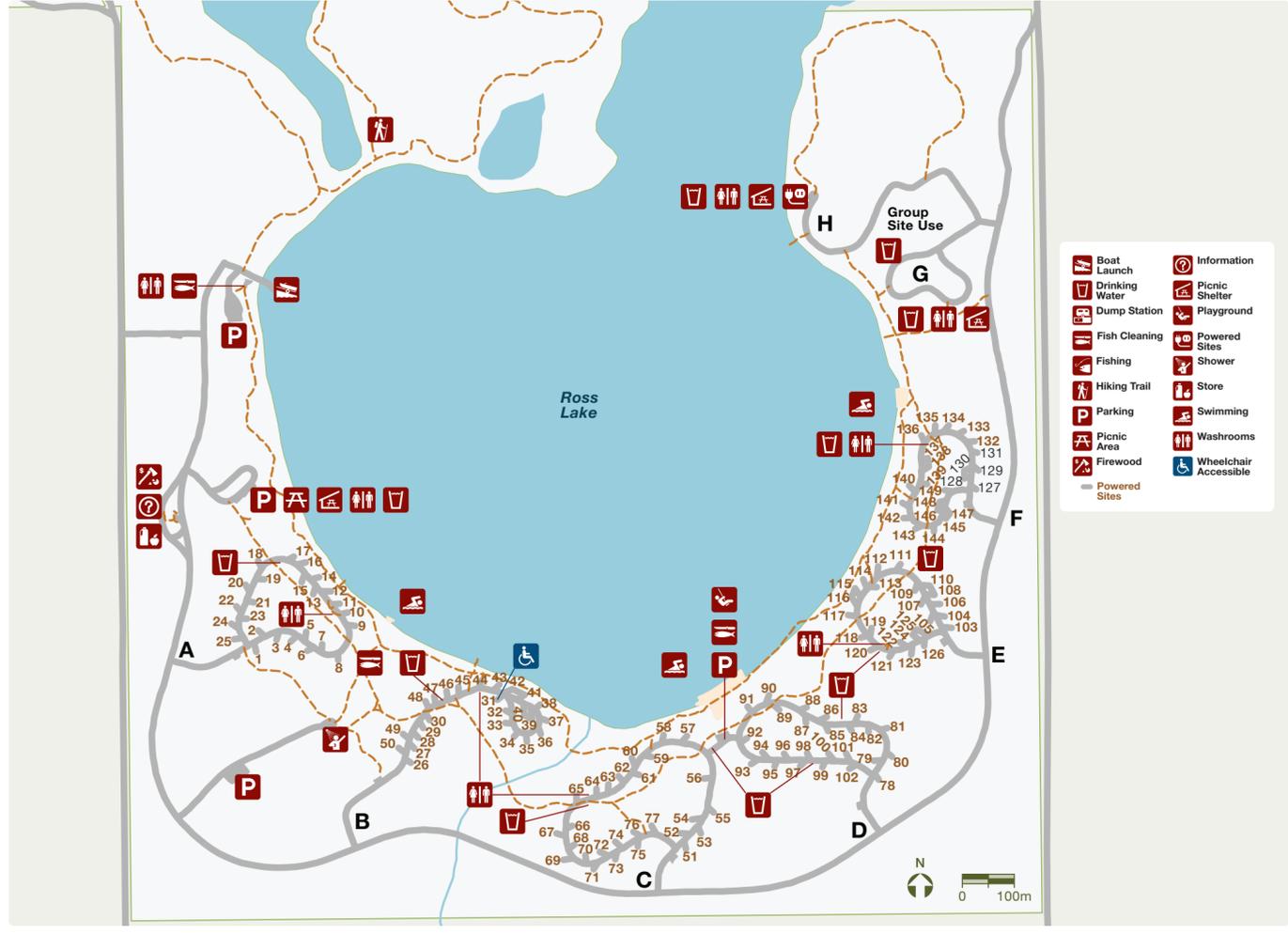
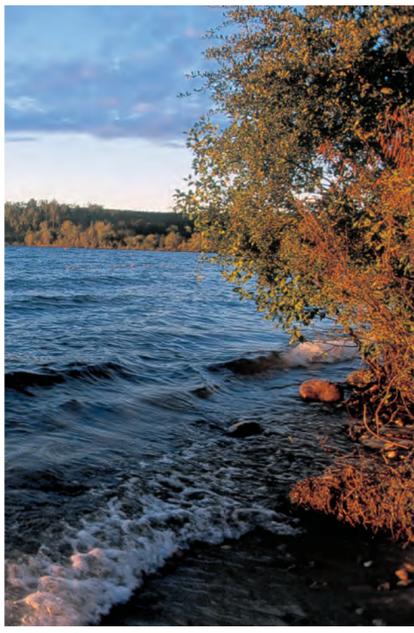


# Whitney Lakes Provincial Park



Ross Lake Campground Map

Remember the family vacations you experienced as a child—lazy days on the beach, hours spent exploring trails and evenings spent around the campfire? Come and re-create these memories on the white sand shores and peaceful trails of Whitney Lakes Provincial Park.

Located just three hours northeast of the city of Edmonton, the park is situated in a beautiful forested landscape surrounding four lakes—Whitney, Ross, Laurier and Borden. The park’s wetlands and forests create an interesting combination of habitats that will allow you to experience not only fond memories of childhood, but a fascinating variety of plants and animals as well.

## Tapestry of Time

As the glaciers retreated during the last ice age, approximately 10,000 years ago, glacial melt-water weaved over and under the great sheets of ice. Gravel and sand, moved by the water, came to rest in drainage channels leaving the ridge of hills you see here today.

Whitney Lakes Provincial Park protects the spectacular and provincially significant esker and kettle formations formed when the glaciers retreated. Eskers are long narrow ridges of sand and gravel left behind by melting glacier ice. Kettles are hollows or depressions that resulted when ice blocks covered by gravel emerged from the glaciers and subsequently melted, allowing the debris to settle.

Park visitors should definitely take the time to experience this “tapestry of time”. For the curious, its an easy 10 minute walk to view the esker, while the 3.3 km Esker Trail, with its numerous rolling hills, provides excellent views of the glacial esker, Borden and Laurier lakes.

## Summer Activities

### Camping

The park has 149 well-treed campsites at Ross Lake. 144 of these sites have power hookups. Facilities include showers, tap water, fire pits and a playground. Site 31 is wheelchair accessible.

At Whitney Lake campground, 53 campsites, among jack pine and aspen trees, provide basic camping and 33 sites with power hookups.

Two group use areas located at Ross Lake are ideal for school groups, family gatherings and other special events. Campsite and group reservations are available online at [reserve.albertaparks.ca](http://reserve.albertaparks.ca) or by calling 1-877-537-2757.

### Trails

The park has an extensive trail system of more than 30 km, linking Ross, Whitney, Laurier and Borden lakes. Trails follow shorelines, pass through dense forests and offer exceptional wildlife viewing opportunities.



You can walk one of the shorter loops or enjoy a day hike on one of the park’s extended back country trails. If mountain biking is more to your liking, the trail system offers easy family rides as well as more challenging terrain.

### Backcountry Camping

A new backcountry campsite on Borden Lake can accommodate canoe campers, hikers, or mountain bikers with basic facilities such as a stove, table, backcountry toilet, firepit and bear locker.

### Birding

With more than 145 species of birds and waterfowl in the park, Whitney Lakes provides a rewarding bird watching experience.

### Wildlife Viewing

A variety of animals are attracted to the Whitney Lakes area by the diversity of plant life. The park’s wetlands and forests of pine, white spruce, aspen, birch and willow are home to black bear, deer, moose, beaver, red squirrel and flying squirrel. In addition to these

mammals, keep your eyes open for the elusive tiger salamander, as well as other amphibians, such as the boreal chorus frog, wood frog and Canadian toad.

### Fishing

Try your luck at catching perch or pike in Laurier, Whitney and Ross Lakes. Be sure to check the Alberta Sport Fishing Regulations for more information.

### Boating and Canoeing

Enjoy a day out on one of the park’s four lakes. Power boating and canoeing are permitted on Whitney, Ross and Laurier lakes. Due to Borden Lake’s isolation, only canoes are allowed.

## Winter Activities

**Cross-country skiing:** enjoy those beautiful winter days while skiing park trails. Please be aware, trails are not maintained on a regular basis.

**Ice fishing:** try your luck catching pike and perch on Laurier, Ross and Whitney lakes.

**Snowshoeing:** experience the winter beauty while snowshoeing into the untouched white blanket of the park’s backcountry.

**Note**  
Use of snowmobiles and off-highway vehicles is not permitted in the park

## Be Bear Aware!

Black bears frequent the park during summer months, so visitors are advised to take necessary precautions such as securing food and properly disposing of garbage. For more information about bear safety consult a park conservation officer, or pick up a copy of our bear safety brochure “Bear Smart”.



## Contact

**Cold Lake District Office**  
Phone: 780-594-7856  
Campground Booth (Seasonal): 780-943-2482

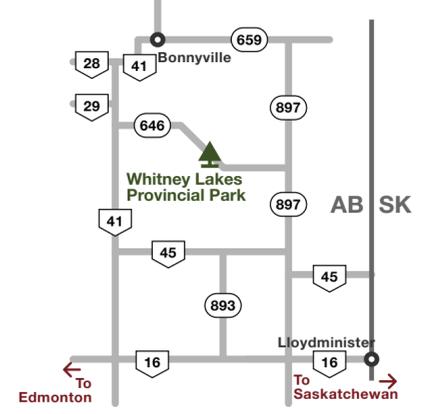
**Campsite and Group Use Reservations**  
Web: [reserve.albertaparks.ca](http://reserve.albertaparks.ca)  
Phone: 1-877-537-2757

**Alberta Parks Visitor Information**  
Web: [albertaparks.ca](http://albertaparks.ca)  
Phone: 1-877-537-2757

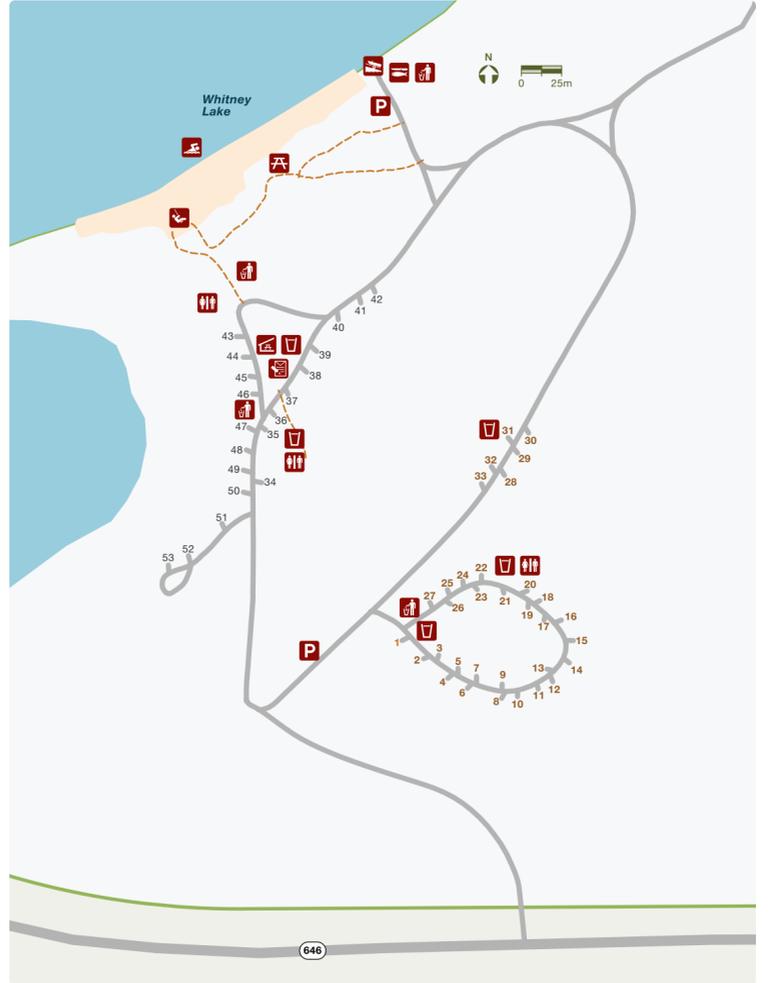
**Illegal Activity/Public Safety (24/7)**  
Phone: 310-LAND (5263)

**Fire Bans in Alberta**  
Web: [albertaparks.ca/firebans](http://albertaparks.ca/firebans)

**Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)**  
Phone: 911



Updated December 2022



Whitney Lake Campground Map

# Highways of Old

## Winnipeg Trail

History abounds in Whitney Lakes Provincial Park. Here you will find historic Winnipeg Trail, which stretched from Ft Garry near Winnipeg to Ft Edmonton more than 200 years ago. Also called North Victoria or Carlton Trail, it played a major role in Western Canada's history. Aboriginal people, early explorers and traders used the trail during the late 1700s and early 1800s. With establishment of Victoria Mission in 1863, the trail was upgraded so Red River carts and wagons could readily use it. It became a vital freight, mail and telegraph route that permitted development of the fledgling Province of Alberta.

Peter Fidler, Reverend John McDougall, Chief Big Bear, Bishop Gabriel Dumont and Father Lacombe traveled the route, as did patrols of the North West Mounted Police and, in 1885, the Alberta Field Force of the Canadian Militia.

While hiking the trails near Ross and Whitney Lakes, some people say that if you listen carefully you may still hear the creaking of Red River carts.

## Iron Horse Trail

A short distance south of the park, is a modern-day multi-use trail, developed from the abandoned rail line. It is roughly 260 kilometres in length and stretches from Waskatenau in the west to Cold Lake in the northeast and Heinsburg in the southeast. The trail passes by rolling hills, numerous lakes, agricultural lands, dense forests, deep gullies and spectacular views of the North Saskatchewan River. The Iron Horse Trail cuts across and parallels portions of the Winnipeg Trail.

For more information about the Iron Horse Trail, visit [www.ironhorsetrail.ca](http://www.ironhorsetrail.ca).

## Historical & Cultural Features

While visiting the park, be sure to take time to explore the surrounding area's historical and cultural features.

Fort George-Buckingham House Provincial Historic Site is a great place to experience Alberta's fur trade history. The site, which houses two of the earliest trading posts built in the province, date back to 1792. It was here the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company competed for Canada's abundant natural resources. Fort George - Buckingham House is located 13 kilometres east of Elk Point on Secondary Highway 646. It is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily from May 15 to Labour Day.

Heinsburg Water Tower is nestled along the banks of the North Saskatchewan River in the tiny hamlet of Heinsburg, located south of the park. It is Alberta's only intact wooden water tower.

In Elk Point, you will find the 10-metre tall chainsaw carved Peter Fidler statue overlooking the town. This statue commemorates Peter Fidler, an early surveyor for the Hudson's Bay Company. Also be sure to check out the Elk Point Visitor Information "Eco" Centre on the south end of main street for information on local attractions and events, as well as displays about the history of the area. The centre is a replica of the exterior of the original train station. For more information about the Elk Point Eco Centre, email [elkpointvic@telus.net](mailto:elkpointvic@telus.net).

Frog Lake National Historic Site, just east of the park is the site of the Frog Lake settlement. Although there are only archaeological remains of the settlement, a cairn, interpretive signs and small cemetery mark the site of a tragic and pivotal event in western Canadian history.

