



Canoe Trip #30

Otter Lake - Grandmother Bay - French Lake Ducker Lake - Otter Lake

Length of Trip: 35 kilometres (22 miles)

Time Required to Complete Trip: 1 to 2 days

Number of Portages: three

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 from the Saskatchewan Government campground at Missinipe (Walker Bay) on Otter Lake 80 kilometres (50 Miles) north of La Ronge on Highway 102. Arrangements for the safe parking of vehicles may be made with one of the camp outfitters at Missinipe. An alternate starting point for this trip is from below the rapids at the Saskatchewan Government campground at Otter Rapids 88 kilometres (55 miles) north of La Ronge on Highway 102.

Otter Lake forms part of the Churchill River system.

Accommodation, food, gasoline and telephone services are available at Missinipe.

Maps:

- 73-P/10 Otter Lake

About the Trip:

This trip is a short, easy loop returning to its starting point via a different route. It is suitable for the relatively inexperienced canoeist as there are no rapids to run and only three short portages. This trip, however, traverses much of Otter Lake, the many islands and bays of which require constant use of the map to avoid confusion. Under adverse wind conditions the lake may become very rough. In such event canoeists should be prepared to wait out bad weather.

This trip could be made in reverse direction as stream currents are negligible except for a few short stretches at the outlet of Ducker and French Lakes. Prevailing weather conditions, or personal considerations may make the reversal of direction of this trip desirable. For this reason, portage locations have been described from both ends.

This trip offers good northern pike and walleye fishing.

The Canoe Trip:

From Missinipe on Walker Bay the canoeist travels east-northeast across Otter Lake, through Grandmother Narrows, to the eastern part of Grandmother Bay.

Portage Number 1:

Connecting Grandmother Bay with French Lake. Approximately 365 metres (400 yards) long and in good condition.

From the eastern part of Grandmother Bay, this portage starts as a break in the shoreline grass and willows (Grid location 218641 - Map 73-P/10)

From the northwest bay of French Lake, this portage starts as a break in the alders and willows (Grid location 223640 - Map 73-P/10).

Canoeists should make their way to the outlet stream at the northeastern end of French Lake.

Portage Number 2:

Connecting French Lake with Ducker Lake, this portage bypasses the shallow, unnavigable outlet stream. Approximately 90 metres (98 yards) long and in fair condition.

From the northeast end of French Lake, after passing through a small riffle, this portage starts approximately 20 metres (22 yards) southeast of the outflowing stream at a grassy break in the shoreline.

From the west-central shore of Ducker Lake (Grid location 282678 - Map 73-P/10), this portage starts approximately 170 metres (185 yards) southeast of the base of the inflowing stream.

Canoeists should travel south on Ducker Lake to its outlet.

Portage Number 3:

Bypassing the shallow, rocky fall at the outlet of Ducker Lake. Approximately 200 metres (219 yards) long and in fair condition. From the southern extremity of Ducker Lake, this portage starts at a large rock on the west, or right side, in fast flowing water approximately 65 metres (71 yards) above the shallow, rocky rapids and fall. From the downstream end, this portage starts from a clearing in a small inlet about 25 metres (27 yards) west of the base of a rocky waterfall (Grid location 287664 - Map 73-P/10).

As the canoeist travels southwest down Stewart River, some faded Indian pictographs may be found on the west side on a conspicuous vertical rock cliff.

From the mouth of Stewart River, the canoeist travels from Norris Bay of Otter Lake in a west and northwest direction to the starting point of the trip at Missinipe on Walker Bay. This is the most exposed portion of the trip. Adverse weather conditions may make it necessary for canoeists to seek shelter and wait until wind and waves subside before continuing. Frequent use of map and compass will lessen the chances of becoming confused among the many islands and bays encountered along this part of the trip.

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

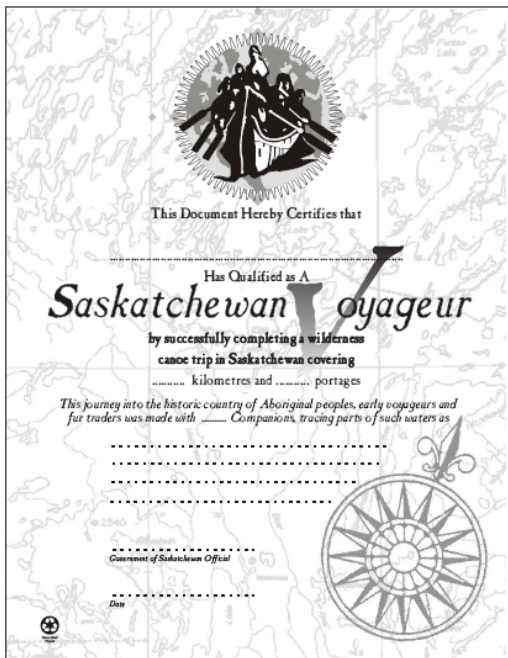
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:

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-Croise, 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.



Ministry of
Tourism, Parks,
Culture and Sport

For further information contact:

Toll Free: 1-800-205-7070

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Email: info.TPCS@gov.sk.ca



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