known as '**Lone Ranger**'. At around 3000 cfs, another wave, '**Kemosabe**' develops below Lone Ranger. A hole below Kemosabe is called '**Shallow Hal**'. Shallow Hal changes it's character in high water and becomes known by an entirely different name, "**Wave 47**" (4700 cfs). Playboaters love this wave!

Meanwhile, below the lead-in waves in the main channel on river right, is another hole named '**Bloody Knuckles**'. This shallow feature was given its name for good reason, and should probably be avoided until you've had a chance to watch others playing in it. Above 3500 cfs the force of the hydraulics in the hole makes boat control very difficult. The waves river-left of the hole are especially shallow and if you're not careful you'll likely end up with bruised hands and some nasty bloody knuckles.

**87.4 Mile Beach** After Sand Portage Falls, the river bends left then goes straight for a while before entering a wide right bend. A small beach on the left bank is a good place to land and scout the falls and rapids ahead. The river constricts and the current becomes very fast as you approach the drop at Missicot Falls. Class 1 waves begin in the right bend and continue to the falls.

**87.3 Mile 3rd Pier, Missicot Falls (Class 4)** Granite cliffs surround the river where the horizon line marks the drop of Missicot Falls, you will certainly hear the roar from the falls as you approach. The river constricts as it flows over a thundering 8 to 10 foot cascade over a submerged ledge that spans almost the entire width of the river. The left side has dangerous, exposed boulders that you should avoid. The main chute is down the right, where the flow funnels from right to left. There are fun waves and potentially scary holes at the base of the drop. An exciting, huge, submerged boulder known as '**Volkswagen Rock**' lies a short ways below the inverted 'V' of the main drop, river right. Some kayakers will try to jump this rock when water levels reach 2500 cfs or higher, but be wary of the hole in the lee of Volkswagen, at the base of the rock, it's shallow!

More large waves follow the Falls with the main flow rushing down center-right until hitting a sharp right bend where it pushes up against a granite wall on the left bank. Missicot Falls are the most difficult part of this run.

**87.2 Mile Chicken-Ender (Class 3)** After Missicot and Volkswagen Rock, a rock ledge is often exposed down the right center forming a small island named Cudaghi Island. Just below the island is an awesome hole known as '**Chicken-Ender**'. This is an excellent spot to practice cartwheels. There are usually huge surfing waves around and below Cudaghi as well as an eddy on river right.

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- 87.2 Mile 2nd Pier, 2 Sisters (Class 3)** Thirty yards after 'Cudaghi Island' is a diagonal, submerged ledge that creates a 4-5 foot drop that spans the river. The diagonal feeds into a hole known as '**Justin's Bane**'. The current just rips through here! A large wave and two deep holes in rapid succession quickly follow. The two holes are called '**2 Sisters**'. Nose into the second hole of 2 Sisters and if you can 'stay and play' more than 30 seconds at around +/- 2000 cfs, then you're doin' ok!
- 87.1 Mile Rapids (Class 2)** A wavy rapids occur in a left bend below 2 Sisters. After the action upstream you may not even notice. The river widens and slows considerably after the rapids.
- 86.9 Mile 1st Pier, Terminal Surfer (Class 3)** Class 1-2 waves lead into Terminal Surfer, a deep hole just right of center formed by a submerged ledge that spans the river. The hole is very easy to underestimate, and cannot be seen until you're right in it. You should avoid Terminal Surfer by paddling down the right. Under no circumstances should you enter the hole without first scouting it. Powerful hydraulics on the left (north) side of the hole have a tendency to scare even the most experienced kayakers. Scout from the left bank. There is often a low, rocky shelf that extends from the left bank to near 'Terminal Surfer' from which to scout.
- 86.7 Mile Piers Gorge Road Access River:** The landing is about 200 yards past Terminal Surfer on the left bank, downstream of a narrow slough. **Shuttle:** On Highway 8, north of the bridge, turn west onto Piers Gorge Road. The river access parking area is approximately one mile from the intersection, on the left. Hand carry access, parking, trailer turnaround.

## Driving Directions (Google Maps)



**Niagara, Mill Str Landing**



**Piers Gorge Road Access**

## GPS - NAD83 / WGS84

Niagara, Mill Street Landing	45.76971,-87.98865
Sand Portage Falls	45.76007,-87.96477
Missicot Falls	45.75790,-87.94910
Piers Gorge Rd Access	45.75834,-87.93907