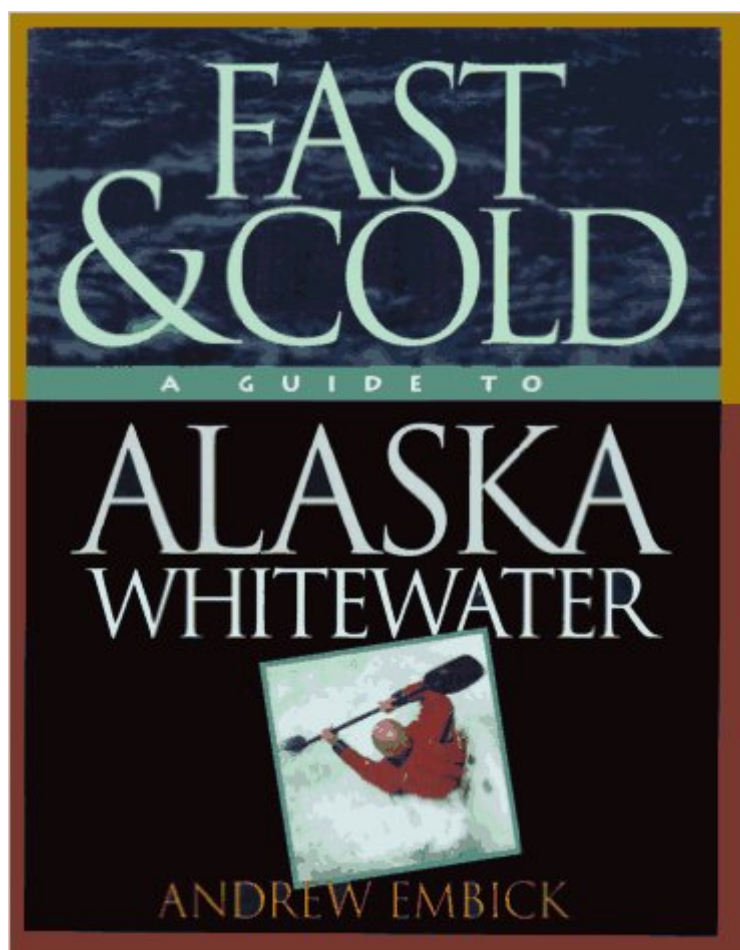


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# Fast & Cold, A Guide To Alaska Whitewater



## Synopsis

Alaska's whitewater rivers offer kayakers and rafters unforgettable journeys of excitement and beauty. *Fast & Cold* is a comprehensive guide to seventy-nine of the best, including the five-star Alsek, Charley, Happy, and Kiagna Rivers. *Fast & Cold* was written by Dr. Andrew Embick, the leading authority on Alaskan whitewater. Embick has personally run sixty-three of the seventy-nine trips described, thirty-two of which were first descents. Embick is an adrenaline junkie, and his first-person accounts are spine chilling. At the same time, he thoroughly addresses the special concerns of running Alaska rivers, offering experienced advice on travel, camping, and safety. For each river, he gives access and flow information, a difficulty rating and description, as well as history. Embick also includes a special section of river stories to whet the reader's appetite for the thrills of Alaska whitewater. Whether you are already familiar with the beautiful and exciting world of Alaska's waterways or you are a Lower 48 floater planning the single best trip of your dreams, *Fast & Cold* is an indispensable book for your whitewater library.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After borrowing this book from the library, I had someone give it to me as a Christmas present. Andrew Embick put his heart and soul (and considerable time and money) into this effort, and it shows. He outlines many whitewater rivers for which he has first-descent credentials; in that respect, he must be viewed as the acknowledged expert. One criticism, hopefully constructive: the book doesn't have an all-encompassing map, which would be useful for the reader to get a sense of

orientation as (s)he navigates through the book. But overall, the book is a tour de force. I'll never paddle half the rivers in this book; I may never paddle Alaska, for that matter; but the book was a "must" for me. The color plates alone, depicting all the glory of glaciated streams, are worth the price of admission.

While the sport has continued to evolve since Andy did most of his rivers, he's still set the standard by which few will even come close. His reviews of the various rivers of Alaska are complete. This is a great read for entertainment. This is a dream book for the kayakers of Alaska and anyone hoping to stop by our beautiful state. Many of these rivers have still not been run since Andy and his friends ran them in the 80's. Kudoo's to THE AK whitewater book by which all others will be measured.

Usually, it's easy to promote a friend's effort. In the case of Andy's book, that took a bit of extra time, since during the time his information seemed most needed, the book hadn't been published yet and he usually sent the pertinent details via fax or by mail. It has only been in recent times, with a renewed interest in running Alaska rivers, that (for me) the book plays a role as a source of information, and more than that. Sadly, Andy is no longer around to provide his concise personal touch. Hence, the book not only serves as a guide, but also as a reminder, who Andy was - in part - as he was certainly a very complex person. This book is a reminder of how some guide books used to be written, that is, with a healthy dose of historical information. The history alone requires commitment to gather, check and then publish, lest an author had some very serious interests in that field. As in climbing guide books, the trend seems to be to give details about where to find what difficulty and how to deal with it by making available topos while omitting practically all else. Embicks's book is of great value because of the many personal tidbits it contains and some of the radical trips he relates, like paddling the Chakatatna and then crossing Cook Inlet (a salt water body with extreme tidal currents) in the same white-water boats, a feat, which will not very soon be repeated in our time-crunch society. Fast & Cold makes not just an informative guide book, but also a great coffee-table issue for armchair aficionados. It is pertinent, that one has a lax attitude when dealing with Andy's type A, self-assured personality, and by giving him credit for having seen the many details he found on his trips and in his research, for relating them to us and thus enabling us to contemplate that aspect of him, which so many times didn't make it to the surface of his being, when we knew him during his lifetime.

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