

# **NORTH FORK YUBA RIVER**

Class: 3-5, 8-10 miles in 1 day, 18-36 miles in 2-4 days, April thru mid-July (depending on snow-pack)  
Location: Meeting near Indian Valley off Hwy. 49, between Nevada City and Downieville.

The North Fork Yuba River offers both veterans and active first-timers, a variety of Class 3 - Class 5 whitewater thrills, from 1 - 4 days, on over 35 miles of river. Even at lower flows, the North Fork Yuba River still offers exciting rafting in smaller boats. The river runs through the heavily forested Tahoe National Forest, fed by the snow-melt from the majestic 8000+ peaks of the Sierra Buttes. It is located at the north end of the fabled Mother Lode highway (Hwy 49) and nearby are the rustic and charming gold mining towns of Downieville and Sierra City. There is a good selection of restaurants, interesting shops, cozy motels & saloons, historic landmarks and plentiful camping. Despite its proximity to the Bay Area, this river is an un-crowded gem, with just 3 permitted outfitters. Tributary is one of the original companies who pioneered this river for commercial rafting in 1981.

**Haypress Creek to Union Flat (Wild Plum Run):** Class 5+, 8 miles Elevation 4240 - 3350

This section of the North Fork Yuba River offers high mountain scenery and plenty of Class 5 action with the most note-worthy section being Ladies Canyon. A more technically difficult run than the Class 5 section below, so previous Class 5 paddling experience is required. It has a shorter season than the runs below as it is above the in flow of the Downie River and several large side creeks, which add considerably to the flows downstream. Gradient 110 feet per mile. **AVAILABLE AS CUSTOM TRIP for previous Tributary clients only.**

**Union Flat to Goodyear's Bar (Moss Canyon/Rossasco Ravine):** Class 5, 10 miles Elevation 3350 - 2640

Nearly continuous Class 4-5 rapids in the first 8 miles, with 3 large Class 5 drops in Moss Canyon above Downieville. The Downie River enters in Downieville adding considerably to the flow, and below this is a long series of rapids in Rossasco Ravine, including "Big Dummy". At higher flows this may have to be portaged due to the chute ending in a huge hole. Previous Class 4 paddling experience required with excellent swimming ability. Gradient is 72 - 80 feet per mile.

**Goodyear's Bar to Indian Valley (Maytag Run):** Class 4, 9 miles Elevation 2640 - 2320

This section of the North Fork Yuba River is a great Class 4 run, which can be suitable for the active and adventurous first-timer when flows are not too high. There is an introductory 2 miles of Class 2-3 rapids, followed by Class 3 and 4 action including "Ramshorn" and the double drops of "Two Pair". Six miles into the trip is the highlight - the Class 5 "Maytag". We stop above this rapid and scout it, so all clients have the option of walking around. The Class 4 "Son of Maytag" falls follows quickly, with more Class 3 action to the take-out.

**Indian Valley to Bullards Bar (Wilderness Run):** Class 4, 8 miles Elevation 2320

This is a beautiful wilderness section of river, providing exceptional Class 4 whitewater. It is usually combined with the 'Maytag' stretch for 2 days of excellent Class 4 rafting. Due to the lack of access that requires a motor tow across the length of Bullards Bar Reservoir, or an interesting 4x4 take-out on a little used road, this section is seen by few boaters and is not detailed in any guide books. However, it is well worth taking the time for a great combination of whitewater and wilderness.

Distances/Times for Travel:

2 hrs NE of Sacramento (98 miles), 3 ½ hrs NE of San Francisco (180 miles),  
1 ¾ hrs W of Reno (89 miles), 2 ¼ hrs NW of Incline Village (79 miles),  
1 ¾ hrs W. of Truckee (65 miles), 1 ½ hrs N. of Auburn (60 miles),  
2 ½ hrs SE of Chico (115 miles), 1hr N of Grass Valley (35 miles)

---

## **Tributary Whitewater Tours LLC**

Toll Free: 800/672-3846 or 530/346-6812

In emergency only: The night before or early on day of trip, call 800# and also try 530/637-4866.

PLEASE LEAVE MESSAGES AT BOTH #'s.

rafting@whitewatertours.com

[www.whitewatertours.com](http://www.whitewatertours.com)



**Guiding California Rivers Trips for 30 years**