



Canoe Trip #27

Brabant Lake - Kakabigish Lake - Kemp Lake - Mountain Lake - Otter Lake (Missinipe)

Length of Trip: Approximately 125 kilometres (78 miles)

Time Required to Complete Trip: Five to six days

Number of Portages: 14

Warning:

Water levels and canoeing conditions on many Saskatchewan rivers and lakes vary from time to time, causing changes in the appearance of the various landmarks described in this booklet, as well as causing hazards not described herein. It is the canoeist's responsibility to proceed with caution and alertness, using discretion and good judgement at all times. The information in this booklet is intended to be of general assistance only, and the Government of Saskatchewan assumes no responsibility for its use. Canoeists are reminded that they travel at their own risk at all times.

Access to Starting Point:

Canoes may be launched on Brabant Lake from the access road into the north end of Brabant Bay. This access road is approximately 89 kilometres (55 miles) north of the Churchill River on Highway 102. Arrangements for the safe parking of vehicles may be made with one of the camp outfitters at Missinipe. It is not recommended that vehicles be left unattended at Brabant Lake.

Maps:

- 63-M/13 Rothnie Lake
- 64-D/4 Lower Waddy Lake
- 73-P/9 Guncoat Bay
- 73-P/10 Otter Lake
- 73-P/16 Settee Lake

About the Trip:

This route has been used for many years by Indians and fur traders for travel both by canoe and by dog sled between the settlement of Stanley Mission and the Wathaman Lake area.

Although this route includes a fair number of portages, with one exception these are reasonably short. Good walleye fishing is available throughout this trip, and lake trout are found in some of the lakes along the route.

With a few exceptions, the rapids along this route are shallow, rocky and impassable. The portages indicated are therefore, in most cases, mandatory.

The Canoe Trip:

From the Brabant Lake access road north of the Waddy River (Grid location 787195 - Map 64-D/4) the route leads across Brabant Bay and then south down McIvor Channel, across Trask Bay and then to the extreme south end of Doerksen Bay.

The islands in the narrows leading to McIvor Channel are heavily treed with spruce in contrast to the high lake shores, the rock bared by a forest fire years ago.

In the extreme southwest end of Doerksen Bay a small stream enters after meandering through a reedfilled shallow portion of the lake. The canoe route follows this stream for a few hundred metres (yards).

After entering the stream from Doerksen Bay, the paddler follows the channel upstream as it parallels the lake shore. At this point the channel is approximately five metres (16 feet) wide and a slight current is perceptible causing underwater vegetation to point downstream. Close observation of the left side of the channel should be made for a slight thinning of the reeds through which the barely noticeable current from another small stream enters the main channel. This current should be followed upstream through the reeds, no definite channel being evident, until a small rocky rapid can be heard on approaching the treed shore of the lake. There is a short portage on the right, or west, side of the rapid.

NOTE: The main channel through the reeds receives water from a chain of lakes which is not the canoe route.

Portage Number 1:

Connecting Brabant Lake with the first of two small un-named lakes. About 50 metres (55 yards) long and in poor condition.

This portage starts immediately to the right, or west, side of the shallow rocky rapids of the inflowing stream (Grid location 745979 - Map 63-M/13).

The stream connecting the two un-named lakes ends in a small pond immediately below a shallow rocky rapid at the outlet of the second un-named lake.

Portage Number 2:

Connecting two un-named lakes between Brabant Lake and Kakabigish Lake. Approximately 21 metres (23 yards) long and in poor condition. This portage by-passes a class 2 rapid. This portage starts on the right, or west, side about 20 metres (22 yards) from the foot of this short rapid. A channel has been cleared in the river bed which enables the paddler to line canoes to the lake above in all but extremely dry conditions. After paddling a short navigable channel near the southwest end of the lake, the start of the portage to Kakabigish Lake is obvious.

Portage Number 3:

Connecting second un-named lake with Kakabigish Lake. Approximately 343 metres (375 yards) long and in fair condition. This portage starts immediately to the right, or west, side of the shallow inflowing stream. Kakabigish Lake is a long narrow lake about 11 kilometres (6 3/4 miles) long at whose extreme southwest end is found the portage to Settee Lake.

Portage Number 4:

Connecting Kakabigish Lake to Settee Lake. Approximately 270 metres (295 yards) long and in fair condition. This portage starts a short distance to the left, or southeast, side of the shallow inflowing stream at a grassy clearing. From the campsite at the start of the portage, the trail separates with branches running parallel to each other up a moderate grade until they join just before Settee Lake. Settee Lake is very irregular in shape and contains a number of large islands and bays. There are three portages between Settee Lake and Solymos Lake. Only the most easterly one out of the extreme southeast end of Settee Lake is described here. This is also the shortest of the three portages.

Portage Number 5:

Connecting Settee Lake to Solymos Lake. Approximately 100 metres (109 yards) long and in fair condition. The portage start is obvious immediately to the right, or north, side of the shallow inflowing stream (Grid location 542838 - Map 73-P/16). Solymos Lake is split into three main sections. The canoe route leads, between high rocky banks, to the extreme south end of the most westerly bay to the start of the portage to Stempel Lake. The portage from Solymos Lake to Stempel Lake crosses the height of land separating the upstream and downstream portions of this trip.

Portage Number 6:

Connecting the most southerly bay of Solymos Lake to Stempel Lake. Approximately 230 metres (251 yards) long and in fair condition. The portage start is obvious on the right, or west, side of the shallow outflowing stream.

Portage Number 7:

Connecting the south end of Stempel Lake to the north end of Luther Lake. Approximately 137 metres (150 yards) long and in fair condition. The portage start is obvious on the right, or west, side of the shallow outflowing stream.

Portage Number 8:

Connecting the south end of Luther Lake to the north end of a small un-named lake. Approximately 260 metres (284 yards) long and in fair condition. The portage start is obvious on the right, or west, side of the shallow outflowing stream.

Portage Number 9:

Connecting the south end of the small un-named lake to the north end of Buchner Lake. Approximately 80 metres (87 yards) long and in fair condition. The start of the portage is in a small cove on the west shore of small un-named lake about 100 metres (109 yards) north of the outflowing stream. A campsite is located at the Buchner Lake end of the portage. About 800 metres (875 yards) before the portage out of Buchner Lake (Grid location 483726 - Map 73-P/9), two picturesque waterfalls cascade down the high southeast shore of the lake. The canoe route follows the outlet stream from Buchner Lake to a beaver dam over which the canoes can be pulled. A short distance below this, the portage can be seen on the right, or west, bank just above a shallow rocky rapid.

Portage Number 10:

Connecting quiet waters above shallow rapids in the stream flowing out of the south end of Buchner Lake to the north end of Kemp Lake. Approximately 55 metres (60 yards) long and in good condition. This portage starts on the right, or west, bank immediately above shallow rocky rapids. From this portage, the canoe route follows down Kemp Lake to the outlet stream (Grid location 434667 - Map 73-P/9).

The small river connecting Kemp Lake to the northeast corner of Hood Lake is fast-flowing and shallow. Upon leaving Kemp Lake there are three small rapids very close together. Water conditions will determine whether or not the canoeists line down the first two. The third, which has a number of sharp ledges has a well-used on the north, or right, shore to a pool below.

Portage Number 11:

Around a small rapid in the river flowing out of Kemp Lake. Approximately 33 metres (36 yards) long and in fair condition.

From the foot of this portage, a channel has been cleared in the river enabling canoes to be paddled and lined approximately 550 metres (601 yards) down to quiet waters below. Following the river channel avoids a very difficult and poor 595 metre (650 yard) portage over ridges and through muskeg. This long portage in neither described here, nor recommended.

The narrow channel connecting the south end of Hood Lake to the north end of Satkowsky Lake is navigable. The canoe route leaves Satkowsky Lake over a winter road portage to the north end of Guncoat Bay of Mountain Lake.

Portage Number 12:

Connecting the east side of Satkowsky Lake to the northeast corner of Guncoat Bay. Approximately 760 metres (831 yards) and in good condition.

This portage starts at a clearly discernable clearing in a bay on the east shore of Satkowsky Lake (Grid location 385610 - Map 73-P/9) and ends at an open meadow on Guncoat Bay just south of a high rock outcropping.

The canoe route now heads southwest down the long north bay of Mountain Lake on the Churchill River, then turns (Grid location 316516 - junction of Maps 73-P/9 and 73-P/10) and heads through the northwest portion of the lake towards Otter Lake.

As the paddler approaches Mountain Portage, Twin Falls can be seen entering the lake to the right, or north, side of the portage. These are spectacular falls, the river flowing with great force through two narrow openings in the rock. A photo and fishing stop at this point is well worth the time spent.

Portage Number 13 - Mountain Portage:

Connecting the northwest end of Mountain Lake to the small lake between Twin and Robertson Falls. Approximately 275 metres (301 yards) long and in good condition. This portage by-passes a 6 metre (20 foot) fall.

The start of this portage shows as a break in the shoreline vegetation about 400 metres (437 yards) southwest of the falls. An outfitter's dock is located about midway between the falls and the portage.

Portage Number 14 - Stony Mountain Portage:

Connecting the small lake between Twin and Robertson Falls to Otter Lake. Approximately 73 metres (80 yards) long and in excellent condition. This portage by-passes a 3 metre (10 foot) fall.

The start of this portage is at an obvious landing about 10 metres (11 yards) to the east of the most easterly part of Robertson Falls.

Missinipe Townsite, the end point of this trip is located on the northwest shore of Walker Bay at the extreme west end of Otter Lake.

WRITTEN BY: Original script by Peter Gregg, reviewed in 1989 by Historic Trails Canoe Club.

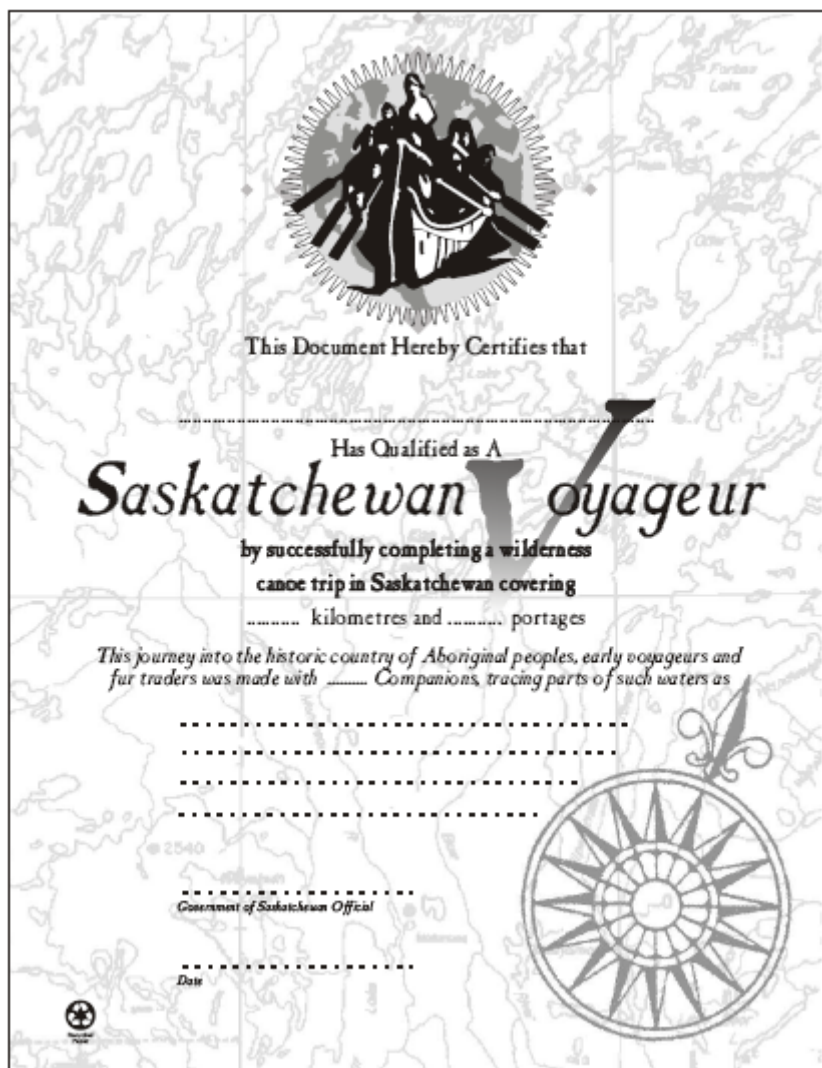
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:

To minimize your impact on the environment while canoeing along Saskatchewan waterways, please keep in mind these safe and sensible practices:

Make every canoe trip a clean trip! Follow the pack in - pack out rule. When breaking camp, erase all evidence that you were there. Leave your campsite cleaner than you found it.

Consider the wildlife and their habitat: While portaging or camping, stay on the trails to prevent any disturbance to the wildlife and natural vegetation.

Fire Prevention: Forest fires along canoe routes are an ever present danger. It is vital that all campfires are kept small and are thoroughly extinguished with water after use. Never leave a fire until you are sure it is 'dead'.



Be sure to obtain an official Saskatchewan Voyageur Certificate upon completion of your canoe trip. Before you start out, check in at one of the registration points and then again immediately after your journey is over. You will then become an official Saskatchewan Voyageur receiving a certificate as a memento of your canoe experience in Saskatchewan.

Registration Points:

Ministry offices in La Ronge, Prince Albert, Green Lake, Beauval, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche, Weyakwin, Stony Rapids, Pinehouse, Southend, Wollaston Lake, Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows, Creighton, Cumberland House, Saskatoon, Pierceland, Loon Lake; Meadow Lake Provincial Park, Narrow Hills Provincial Park and the Visitor Information Centre at La Ronge.

