

Road log for railway features east of Thunder Bay






Routes: Highway 101 from Chapleau to Wawa via Hawk Junction and
Highway 17 (Trans Canada Highway "TCH") from Wawa to Thunder Bay




Notes: *On the TCH there are Km posts every 2 kms which count down to zero on the Ontario-Manitoba border. These are used as references for distances on the TCH. However they are not complete, with long sections from Nipigon to Thunder Bay missing any signs. Therefore correlate your car odometer with the first kilometre sign you see so that you can then recalculate your road log to match your odometer.*

The TCH from Nipigon to Thunder Bay is being rebuilt as a 4 lane divided highway. On weekdays expect delays and flagmen holding up traffic where only one lane is available. They are also rebuilding the road bridge over the Little Pic River on the TCH (Highway 17) between Marathon and Terrace Bay (see Km 810.5) and there may be delays with one lane traffic flow alternating.

Location	Hwy	Kms	Features
Chapleau town centre, CP station	Off 101	129 kms E of Wawa	Static display of CP5433, a CLC 2-8-2, Class P2h and caboose 434627 plus various speeders and MOW equipment.







Chapleau town centre pedestrian overpass over CP tracks	Off 101	129 kms E of Wawa	Excellent views of CP Chapleau yard, loco tracks, turntable, station and double track main tracks. Chapleau is a crew change point and loco fueling depot so all mainline trans Canada trains stop here for at least 20 minutes.	
Hawk Junction	Off 101	19 kms E of Wawa	CN - Algoma Central station, yard and former junction with iron ore mine and Michipicoten Harbour Sub. One to two trains per day come through here including one passenger train most days.	
Between Wawa and White River	17	941	Overpass carries TCH over CP tracks which display a tight S bend. NOTE NO CONVENIENT PARKING AROUND HERE AND NO PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY ON BRIDGE.	
Between Wawa and White River	17	939.5	Pull off at picnic spot with toilets at Depew River bridge where CP bridge is nicely visible as a two part structure with centre span a steel beam flanked on east side by a masonry arch. Good, safe parking.	
White River	17	929	At junction of side road to town centre is rest area with reconstructed CP station, section of track, CP caboose 437136 and CP Fairmont speeder. Also close to here is statue of Pooh Bear as White River is the home of the history of the Winnie the Pooh books.	


White River	Off 17		Follow side road to end where is CP station and yard tracks. VIA Budd car trains from Sudbury overnight here before returning east the next day. Nice row of original buildings along station road as examples for modelling adjacent to a station. The former hotel is shown in the picture as one example.	
Between White River and Marathon	17	909	CP main line passing siding and radio tower right beside highway. Even though this passing siding is only 20 kms from White River trains often pass at this siding - see picture.	
Between White River and Marathon	17	878.5	Highway ascends over an overpass under which the CP branchline to Manitowadge used to run. Track has now been removed. Immediately east of over pass is road junction to Manitowadge and a little museum of mining equipment to commemorate the nearby Hemlo gold mines. Adequate parking.	
Between White River and Marathon	17	877 - 874	The Golden Mile of Hemlo gold mines. Lots of good views but no easy places to pull off highway for photos. Discovered in 1981 production started only 5 years later with three mines producing a combined 1 million ounces of gold a year for the first few years. Two mines continue to operate but at great depths and with lower grades now.	
Between White River and Marathon	17	872 - 871	CP mainline on south side of road separated by a lake.	
Between White River and Marathon	17	845.5	Highway crosses bridge over Pic River. Parallel bridge immediately to north is for snowmobiles.	



Between White River and Marathon	17	845.2 Junction with road to south to Heron Bay. Follow down this road a short distance to CP tracks. Park and walk back through bush and swamp to edge of Pic River "canyon" for oblique view of CP Pic River bridge.
Between White River and Marathon	17	838 Junction with road to west than descends into the town of Marathon where there used to be a large pulp mill which was a large customer for CP with switching etc. Mill has been closed for several years now and very little RR activity except through freight trains. Station building is one of the 60s vintage flat topped boxes.
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	822 Sign identifying Mink Creek beside highway. This is the Mink Creek which is crossed by the CP line close to Lake Superior and identifies Mink Tunnel. Not accessible other than by boat.
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	819 Turn off to south on Coldwell Road. 100m down this is a small area for parking, a locked gate and the end of the CP Coldwell Siding. The road beyond the locked gate crosses the tracks and leads down to the historic site of Coldwell where there are still remains of POW camps from WW2.
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	814.5 Turn off to west to Neys Provincial Park. The CP tracks cut through the lower end of this Park and if it is open makes a good place to stay to explore Coldwell etc.
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	812.5 A dramatic S-bend in CP mainline right beside TCH makes a great photo spot BUT PARKING IS NON EXISTENT, TRAFFIC FAST AND ROAD VERGES VERY NARROW.



Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	811.5	Turn off on west side to Neys Overlook which has parking but no washrooms. This is a must see stop as it gives a dramatic view of the CP Little Pic River bridge on its curve which leads around into the cliff cut section of track beyond with its rock falls and avalanche protection devices. Worth waiting for a train if possible. In the accompanying picture the bridge is to the right of Graham.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	810.5	Little Pic River highway bridge has parking area on its east side and one can then walk up the bridge to get a view down river to the CP bridge. Note that in fall 2013 this bridge deck was under repair and therefore walking across it was not possible.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	802 - 800.5	Ripple Lake on south side of TCH with some parking to allow pull off from highway.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	788.5	Steel River road and CP railway bridges. Lots of parking in pull off areas on east and west side of bridges. Road bridge rebuilt in 2011 - 2012 and old one demolished. New one is further north from RR bridge and therefore gives better view of CP bridge.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	762	Overpass of TCH over CP Terrace Bay yard at east end of Terrace Bay. On right is pulp mill which has its own CANAC SW?? Switcher painted black and silver. To railfan from this over pass will require parking beyond it and walking back.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	756	Just west of Terrace Bay is the Aguasabon water tower which is the header tank for a hydro electric power station. Water comes down a penstock from a lake above the CP tracks which are above the road.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	751.5	Overpass of TCH over CP mainline. There is parking on Hays Lake road which is immediately west of overpass on east side.	

Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	748 Schreiber - east end of rail yards. Schreiber CP has yards, Y track, MOW equipment accessible from north side of tracks. In centre of town on north side of tracks is a display area with restored switcher, MLW S-3 former CP 6539; baggage car former CP4773 then CP 411733; flat car former CP 302868 and box car former CP 401710 plus various Fairmont speeders all over the town. Taking the road west of the museum goes in underpass under tracks and allows access to the CP station which is a classic 2 storey brick building. Schreiber is a crew change point which all happens in front of the station. Sometimes an SD40-2 unit stationed at Schreiber to run local way freights and support MOW work along inaccessible track along lake edge.	
Between Marathon and Schreiber	17	747 West end of Schreiber	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	733 TCH over pass over CP main tracks at end of passing siding which is first siding west of Schreiber and quite busy. This also the east end of the RosSPORT Bay. RosSPORT was an early port for CP ships supporting RR construction. No parking space available, except further east back up hill, so be very careful where you pull off the road.	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	727 Overpass TCH over CP mainline at east end of RosSPORT Bay between east and west side roads into RosSPORT itself.	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	720.2 Pays Plat, CP Rail bridge over Pays Plat River to south of TCH.	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	718.3 West entrance road to Cavers Cove. This side road crosses CP mainline tracks where they are on a broad curve through the trees and afternoon views can give dramatic photos with sun reflections.	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	702.2 TCH crosses Little Gravel River bridge and 10m to south is a small bridge on CP mainline	

Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	694.5 TCH crosses Cypress River bridge and 10m to south is a small bridge on CP mainline
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	685.5 View south from TCH of culvert dated 1909 on CP mainline.
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	684.3 Near top of hill is a viewpoint exit on south side of highway. It is poorly signposted and not named but the locals call it the Kama Viewpoint. From the cliff edge there is a spectacular view to the west of the multiple S bends CP mainline 200 metres below. Note that the Highways Department may have closed and locked access to this viewpoint depending on the time of year. Also observe safety fencing as there is a vertical cliff face and if the rock is wet it is very slippery. Picture shown is view west from Kama Lookout with rear end of eastbound oil cans train.
		
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	683 West side of TCH is a pull off area which provides views of very colourful red and white striped rock cliffs to east, towering up from highway and on west view straight down to CP mainline.
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	671.5 Jackfish River bridge on CP mainline south of TCH. Parking not available here and road verges are narrow and on a curve. Exercise extreme caution as traffic is moving very fast.
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	758.9 Junction of Hwys 11 and 17 just east of Nipigon.

Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	759.5 TCH and CP bridges over Nipigon River are parallel and only 20 - 30 m apart. Park on west side of bridge where there are some pull off areas. There is a pedestrian walkway on the road bridge allowing one safely to access views from middle of bridge. Looking down near west end of bridge you will notice the abandoned grade of the CN line from Thunder Bay to Nakina. From east to west the bridge comprises a girder deck beam section followed by a truss deck section and then a steel trestle section. Detailed examination from below will show how and where the various sections were replaced with strengthened components over time.	
Between Schreiber and Nipigon	17	759.2 Take turning south off TCH 100m west of Nipigon River bridge and drive into the centre of Nipigon - about 750m. CP no longer has a station there but does have a passing siding, a Y track and MOW base. Check out the Hi-rail golf cart if it is there. It has its own portable decking to fit between the tracks to allow it to position itself on the tracks. Is this the modern day answer to a Fairmont speeder with a couple of lifting poles? Turn left in centre of town and cross tracks then turn left again onto gravel road. Follow that road for 0.5kms and it will wind down to river valley beside abandoned CN right of way and from which a good view up of the CP bridge can be seen with all its variable style engineered spans.	
Between Nipigon and Thunder Bay	17	747.4 Turning to South to Red Rock where there used to be a pulp mill with a GP9 switcher and a spur off CP and CN mainlines plus an intercnage between CP and CN as this is the most easterly point where CP and CN where at the same grade elevation before CP rises to pass through Nipigon town and over the bridge over CN.	
Between Nipigon and Thunder Bay	17	715.1 Ouimet Canyon turning to west immediately followed by Hwy 17 overpass over CP mainline.	

Between Nipigon and Thunder Bay 17

696.7 Turning to west off Hwy 17 called East Loon road is immediately after a bend in CP tracks close to Hwy and a short distance down East Loon road tracks cross it a good photo shots available with bends in tracks and undergrowth cleared back.



Between Nipigon and Thunder Bay 17

691.7 Turning to east off Hwy 17 to Pass Lake. Pull off Hwy at site of former gas station beside junction and get good view of Pass Lake trestle, which is over 1,000 feet long and nearly 100 ft high and used to carry CN grade over the valley. Drive down Pass Lake road for close up views but limited parking and thick tree cover precludes closer views of whole length of structure.



Between Nipigon and Thunder Bay 17

668.1 Hwy 17 overpass over CP mainline adjacent to construction site for second overpass to carry additional lanes of new freeway under construction. Very difficult to pull off road here safely.

ARRIVE IN THUNDER BAY

The last 20 - 30 kms of Hwy 17 to Thunder Bay are mostly opened as a new freeway now. The freeway follows a bypass route that largely goes around the perimeter of Thunder Bay, therefore when you reach the first exit (on a hill top in a rock cut just beyond the Terry Fox Memorial exit) take the exit ramp on the right and then turn left and cross over the freeway and follow the road downhill into town and towards the lake. The road is called Hodder Avenue and then changes its name to Cumberland St when it turns right and parallels the drydock, grain elevators and railway tracks. Follow along Cumberland for several kilometres and then immediately past traffic lights with River Street, Cumberland takes a right hand exit lane while the continuing road changes name again to Water Street. Go along the diverging Cumberland St and after about five blocks the Prince Arthur Hotel is the large building on the left hand side.

ADDITIONAL RAILFANNING INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT HANDED OUT AT CONVENTION REGISTRATION.