

Baptiste Lake – Dog Bay Ice Climbs

By Danylo Darewych

v. 2 – March 2021

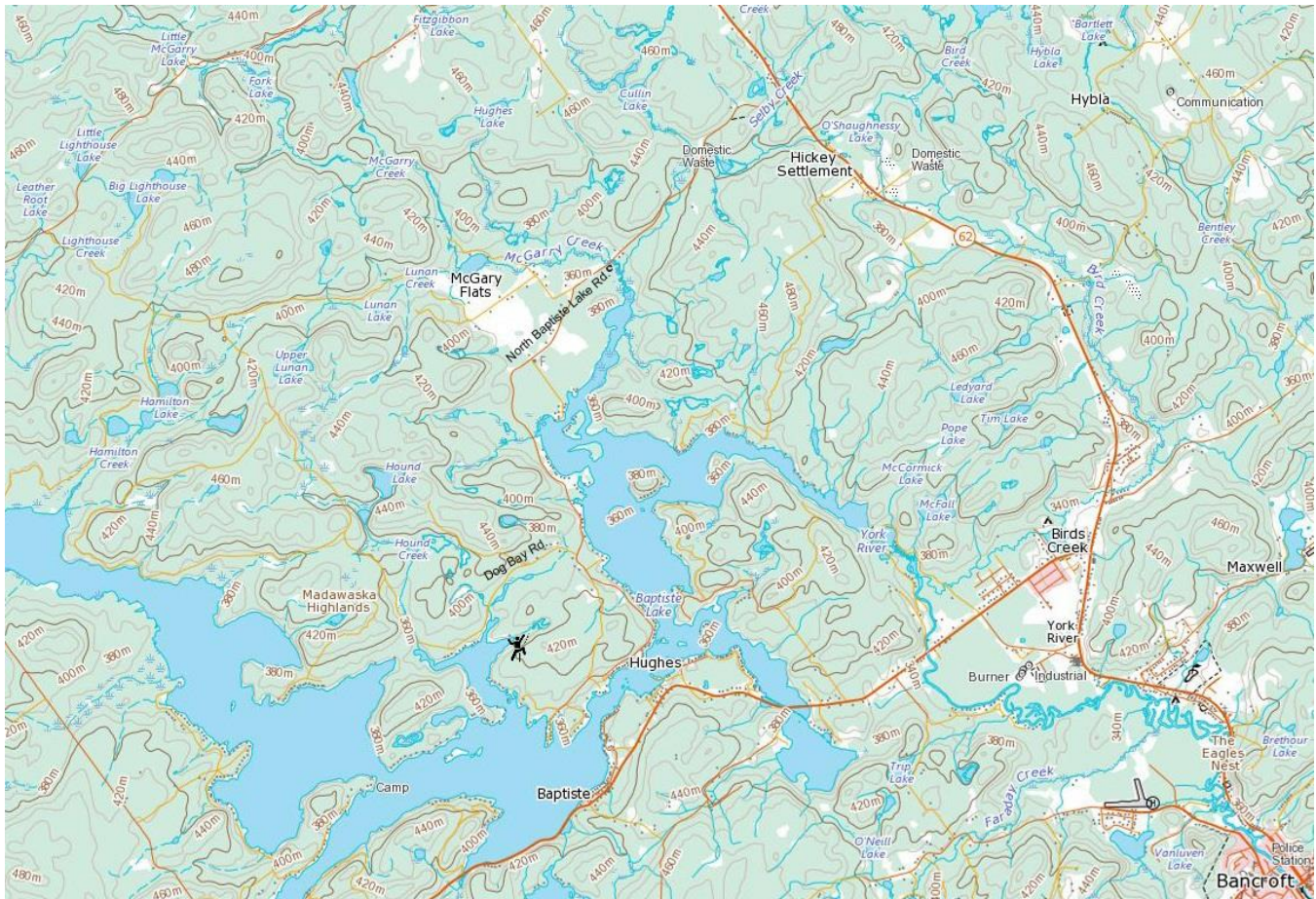
Dog Bay on Baptiste Lake holds a series of smaller cliffs with several worthwhile ice routes. The cliffs face north and seem to have a reliable and steady water supply. The ice at the East Cliff comes in quite early, continues to build slowly all winter, and stays late.

Location/Directions

Dog Bay is located north-west of Bancroft, Ontario in the Madawaska Highlands.

- From downtown Bancroft (intersection of Highways 28 and 62) head north on Highway 62 (North Hastings St.) for 16.5 km.
 - Turn left (west) onto North Baptiste Lake Rd. Drive down the North Baptiste Lake Rd. for 9.5 km (make sure you stay left at the fork at the 4.7 km mark), past the parking for the ice climbs on Blueberry Island.
 - Turn right onto Dog Bay Rd. Drive down the Dog Bay Rd. for 2.5 km.
 - Park near the driveway for a cottage where a snowmobile trail drops down into Dog Bay (#509 A & B)
- The total distance from Bancroft is 28.5 km, about a 30 minute drive.

Access Note: When the snowmobile trail is closed for the season, the owners of the property, over which runs the snowmobile trail, might be present at their cottage, in which case it might be prudent to ask permission to cross their property.



Approach

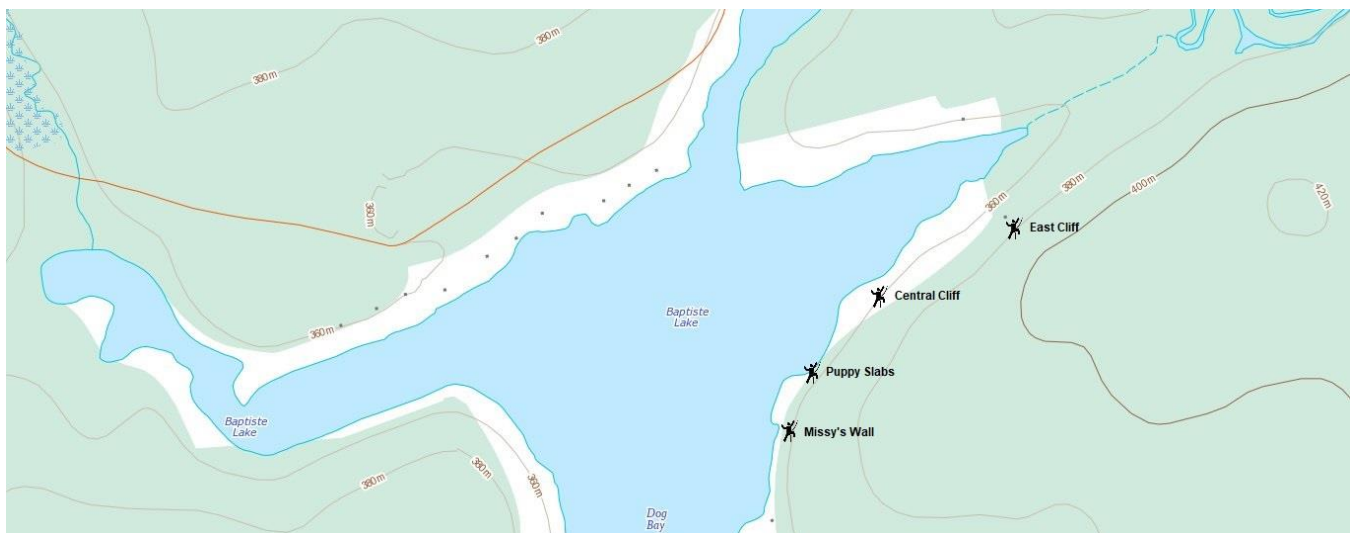
Walk down the driveway/snowmobile trail onto Dog Bay. Turn leftish and head towards the small bay in the far south-east corner of Dog Bay. You should see the snow-covered ice of the *Puppy Slabs* rising directly from the lake on the far shore, then a larger cliff (Central Cliff) further on. The main ice flows lie past these on a secluded cliff semi-hidden among the trees behind a small cottage (the East Cliff). The top of the ice flow is visible above the trees as you get closer. It's a short 60 m bushwack through the trees to the cliff. It's about 850-900 m from the road to the farthest ice of the East Cliff; a 20 minute walk.

The main ice flow of the East Cliff lies either on or behind private property – there is a small cottage nearby. The cottage is not used in the winter, but perhaps it is best to give it a wide berth and approach the main flow along the cliff line. Please make an effort to maintain a low profile.

If it's early season and the lake ice is suspect, it is possible to get to the crag overland by skirting the east shore of Dog Bay.



A view of the East Cliff from the bay.
Doesn't look like much (Dec. 12, 2014).



Route Descriptions

Routes are described from east to west (climber's left to right), that is in the opposite order from which you see them when walking in across the lake (yes, I know that's annoying).

East Cliff

The East Cliff is where the most consistent ice at Dog Bay is located. The cliff is split into a lower and upper section by a wide ledge. A fat, bulgy, easy-angled central flow leads up to the ledge below the central prow of the upper section of the crag. The upper section is a wide vertical curtain of ice, bounded on the left and right by corners, and split in the middle by the aforementioned prow.

Runt, WI3, 8 m (Danylo Darewych, Frances Garrett, Matt Price, Catharine Macdonald, March 12, 2017). This is a short vertical pillar located at the very far left end of the cliff, past the left-side corner of



Left: Mike Makischuk leading the *Runt*, March 14, 2021. Photo by Andriy Kolos. Middle: Laura Duncan leading *La Chienne*, March 14, 2021. Photo by Mark Kit. Right: The top step/corner on *Stray Dog*, January 31, 2015.

Stray Dog. Either climb the central approach ice gully to the ledge and traverse to its far left end, past *Dog Day Afternoon* and *Stray Dog*, or scramble up to the same point from directly below (on thin WI2-for 8-9 m, if it's there). Climb up a steep slab/pillar combination that spills over a small overhang and tops out just left of an annoying cedar tree. Does not form every year.

La Chienne WI4, 7 m (Laura Duncan, Brent Elliott, Mark Kit, Danylo Darewych, March 14, 2021). This is the next vertical pillar, 5 m right of *Runt*, and left of the *Stray Dog* corner. From the upper belay stance climb straight up the pillar. Doesn't form regularly. Full name - Avoir la Chienne (a Quebecois expression that means "to be terrified").

Stray Dog, WI2 to WI3, 19 m (Danylo Darewych, January 31, 2015). Climb the easy-angled central approach ice to the ledge (10 m), step 5 m left to a corner and climb up some ice bulges past a tree, then up a final steeper, tight corner (another 9 m from the ledge to the top).

Dog Day Afternoon, WI4, 18 m (Danylo Darewych, Matt Zaleski, David Britnell, March 8, 2015). Climb the easy-angled central approach flow to the ledge (10 m), step left of the prow 2-3 m and climb



Left: The central approach ice in the foreground and the pillar of *Dog Day Afternoon* above it (on the left), March 8, 2015. Right: Andriy Kolos leading *Dog Day Afternoon*, March 14, 2021. Photo by Mark Kit.

the vertical curtain to the top (another 8-9 m).

Mad Dog WI4+, 20 m (Andriy Kolos, Mike Makischuk, Brent Elliot, Laura Duncan, Danylo Darewych, March 14, 2021). Rabid madness is debatable. Start up the lower-angled ice and break right towards the prow of the curtain. Climb the highly-chandeliered structure up the prow. Stick a hanging curtain with relief, and lock-off up to better ice, and the top. “Tricky/hard” to adequately protect. AK

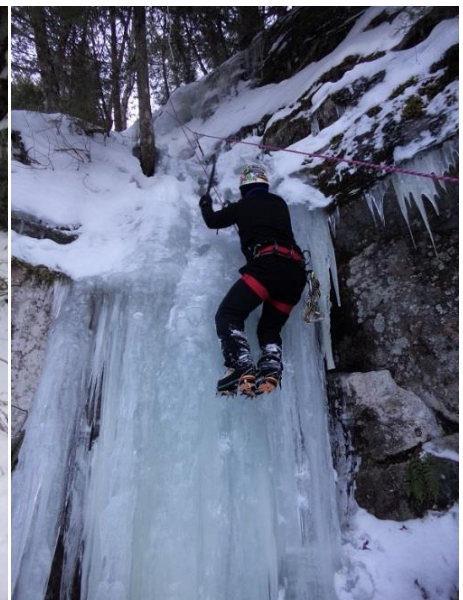
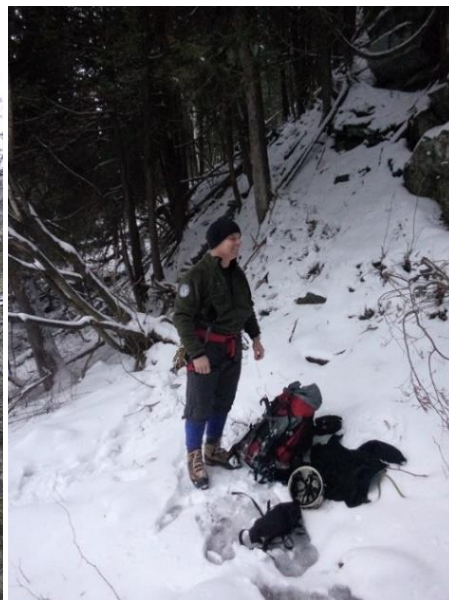
Horndog, WI3, 18 m (Danylo Darewych, David Britnell, December 14, 2014). Climb the easy-angled central approach flow to the prow (10 m), traverse rightwards around/through some shrubs/trees for 5 m on a ledge to a corner and climb the ice up the corner (another 7-8 m). Later in the season a direct approach to the upper corner forms on the right. (So, Dave – dressed in his spiffiest Alpine Club knickers – met a lady in the Pizza Pizza in Bancroft, who said that she liked to party... Dave talked about her for months afterwards).

Bulldog, WI3, 6 m (Danylo Darewych, David Britnell, February 26, 2017). Located 25 m right of the East Cliff at the top of a gully. I don’t think this qualifies as a route. Very short, but steep.

Dog Bay Delight, WI3-, 10 m (Matt Zaleski, David Britnell, Danylo Darewych, March 8, 2015). Located about 50 m right of the main ice cliff, just to the right of a small lip/overhang. Climb an initial steep, narrow, 3 m tall step of ice, and then follow easier ice up left past a tree to the top.



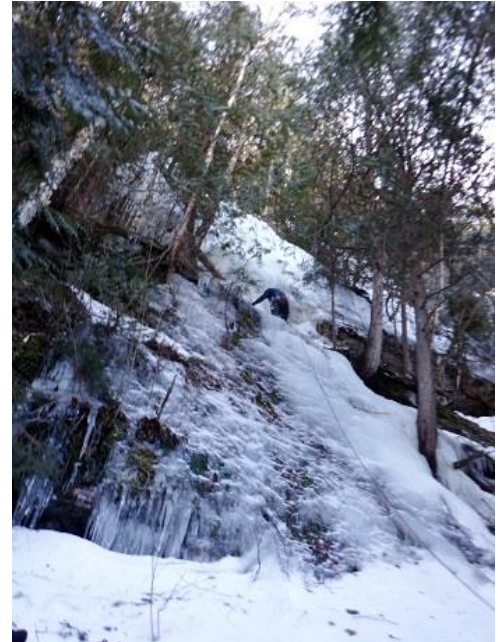
Andriy Kolos treading carefully along the fine line between mastery and madness on Mad Dog, March 14, 2021. Photo by Brent Elliott.



Left: Danylo Darewych on *Horndog* (Photo by David Britnell, Dec. 12, 2014). Middle: The *Horndog* himself, dressed in his spiffiest Alpine Club knickers (Dec. 12, 2014). Right: David Britnell on *Dog Bay Delight*.

Central Cliff

The Central Cliff is the tallest, most prominent cliff at Dog Bay, easily seen on the walk in along the lake. It is located about 250 m right (west) of the East Cliff (or 150 m left – east – of the Puppy Slabs) around a small point. The base of the cliff is hidden behind trees along the shoreline. There is frequently ice at the top of the cliff here, but it only touches down in a wet year or after rains. When it does, the two longest routes at Dog Bay are found here.



Left: The Central Cliff at Dog Bay. Danylo Darewych is just visible topping out on *Dog's Breakfast*, the flow in the middle of the photo (photo by Janet Trost, March 12, 2017). Right: Danylo Darewych on *Junkyard Dog* (Photo by David Britnell, March. 12, 2017).

Dog's Breakfast, WI3, 26 m (Danylo Darewych, Chris Talbot, Janet Trost, Catharine Macdonald). This is the left of two climbs at the Central Cliff. The climb starts with two short steep pillars about 5 m apart. Climb either of these to a ledge, then continue up above the left side pillar. Expect the climb to feel harder for the grade, because of hard, brittle ice.

Junkyard Dog, WI2+, 21 m (FA Danylo Darewych, Matt Price, Frances Garrett, Dave Britnell, Janet Trost, Catharine Macdonald, Chris Talbot, Dave Wardlaw, March 12, 2017). This is the right side of two routes at the Central Cliff. It is located about 25 m right (west) of *Dog's Breakfast*. Climb some easy-angled ice for 7-8 metres, then continue up over a couple of short, steeper ice steps to the top.

Puppy Slabs, WI2, 16-23 m (Matt Zaleski, David Britnell, Danylo Darewych, March 8, 2015). Located some 300 m right (west) of the East Cliff, or 130 m right (west) of the Central Cliff are slabs rising directly off the bay. Several





Left: Matt Zaleski tooling around at the base of the *Puppy Slabs*, March 8, 2015.

Right: Dave Wardlaw at the top of *Missy, Fetch the Draws*, March 12, 2017. Photo by David Britnell.

different easy-angled lines are possible on the ice spilling down these slabs. Be prepared to clear off lots of snow.

Missy, Fetch the Draws, WI2, 8-10 m (FA David Wardlaw, Danylo Darewych, Janet Trost, David Britnell, Chris Talbot, Catharine Macdonald, Matt Price, Frances Garrett, March 12, 2017). Located 140 m right (west) of the *Puppy Slabs* around the first point in a little cove. This is a wide, low wall of ice rising straight off the lake with many (4-5) possible lines. It faces west, so there is some much-needed sun in the little cove (although not on the ice wall itself) on cold days. It was spotted first by David Wardlaw who named it after his dog Missy and the fact that he was halfway up a climb before realizing he had forgotten his draws.