

Pamela Creek

Vitals

Locale: Gold River, British Columbia

What It's Like: One of the better creeks in Gold River - excellent bedrock ledges and waterfalls, with some classic Island mank.

Class: IV-V

Scouting/Portaging: Moderate.

Level: Online gauge: http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/graph/graph_e.html?stn=08HC001. Otherwise visual at the put in.

Time: 2-3 hours.

When To Go: Rain fed all year, snow melt in the spring.

Info From: November 2011, July 2012.

Other Beta: None.

Description

Pamela Creek is a tiny drainage in the whitewater hot spot of Gold River, in the center of Vancouver Island. With crystal clear water and a classic mixture of Vancouver Island smooth bedrock and a bit of mank, this is perhaps one of the better moderate creek runs out there. On top of the nice waterfalls of Pamela this run actually ends on the Ucona River, which is packed full of even more bedrock canyons and falls that are sure to please.

Access to Pamela is along well maintained dirt logging roads. If you have never been here before, you will definitely need a backroads map book to find the put in and the take out. Follow the main road south out of Gold River, along the east side of the Gold River itself. It quickly turns to dirt. If you follow the main dirt road, it will first pass Star Lake (good camping), then it will cross the upper Ucona and finally it will cross the Pamela. There are no obvious landmarks to denote the take out road other than it is 4.5 km back towards town; it is fairly big spur road. Follow this road to the furthest downstream clear cut along the Ucona. Be sure go to the rivers edge and mark your take out as there is no easy way out of the next class V canyon downstream if you stray too far.

Pamela doesn't have a gauge, and as it's a small tributary of a tributary of the Gold River the gauge isn't always accurate. Furthermore, flow versus gauge reading will vary based on whether it is rain or snowmelt feeding the river. Levels tend to rise and fall quickly. This report is based on one visit where a flow of 90 cms and falling after a rain event gave a low flow on Pamela, and another where 90 cms from snowmelt gave a medium level. Otherwise, the level is visual. What you see is what you get - if it is low but just floatable, the whole thing will be low but doable. If it looks high it's probably pretty juicy. Use your best judgment.

On the water, the Pamela quickly picks up to fun ledges around the corner from the put in. Generally speaking, the action is well spaced on this run with good pools and recovery zones between everything that is of concern. The first waterfall sequence comes quickly and is best inspected from the right bank. There is a great deal of boogie-style whitewater between this drop and the Ucona confluence, with one more great section of bedrock mixed in. Unless the run is high there will be mank to deal with. Once on the Ucona the volume with at least double. You'll find fun grade IV canyons and 2 excellent waterfalls. The take out is a short ways below another notable confluence (with the Quatchka) which is sometimes marked with flagging tape, or which you should recognize from scouting the take out.

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