

Silverhope Creek

Vitals

Locale: Hope, British Columbia

What It's Like: A good quality boulder run with tons of fun boogie.

Class: IV-IV+ to V, depending on the put in and take out used.

Scouting/Portaging: Easy to difficult.

Level: Visual only.

Time: 1-4 hours.

When To Go: May/July or after rain.

Info From: Several visits.

Other Beta: Bellingham Whitewater <http://www.bellinghamwhitewater.org/2007/07/16/operation-silverhope/> have good beta and a nice video of the run.

Description

Silverhope Creek is a river found at the juncture of the Fraser Valley and the Fraser Canyon. Often overshadowed by the whitewater found in the Squamish/Whistler area of southwest BC, this run (and the area in general) boasts a wide variety of quality boulder garden rapids of varying difficulty and a season that can extend well into the winter owing to its relatively low elevation and copious rainfall in the area. There's not much else to be said aside from it is a run that is well worth going to paddle.

The level on Silverhope is visual only - you need to go to the river to get an exact picture of flows. Bellingham Whitewater suggests some gauge correlations that might give an indication as to when the river is runnable. In a broad sense, Silverhope has a typical early BC snowmelt window from May to July and it will run after rain in the fall and winter, provided the snow line is high enough. The Fraser Valley Whitewater (<http://fraservalleywhitewater.com/>) forum will often have an up-to-date visual report on the flow of this run as well. The run is roadside, so gauging the difficulty of the rapids is easily done while running shuttle.

Silverhope Creek runs through the town of Hope, approximately 1.5 hours east of Vancouver. To reach the river, exit highway 1 at exit 168, following Flood-Hope Road. This quickly brings you to Silver-Skagit Road, which follows the river upstream. The lower river is splashy class III. Near the 3 km marker a small creek passes under the road, which is the usual take out. There are optional class V rapids below here - just walk back up to your car if you run them. Continuing upstream, the road will cross from river left to river right. Keep left at the major fork. Several hundred meters past the fork is an undeveloped campsite that gives easy access to the river. The uppermost put in is at the lake just another 1km up the road.

Silverhope is a unique river in that there are several distinct sections adjacent to one another of different difficulties. Starting at the campsite and finishing at the creek gives a pleasant class IV-IV+ roadside boulder run with a few surprises here and there. The rapids just below the creek takeout (you won't miss them) are solid class V and are completely optional. Putting in at the lake delivers the most challenging section of the run - on top of more class V whitewater the scouting is tough and there is a fair bit of wood in the riverbed. More adventurous teams will enjoy sorting out the run from the lake down - for a mellower run with some spice at the end just start at the campsite. The middle section of Silverhope can handle a fair bit of water and remains runnable when the upper and lower sections are a little too juicy for comfort.

Here are a few photos of the run to get you interested - enjoy!

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