WATSON'S PADDLING GUIDE to the RIDEAU CANAL

by

Ken W. Watson

ISBN 978-0-9780751-3-2

v.2.0

For more information about the Rideau Canal visit: **www.rideau-info.com**

Map illustrations and photographs by Ken W. Watson unless otherwise credited.

First Printing: May 2012
Current Revision: October 2019

Published by: Ken W. Watson, Elgin, Ontario

Printed in Canada

ISBN 978-0-9780751-3-2

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About this Guide

This is a very detailed paddling guide to the Rideau Canal. Key to the guide are the 18 maps that cover the 202 kilometre length of the Rideau Canal and also the Tay Canal. You'll be able to use the maps for route planning and as an on-water guide to the many points of interest the Rideau has to offer. All in all this is the most comprehensive resource you can have for paddling the Rideau Canal.

If you're not familiar with the Rideau Canal, then I'd suggest that you start with the Rideau FAQ – it will provide the best synopsis of Rideau paddling information. Once you have read the FAQ you can jump into more details.

This guide evolved from 18 individual day/weekend paddling guides and some elements originally designed for the day/weekend paddler, such as water access, have been retained in this guide.

You Can Help

This guide is based on my knowledge of the Rideau and an error or three have likely slipped in. If you find any errors in the information contained in this guide, please contact me at rideauken@gmail.com so that I can provide an update.

Thanks

Thanks to Don MacKay of Parks Canada for being a long-time champion of paddling on the Rideau Canal – making the Rideau more paddling friendly. And, specifically for this guide, Don provided information about the portage routes at each lockstation. Thanks too to my wife Pat for proofing this document and providing constructive criticism which has served to improve this guide. Thanks to Yvan Bédard for improving this document with more interactive features.

About the Author

The author, Ken Watson, has lived on the Rideau since 1995. In 1996 he created the non-commercial website, **www.rideau-info.com**, which has grown over time to encompass all things Rideau. Ken has been boating on the Rideau, by power boat, canoe and kayak, since he arrived here. Taking an interest in the heritage of the Rideau Canal, Ken is active with several Rideau heritage organizations and has authored four books about the Rideau Canal. An avid photographer, Ken also enjoys the many photographic opportunities the Rideau has to offer.

For this guide, Ken has applied his knowledge of boating on all sections of the Rideau plus his knowledge of the many interesting sights, both contemporary and historic, that can be seen along the canal.


N
W
E
S
Ottawa River
Gatineau (Hull)
OTTAWA
Ottawa
Hartwells
Hogs Back
Black Rapids
Long Island
Manotick
Kars
Rideau River
Kemptville
Rideau Canal
National Historic Site of Canada
UNESCO World Heritage Site
Ontario, Canada
= Town
= Lockstation
= Rideau Canal
= Other Water
= Rideau Heritage Route
Burritts Rapids
Burritts Rapids
Nicholsons
Clowes
Merrickville
Merrickville
Poonamalie
Smiths Falls
Smiths Falls
Old Slys
Kilmarnock
Perth
Tay Canal
Beveridges
Rideau Ferry
Lower Rideau Lake
Edmunds
Big Rideau Lake
Narrows
Upper Rideau Lake
Portland
Westport
Newboro
Newboro
Newboro Lake
Clear
Indian
Elgin
Delta
Chaffeys
Opinicon Lake
Sand Lake
Jones Falls
Davis
Lyndhurst
Morton
Whitefish Lake
Charleston Lake
Seeleys Bay
Little Cranberry Lake
Brockville
Loughborough Lake
Cranberry Lake
Dog Lake
Upper Brewers
Lower Brewers
St. Lawrence River
Cataraqui River
River Styx
Gananoque
U.S.A.
Colonel By Lake
Kingston Mills
KINGSTON
Lake Ontario
0 kilometres 20
0 miles 10
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Front Cover Photo: Sunrise Paddle on Sand Lake, photo by Ken W. Watson

PADDLING THE RIDEAU CANAL

The Rideau Canal is mostly natural waters, made up of lakes and rivers. The direct route from Kingston to Ottawa is 202 kilometres, but that length includes 1,091 kilometres of shoreline. It spans urban, rural and natural environments – it is a very interesting place to explore. You'll find a listing of the top ten reasons to paddle the Rideau on the www.rideau-info.com website. These, in a nutshell, are: it's interesting •it's easy •it's safe •it's accessible •it's quiet •it's decadent •it's photogenic •it's historic •it's friendly •it's fun. What more could you ask? It really is a great place to paddle.

This guide contains much of the information you will need to plan and have a great on-water experience paddling the Rideau Canal. A feature of the guide are the detailed maps (1:50,000 when printed out at 8.5" x 11") of the Rideau Canal and inset maps of each lockstation showing the portage routes.

TRAVEL PLANNING

Transiting the Rideau Canal

The Rideau Canal is an easy paddle, it is a slackwater system (very little current) and there are lots of camping opportunities (including at most of the lockstations), plus more decadent accommodations such as B&Bs and hotels. Supplies are available at several of the communities along the route.

It will take about 6 to 10 days for the trip. That timing depends on your paddling speed (early voyageurs could do it in 3 days –long days with lots of paddling and several portages) and how much off the beaten path sightseeing you wish to do while on your journey. If you don't know your average speed, start your planning using 3 kph (full day average including stops/portages/lockages). The direct length, following the navigation channel, is 202 kilometres, but with side trips and exploring some shorelines, the average trip will be 250 to 300 kilometres. When planning your trip, keep in mind that it is more relaxing if you're not working to a tight schedule and you may also wish to include a couple of weather days. I've had emails from several paddlers wishing that they'd allowed a couple more days in order to do more sightseeing. Paddling to meet a deadline can suck the fun out of the experience.

You can lock through the locks for a fee or you can portage the locks (except for those at Smiths Falls and Old Slys which have dangerous road crossings) for free. There are paddling docks at most lockstations that make it easy to pull out or put in.

Direction of Travel

Kingston to Ottawa or Ottawa to Kingston? The preferred direction of travel for most paddlers is ***Kingston to Ottawa*** for the simple reason that the **prevailing wind is from the southwest**, making it more likely that the wind will be to your back, that you'll be paddling with wind and waves, not into them. All bets are off during a storm when the wind can come from any direction.

For the **photographer**, Kingston to Ottawa is also the preferred direction since that will place the sun at your back for most of your trip, improving the quality of your photos.

Lockstations

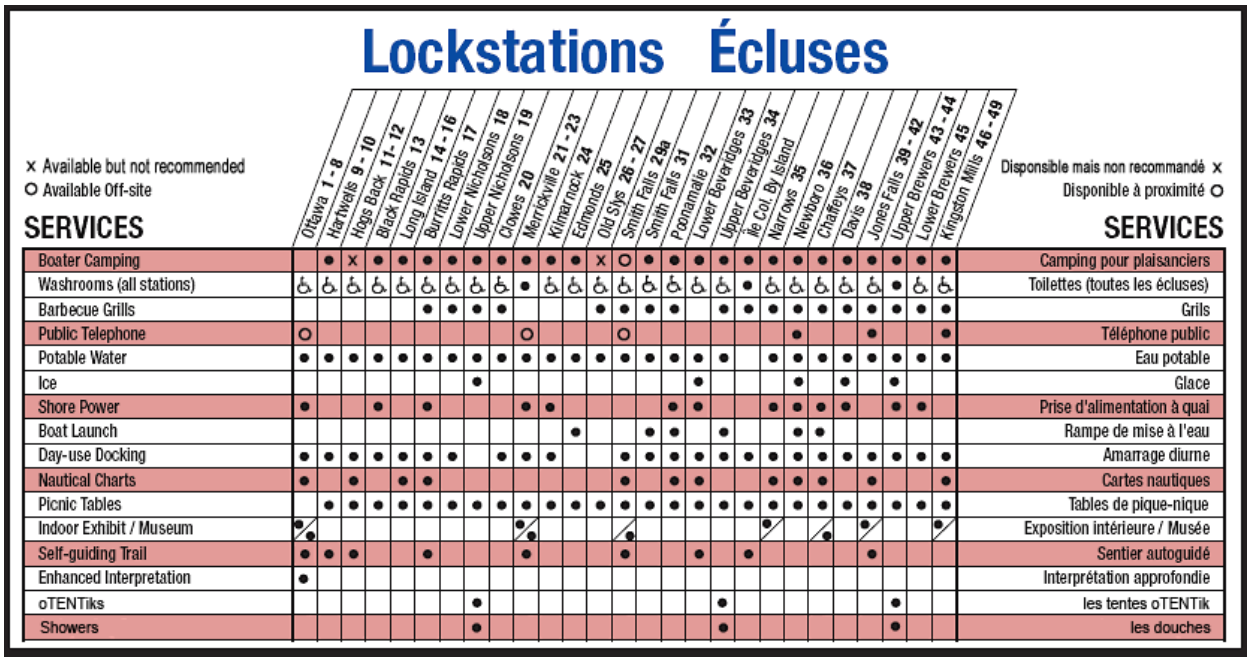
The lockstations are a main feature of the Rideau Canal. For anyone at all interested in Canadian history, I'd advise that you plan to stop at each station and have a look around. If you are carrying my book *"A History of the Rideau Lockstations"* it will provide information on the history of each station, including how they was built. Most of the original features can still be seen today if you know where to look. The Points of Interest write-ups for each lock provide a brief synopsis of the historical features.

You have a choice of portaging around the locks or locking through. The Rideau Canal is a recreational waterway operated by Parks Canada. The Parks Canada staff is always happy to help you. Whether you're the only canoe or kayak at the lock, in a group of paddlers, or with other boats, you'll get locked through (some people are surprised that a single kayak or canoe will be locked through – but that's what happens). Locking is a gentle procedure, no problem for a canoe or kayak. The lock staff will advise you on when to enter the lock and where to position yourself. Once you've got a lock or two under your belt, you'll be an expert.

Parks Canada has also been very good at improving the portaging options at locks. Most locks now have specific paddling docks and signage that indicate put-in and take-out points. Some of this information is included in this guide. The profile of the Rideau Canal is shaped like a hump (you're actually paddling over a very old mountain range), with Upper Rideau Lake (bounded by Newboro and Narrows locks) the top. So about half your portages will be uphill, half will be downhill.

The lockstations have washrooms, most allow camping (see Camping section below), most have picnic tables, all have potable water. Only those with oTENTiks have showers (showers are available to anyone with paid access to the Rideau Canal - lock pass, mooring pass or camping pass). You can also get a shower at a private campground, a B&B or at some marinas. The other option is to take a swim, you'll find a lake water temperature chart in Appendix D of this guide.

The chart below (adapted from the Parks Canada brochure) lists many of the services at each lockstation.



Camping/Accommodations

There is essentially no Crown Land (public land) bordering the Rideau Canal – most of the shorelines and islands are privately owned. Camping is therefore only available at designated spots, including most of the lockstations, two Provincial Parks (Murphys Point PP and Rideau River PP), several private campgrounds and at least one marina (Long Island Marine – Kars).

Camping is available at 24 of the 26 lockstations, plus Colonel By Island in Big Rideau Lake. The only lockstations that do not provide for camping are Ottawa and Smiths Falls Combined. At all the other lockstations, you can pitch a tent on the grassy grounds of the lockstation for a fee. The lockstation staff will direct you to where you can camp (and collect your fee). Three lockstations – Upper Nicholsons, Upper Beveridges and Upper Brewers – have Parks Canada oTENTiks available for rent.

Supplies

There are several communities along the route where you can stop and re-stock with supplies from a grocery store. These include (south to north) Seeleys Bay, Westport, Portland, Smiths Falls, Merrickville and Manotick. In addition, several of the marinas carry a small selection of goods.

Temperature

What to pack in terms of clothes? See Appendix D for a table of monthly temperature averages for the summer as well as a chart showing water temperature. Bottom line is that paddling can easily be done from the beginning of May to the end of October.

Maps for Travel Planning

Much of the fun of trip planning is looking at maps and planning routes. This can quite easily be done with the maps included in this guide. If you plan to get a set of navigation charts (see Navigation in the Travel Safety section), get them early so that you can use them as an aid to your travel planning.

There are many on-line resources and these continue to evolve so I'll only mention one that I've used:

Google Earth (earth.google.com): A free application offered by Google, Google Earth provides fairly high resolution satellite imagery for much of the Rideau Canal. One of the handiest features of Google Earth is the Path tool of the Ruler. This allows you to very quickly measure real world distances. I use it all the time to plan my paddling day trips and it has been used in this guide to measure distances such as lake circumferences.

TRAVEL SAFETY

Preparation

While the Rideau Canal is easy paddling, normal paddling preparations should be made (all required safety gear, maps, food, water, first-aid kit, etc.).

Zebra mussels are present in many areas along the Rideau, so a pair of water shoes (to avoid cut feet) is recommended.

Please take all normal safety precautions; including checking the weather forecast before you head out and making sure that someone on shore knows your planned travel route and itinerary.

Safety Gear

Transport Canada has regulations regarding the types of mandatory safety equipment that must be carried. This listing is an unofficial synopsis of the Transport Canada regulations – please check with the Office of Boating Safety (or a current copy of Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide) for an official listing of the required equipment for your boat.

For canoes & kayaks (and other human powered boats) the general requirements are:

- One (1) lifejacket or PFD of appropriate size for each person on board*.
- One (1) reboarding device if your freeboard is over 0.5 m (1′ 8″)
- One (1) buoyant heaving line at least 15 m (49′ 3″) long
- If your boat is over 6 m (19.7′) long then it will require one watertight flashlight.
- Flares are optional while on the Rideau Canal
- One (1) bailer, or manual bilge pump or bilge pumping arrangements**.
- One (1) sound signalling device or appliance.
- Navigation lights if the boat is operated after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.

* If an inflatable PDF is used, IT MUST BE WORN (this applies to all open boats).

** A bailer or manual bilge pump is not required for a boat that cannot hold enough water to make it capsize or a boat that has watertight compartments that are sealed and not readily accessible. It's obviously required for any canoe and is highly recommended for all kayaks (to pump out the cockpit).

Navigation Maps

Paper Maps - while the Rideau Canal is generally easy to navigate, taking along a set of paper maps is a must (in addition to any GPS/Smartphone you might have). Although the maps in this guide are an accurate 1:50,000 representation of the waterway (when printed to 8.5″ x 11″), you may also wish to have the 1:20,000 hydrographic charts (Charts 1512 and 1513). For power boat navigation, the charts are an

absolute must (the maps in this guide should not be used for power boat navigation). The charts are also very handy for the paddler, since they show the Rideau in great detail, including depths (which can be helpful when looking for wildlife habitat or interesting places to paddle).

The charts also show all the navigation buoys. These are all numbered (red buoys have even numbers, green buoys have odd numbers) and so can be used as an aid in locating yourself on the map when you're on open water. A subset of those buoy numbers have been included on the maps in this guide.

Digital Maps – digital maps that you can carry with you come in several flavours. For those with a smartphone there are the built in maps or specific map apps, including apps that provide the Rideau navigation charts. Be aware that there are dead spots on the Rideau depending on the carrier, so if you plan to use any map on your smartphone, be sure they can be downloaded onto your phone for use if you can't establish a connection. For those using a dedicated GPS unit, maps are usually stored on the device itself (no Internet connection required). As noted above, carrying a set of paper maps is highly recommended in case you lose battery power on your digital device.

More map information can be found below in the "Do I need a Map" section of the Rideau Canal Paddling FAQ.

Cellphones/Smartphones

Be aware that there are still dead zones on the Rideau Canal depending on your cellphone provider. So while a cellphone is a very good thing to carry – don't rely on it exclusively.

WiFi

Public WiFi hotspots on or near the canal are rare (local libraries, some restaurants).

Be Aware – Wind Issues

A question often asked is which way does the wind blow? The prevailing wind, powered by the jet stream, is from the southwest. That's about the only rule of thumb. If a front is moving in then the wind can come from any direction. I've been on several paddles where I've been paddling into the wind on the way out in the morning and into the wind on the way back in the afternoon because the wind direction swung around 180 degrees (for some reason it never seems to work the other way around – at your back both ways :-). So, if you're going to travel the entire Rideau, going from Kingston to Ottawa improves the odds of having the wind at your back – but be prepared for anything.

Be Aware – Wave Issues

Waves can be an issue on the lakes with large sections of open water unprotected by islands such as Colonel By, River Styx, Upper Rideau, Big Rideau and Lower Rideau lakes. While wind can raise whitecaps on all the lakes, many of the smaller lakes such as Sand, Opinicon, Indian and Newboro have enough islands and shoreline features (points) to allow you to "hide" from the brunt of the waves. Not so with the open lakes, you'll either have to wait, or push through it.

Waves generally are not an issue for those using a sea style of kayak (other than making it harder to paddle), but they can be an issue for a canoeist.

The other wave issue are those made by big boats – see the next section.

Be Aware – Big Boats

You'll be sharing the Rideau with big power boats (cruisers). The Rideau is generally not a crowded waterway and often you'll find the large boats in "packs" – travelling from lock to lock – once they pass by you won't see any for a while. Some of these boats can generate a large wave. The general rule for a paddler and large waves is to meet them head-on, this can actually be fun in a kayak (not as much fun in a canoe). If you see waves approaching, turn into them.

The main navigation channel is shown on the maps as a blue dashed line – this is where the big boats will be travelling. So, if you wish to avoid these, pick a route away from the navigation channel. Many paddlers prefer paddling near shore, it's more interesting (i.e. wildlife, cottages) and it keeps you farther away from the waves produced by big boats.

There are several "no wake" zones on the Rideau – these have been marked on the maps. Boaters within these areas are supposed to be travelling at a slow enough speed (less than 10 kph) that their boat doesn't generate any potentially damaging or dangerous waves.

Most power boaters are considerate of the paddler and slow down, although this can sometimes cause a problem as a big boat goes from high to low speed, generating a large wave in the transition. These large transition waves can also be generated at the start and end points of No Wake zones (the locations where power boats slow down or speed up). So, be on the lookout for this type of wave.

Be Aware – Dams and Weirs

At or near most lockstations you'll find a dam and a weir – these should not be approached. The upstream end is generally cordoned off with orange markers. In times of high water, there can be an appreciable flow from weirs, generating a current. Some of the dams are overflow dams, hard to see from the upstream side, so be on the lookout for the markers.

Be Aware – The Visibility of your Canoe or Kayak

For many, safety includes proper trip planning, training (skill in paddling a canoe or kayak), carrying the appropriate safety gear, and having detailed route maps. However, an often overlooked safety issue for paddlers is that of visibility. Just because you can see other boaters doesn't mean that they can see you.

Canoes and particularly kayaks sit low in the water. Even in good weather conditions on a lake or river, canoes and kayaks can be difficult to spot, particularly by power boaters who may not be specifically looking for them.

So it is up to you, the paddler, to make sure others on the water are aware of you. This involves a few simple steps:

1) **AWARENESS** – Be aware of other boaters in your area. Be aware that you might be hard to see and adjust your route and actions accordingly (i.e. paddle along shorelines rather than in the navigation channel – it's also more fun that way). Just because you can see them doesn't mean that they will see you.

2) **VISIBILITY** – Strive for maximum visibility – a bright hat and bright life jacket are a good start. Your best visibly aid is often your paddle, especially in the case of kayakers. If kayaking, choose a paddle with brightly coloured blades (yellow is ideal). If you are in a situation where you think you should be noticed, raise your paddle vertically above you, this will make you much more visible.

OTHER STUFF

Etiquette

Your trip planning should include a "leave no trace" approach – carry out what you carry in. Many areas are un-serviced (no garbage cans) – so plan to be self-contained. The lockstations provide recycling and waste disposal facilities.

Portaging

You can portage the locks for free. The only issues with portaging are at Smiths Falls (Smiths Falls Detached, Smiths Falls Combined and Old Slys) where due to the required crossing of busy roads, portaging can be a safety issue. At these locations Parks Canada will pass canoes and kayaks through the locks for free.

In the guide you will find maps of each lockstation showing the portage routes (in the lockstation description under "Points of Interest"). These are current as of this writing, but in some instances lock staff may move paddling docks a bit. Look for the low docks and the portaging signs as you come to each lockstation and feel free to ask the lock staff for advice, they will be happy to help you.

Water Quality

The Rideau Canal varies from man-made cuts, 6 to 7 feet (2 m) deep, to river sections, generally 10 to 15 feet (3 to 4.5 m) deep, to lakes which vary from shallow (12 to 15 feet / 3.5 to 4.5 m) to very deep (330 feet / 100 m in Big Rideau Lake). Some lakes/rivers are near the top of the watersheds (Newboro, near the centre of the Rideau Canal, marks the divide between the Cataraqui and Rideau watersheds) and these generally exhibit less nutrient loading than those lakes and rivers near the bottom of the watersheds (at the Kingston and Ottawa ends).

The colour of the water is generally determined by the content of (harmless) single cell green algae suspended in the water. The deeper lakes and those nearer the top of the watershed have blue water, shallower lakes and those lower in the watershed have waters that can be fairly green in colour. The algae, while sometimes annoying, does support a large fish population. The Rideau lakes and rivers are very productive when it comes to fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Most of the algae is green algae, either single cell or filamentous. The latter forms green blobs which don't look great but are harmless. Blue-green algae, which can produce toxic blooms, is very rare. Studies in 2010 and 2011 showed a few instances of blue-green algae in the southern section of the Rideau (Colonel By Lake to Cranberry Lake) with only one reported instance in a shallow section of Upper Rideau Lake. There is no current data for the northern Rideau but studies in the early 2000s showed no issues. Blue-green algae generally shows as almost an oil slick appearance – fairly evident.

E-coli is only a reported issue in areas of public beaches (not many on the Rideau) – these beaches will be posted if there is a problem.

Bottom line is that the waters of the Rideau Canal are safe for swimming but not recommended for drinking. Transit paddlers should consider taking along a good quality water filter if lake water is to be used. Potable water is available at lockstations, marinas and campgrounds. Bottled water is available at all grocery stores.

Swimming

Swimming is allowed in most sections of the Rideau Canal except in the immediate vicinity of a lock and in the Ottawa section of the Rideau Canal (swimming is prohibited from Hogs Back to the Ottawa Locks). See the Swimming section of the FAQ.

Water Levels

Water levels along the entire length of the Rideau Canal are managed by Parks Canada following a set of guidelines known as the "rule curves." Levels are controlled by weirs at most of the lockstations. A weir is an opening in a dam with a device used to regulate the level. When originally built, all the weirs used stop logs, squared timber that can be raised or lowered to control the outflow. This historic method is still in use at most lockstations. In a couple of spots, such as Poonamalie, a modern hydraulic gate has been installed.

The watersheds that supply the Rideau Canal (the Cataraqui River and Rideau River watersheds) are quite small and in very dry summers, levels in a few areas can drop below established navigation level (a minimum of 5.0 ft / 1.5 m). It's not a common occurrence and doesn't affect the paddler.

Invasive Species

The Rideau Canal is host to a few invasive species that can be transported by being attached or stuck on a boat such as zebra mussels and Eurasian water-milfoil (which can spread from cuttings). While it is unlikely that your canoe and kayak might harbour any of these, it's a good idea to give them a wash before putting them into the next body of water (which might not have zebra mussels or Eurasian water-milfoil).

Sources of Information

There are many good sources on the Internet to aid in Rideau Canal travel planning. A few are listed below:

www.rideau-info.com/canal/

The home page for everything you wanted to know about the Rideau Canal

www.rideau-info.com/canal/paddling/

The Paddling Section of the Rideau Canal website

www.pc.gc.ca/rideaucanal

The official Parks Canada website for the Rideau Canal

discover.leedsgrenville.com

Tourism site for the County of Leeds & Grenville which includes the central Rideau Canal

Plus do searches for specific communities along the waterway (i.e. Kingston, Seeleys Bay, Newboro, Westport, Portland, Rideau Ferry, Smiths Falls, Merrickville, Kemptville, Manotick, Ottawa) to see the many websites related to tourism in those areas.

Rideau Canal Paddling FAQ

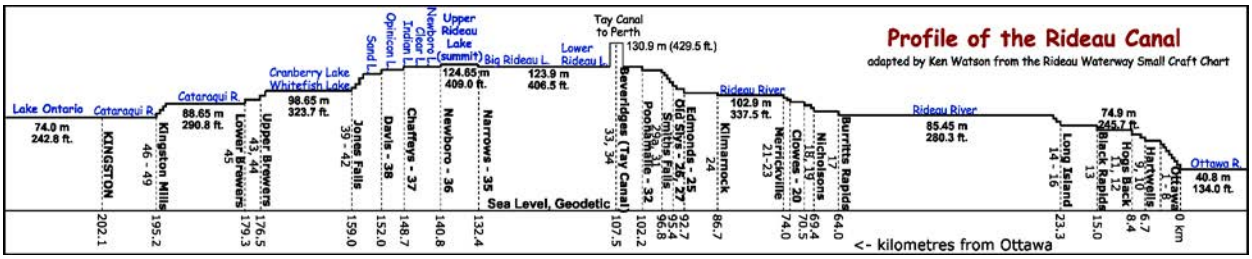
(**F**requently **A**sked **Q**uestions)

THE SETTING

What is the Rideau Canal?

The Rideau Canal is a series of rivers, lakes and connecting locks and canals that form a continuous waterway from Kingston to Ottawa, in eastern Ontario, Canada. It is 202 kilometres (125 miles) long, of which about 19 kilometres (12 miles) is manmade (locks and canal cuts), the rest are natural waters. There are 45 locks in 23 lockstations along the main route of the Rideau plus 2 locks that link the Tay Canal to the Rideau. From Lake Ontario at Kingston the canal rises 50.6 metres (166.2 feet) to the summit of Upper Rideau Lake and then descends 83.8 metres (275 feet) to the Ottawa River at Ottawa. See the location map at the beginning of this document.

Why is the profile shaped like a hump?



This is because it crosses a watershed divide located just north of the Newboro Lockstation. Water on the north side of divide, from Upper Rideau Lake and north on the Rideau Canal, flows to the Ottawa River. Water south of the divide, from Newboro Lake and south on the Rideau Canal, mostly flows to Lake Ontario. The reason for this divide is the topographic remnant of the very old Grenville mountain range which forms today's Frontenac Axis (see map in Geology section), part of the Canadian Shield (very old rocks). When you boat the Rideau Canal from Kingston to Smiths Falls you are literally boating over a mountain. Hence the hump.

In the pre-canal era there were two watershed divides. Water from Newboro Lake and the original southern lakes (Clear, Benson, Indian, Opinicon and Sand) flowed to the Gananoque River via the White Fish River which had the Jones Falls Rapids (which flowed out of Sand Lake) as its headwaters. The Cataraqui River's headwaters were Loughborough Lake and the pre-canal Dog Lake. A mill dam at Morton (c.1803), replaced in 1831 by a canal dam, blocked the flow to the Gananoque River, forcing the water to flow to the Cataraqui River. This remains the configuration today.

Can I paddle the entire waterway?

Yes – the Rideau is ideal flatwater paddling, so anyone from the novice to expert can do it. Canoes and kayaks are welcome to travel through the locks (there are no restrictions other than the required fee permit – see below). Canoes and kayaks can also portage (for free) around the locks if they wish. All lockstation with the exception of Ottawa and Smiths Falls Combined provide camping areas for boaters (a fee applies, see below), a few offer oTENTiks (canvas covered A-frame cabins), plus there are a number of private campgrounds and two Provincial Parks along the route.

Who Operates the Rideau Canal?

The Rideau is operated by the Parks Canada Agency, which is under the authority of the Canadian government's Department of Environment. They maintain the heritage aspects of the canal and operate it much like a park.

When and why was it built?

It was built between 1826 and 1832. It pre-dates the locks on the St. Lawrence River, and was built to assist the defence of Canada by allowing boats to travel from Montreal to the Great Lakes without having to travel along the St. Lawrence River, in gunshot range of the Americans. It was officially opened in May, 1832 and has been operated continuously ever since.

Who built it?

It was built by the British under the direction of Lt. Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers. Private contractors, such as John Redpath and Thomas McKay, did most of the actual construction. The design and engineering of the canal was done by Colonel By and the Royal Engineers. Two companies of Royal Sappers and Miners assisted in the construction. Hundreds of tradesmen (i.e. masons, carpenters, smiths, coopers) used local materials to fashion the locks and dams. The large amount of manual labour (i.e. digging dirt, chopping trees, excavating stones) was done by thousands of immigrant Irish and French-Canadian labourers. Local settlers assisted with moving materials (i.e. stones) and providing food to the work camps. Some 2,500 to 4,000 men worked on the construction each year. Many women and children were also part of these construction camps. For details about the construction, visit the History of the Rideau Canal webpage at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/history/

What makes the Rideau Canal unique?

It is the oldest continuously operated canal in North America. Most of the locks are still operated by hand, using the same mechanisms that were used to operate the locks in 1832. As you travel the Rideau, you are viewing living history. The Rideau isn't just a canal cut (only 10% is man-made), it's a waterway combining canals, rivers and lakes. This makes the Rideau a wonderful blend of urban, rural and natural landscapes. You can see million dollar homes, quaint cottages, and loons swimming in a sheltered, undisturbed bay, all in the same day.

How has the Rideau been recognized?

On May 15, 1925 the Rideau Canal was designated a **National Historic Site of Canada** (plaqued in 1926, 1962 and 2013). The designation was given due to the significance to Canada of:

- the construction of the canal system,
- the survival of a high number of original canal structures including locks, blockhouses, dams, weirs and original lockmasters' houses plus the integrity of most lockstations,
- the unique historical environment of the canal system.

In 2000 the Rideau Waterway was designated a **Canadian Heritage River** in recognition of its outstanding historical and recreational values.

In 2007 it was inscribed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** recognizing it as a work of human creative genius. Two criteria were used as the basis for the designation:

1. The Rideau Canal remains the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale. It is the only canal dating from the great North American canal-building era of the early 19th century that remains operational along its original line with most of its original structures intact (UNESCO Criterion i)
2. The Rideau Canal is an extensive, well preserved and significant example of a canal which was used for a military purposes linked to a significant stage in human history - that of the fight to control North America (UNESCO Criterion iv)

PADDLING THE RIDEAU CANAL

What type of canoe/kayak do I need?

Any type of canoe or kayak will do. Since it is flatwater paddling, the ideal canoe is a "tripping" style of canoe. Kayakers will prefer a sea kayak with some cargo capacity for carrying gear. If you have a choice, a kayak is preferable over a canoe since kayaks can handle wind and waves (which can be problematic at times on the larger lakes) much better than a canoe.

Are there any difficult sections?

The sections that canoeists in particular should pay attention to are the lakes with large expanses of open water. These include Big Rideau Lake, Upper Rideau Lake, Colonel By Lake and River Styx. If the wind is blowing, these lakes can get quite rough. On the other lakes (which can also get rough in stormy weather) there are usually enough nearby nooks and shelters that a canoeist can easily avoid rough water. However, with a prudent eye to the weather and sticking close to shore, all the lakes, including Big Rideau, Upper Rideau, Colonel By and River Styx can be a very enjoyable paddle.

Are there other paddling issues?

One should be aware of where the navigation channel lies and of cruisers (large power boats) that travel along that navigation way. When travelling at speed, these cruisers can create large waves (wash) and not all are considerate of the poor paddler. However, cruiser traffic volume on the Rideau is low and it is quite easy to be aware of the cruisers and avoid problems with their waves. It is often best for paddlers to take the scenic route and travel off the navigation channel.

Do I need any special gear?

You should pack as you would for any normal paddling trip, making sure you are carrying all the required safety gear. A note to kayakers is that you might wish to carry a spray skirt in the event of wavy or rainy weather. While I've never had a problem with water in my kayak, even in the worst conditions on the Rideau (white cap waves), I'm doing day trips with a lighter load than would be the case with a multi-day trip. I received a note from one kayaker who took on water in wavy conditions on Lower Rideau Lake (he didn't have a spray skirt). I also carry a hand pump on the bow of my kayak and keep a sponge in the cockpit.

Do I need a map?

Yes – there are a few choices, the 1:50,000 NTS maps, the 1:20,000 hydrographic charts or the maps in this guide (which are 1:50,000 when printed out at 8.5" x 11"). A good map is very worthwhile since it shows all the islands and shorelines and allows you to explore all the interesting nooks and crannies that would otherwise be missed if you simply followed the marked navigation way. So a good set of paper maps is highly recommended. GPS units are handy, are but not a substitute for carrying paper maps.

Some paddlers like the NTS maps since these show detailed topography and tributaries that connect to the Rideau, features that may be of interest to the paddler. Six 1:50,000 scale NTS maps cover the waterway, from south to north they are 31C/8, 31C/9, 31C/16, 31B/13, 31G/4 and 31G/5.

Other paddlers prefer the hydrographic charts, since they are the most detailed maps of the Rideau (1:20,000) and include detailed insets of all the locks. The charts also clearly show all the numbered marker buoys (giving you a quick clue to your location on the open water – see the buoys section below). Chart 1512 covers from Ottawa to Smiths Falls and Chart 1513 covers Smiths Falls to Kingston.

The maps in this guide are highly detailed and can certainly be used for all paddling purposes. This guide also includes individual lockstation maps and a subset of the marker buoys.

Another resource that can be helpful (or at least interesting) in planning your trip is Google Earth – much of the Rideau is covered by high resolution satellite imagery, so you can see exactly where you plan to go. Their path tool is handy for measuring paddling distances.

For those carrying a GPS unit, the "MapSource Topo Canada" GPS maps are handy to have since they include the entire Canadian NTS series maps. It is still advised that you carry a paper set of maps in addition to your GPS unit in case the batteries run out, or, if you have a non-floating GPS, you accidently drop it overboard (many waterproof GPS units don't float – test yours before you head out).

Digital maps are also available for smartphones. These include apps for both the NTS topographic maps and for the hydrographic charts. Most allow for offline use of the maps (so you don't need a live Internet connection to use them) and integrate with the GPS in your smartphone. For instance, for NTS topo maps, the "Canada Topo Maps" app by Atlogis provides all the topo maps for Canada. For navigation charts there are apps for both Android and iOS such as the "Navionics Boating: US&Canada" app which has the full hydrographic charts for the Rideau Canal. Ensure that whatever you plan to use allows for offline use of the maps (to cover connection dead zones that exist on the Rideau) and make sure you download them onto your device before the trip.

For more information about maps that cover the Rideau, have a look at the maps page: www.rideau-info.com/canal/map_list.html.

Do I need to wear a Lifejacket?

Yes and no. YES if you are using an inflatable PDF (either auto or manual inflate), then it MUST BE WORN if you are in any open boat, whether it is power or paddle (the OPP are enforcing this rule). NO if you are using regular Canadian approved PFDs or lifejackets. These must be of appropriate size for everyone on board. If not worn, the PDF/Lifejacket must be readily accessible (not buried inside a sealed hatch).

What do the navigation buoys mean?

These buoys mark the channels of the Rideau Canal. In shallow water areas they demark the section with a minimum navigation depth of 5 feet (1.5 m), in deeper water areas they show the suggested route for larger power boats. Buoys are red and green. If you are inside the navigation channel, red buoys will be on your right when heading to the Rideau's home port, which is Newboro (remember, "red right returning (to home port)" For the paddler, buoys can be handy since they are numbered and those numbers are shown on the navigation charts. A subset of those numbers is shown on the maps in this guide. If you want to avoid large boats, stay out of navigation channel (which you can see by the buoys).

When is the Rideau open for boating?

The locks operate from mid-May to mid-October. For exact dates see the Fees & Schedules page located at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html. Of course with so many sections of natural water (lakes and rivers), you can paddle anytime there is open water and for those willing to portage, the navigation season (when the locks are open) is not a restriction.

Do the locks operate 24 hours a day?

No - the hours vary. During most of the season the locks open at 9:00 am (10 am during weekdays in the spring and fall). In the summer they stay open until 6:00 pm from Monday to Thursday and 7:00 pm from Friday to Sunday. In spring and fall they generally close at 4:00 pm on weekdays and 5:00 pm on weekends. For full details see the fees & schedules page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html.

What is the preferred direction of travel?

Prevailing winds are from the west-southwest (direction of the jet-stream), so it can be a bit easier paddling northeast, from Kingston to Ottawa. Of note, winds are more unpredictable in the fall (storms moving up the east coast of North America can drive winds inland, creating an east wind). In terms of currents in the rivers, since the Rideau traverses two watersheds, you will be with or against minimal currents both ways. The southern half of the Rideau (Cataraqui River Watershed) flows south while the northern half (Rideau River Watershed) flows north. However, since the Rideau is a "slackwater" system, there are no appreciable currents to contend with.

If you are portaging your canoe/kayak and only doing one section of the Rideau, consideration might be given to heading "down" rather than "up" to make portaging easier. If you're doing the entire Rideau this is not a consideration since half will be "down" and half will be "up".

If you are a photographer or videographer, going from Kingston to Ottawa will put the sun behind you (as you face forward) allowing for better photos.

How long does it take to paddle the Rideau?

How fast do you paddle? This is a question almost impossible to answer on a general basis. My cruising speed in a kayak (minimal stops) is about 5 kph, but my puttering speed (photo stops, pit stops, drifting breaks, snack breaks, lunch break, leg stretching breaks, etc.) is about 4 kph. A tandem canoe should be about the same. The direct distance along the route of the canal is 202 kilometres (if you don't take any side trips) and in addition the paddling, there are 24 lockstations to lock through or portage around. Many transit paddlers will end up doing in excess of 250 kilometres. A very general rule of thumb is to allow 6 to 10 days to do the journey. The Rideau contains 292 islands and 1,091 kilometres of shoreline in addition to several tributaries and feeder lakes – so you could spend as long as you like and still find new areas to explore.

How much does it cost to go through the locks?

You can portage around the locks for free or pay a fee and go through the locks. Parks Canada charges a fee by the foot (12 foot minimum). The following are based on 2018 fees. If you just want to go through one lock, it will cost $0.90 per foot. If you transit the entire system one way, a transit pass will cost you $4.65 per foot. There are various other options (one day, 6 day, season pass). So, if you're in a 16 foot canoe, a single lockage and return would cost $14.40, and a transit pass for the entire system would cost $74.40 (pretty inexpensive to save you all that portaging). For full fee information visit: www.rideau-info.com/canal/fees.html.

Can I portage the locks?

Certainly. Portaging is sometimes faster than locking through (depending on how much gear you have to lug) and provides more exercise (good opportunity to get out and stretch). Most of the lockstations have a paddler's dock (low-lying floating dock) at the lower and upper ends of the lock. Many have marked portage routes, although when portaging the longer lockstations, it is best to stop first and ask one of the lockstaff regarding the best route to take. Maps showing the portage routes at each lockstation are included in this guide. Of note, Parks Canada recommends that portaging **not** be done at Smiths Falls Detached, Smiths Falls Combined and Old Slys due to dangerous road crossings. Currently Parks Canada offers free lockage for paddlers at those locations.

Where can I make pit stops?

Washroom facilities are available at all the lockstations as well as parks, conservation areas, marinas and campgrounds. Of note with the lockstations is that the washrooms at some of these can be closed at night if no one is staying at the lockstation (something to be aware of if you arrive late). Answering the call of nature between these locations can be technically problematic since most of the land bordering the Rideau is privately owned. However, quite a bit of waterfront (almost 50%) and many islands remain undeveloped along the Rideau – so (and you never heard it from me) – if you have go, keep your eye out for an undeveloped spot. Please leave the area undisturbed.

Can I consume alcohol or cannabis (marijuana) while paddling?

No. The law in Ontario regarding alcohol and cannabis in any vessel (including canoes and kayaks) is the same as it is for a motor vehicle. If you're found to be impaired, your driver's licence will be automatically suspended for 90 days and you'll be subject to impaired "driving" penalties. Any liquor in a boat must be in a container that is unopened and the seal unbroken; or stored in a closed compartment. Cannabis must be in a closed or fastened container out of the reach of the paddler.

Where can I park my vehicle?

There are a number of options for vehicle parking. One option is a campground – some provide parking space for your vehicle while you are away on your trip. Contact the individual campground first. A listing of campgrounds can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/accommodations.html. Some marinas will also allow longer term parking. A listing with contact information for these can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/marinas.html

Another option is the lockstations, several offer weekly parking rates. However, be aware that the parking lots are unsupervised and Parks Canada does not recommend leaving your vehicle for extended periods.

Is there a pick-up/drop-off shuttle service?

I get asked this fairly often and don't have a good answer. My suggestion is to contact canoe/kayak rental places that advertise a pick-up/drop-off service for their own boats (i.e. Ahoy, Jenda) to see if they might do it for a person with their own canoe/kayak. Parks Canada may have more up to date information about this than I have – you can contact them by email: RideauCanal-info@pc.gc.ca.

How can I charge my electronic device(s)?

For those of you loaded up with electronic devices (smartphone, GPS, tablet, etc.), there is the issue of keeping them charged while on your trip. There is no official power available at lockstations to campers, but the washrooms do have power outlets (unsecured so you'll have to monitor your device(s) while on charge). Technology continues to evolve, but one of the best options to keep your devices fully powered is a portable battery pack (inexpensive, small, lightweight). These range in capacity, a 10,000 mAh battery for example (cost ~$20 in 2018) will supply about 3 to 4 full charges to a typical smartphone. You only have to charge the battery every so often. There are solar battery options, still fairly pricey for good ones and they are generally larger and heavier than a portable battery pack.

Can I rent a canoe/kayak?

Yes – there are a few options. Currently, canoes and kayaks can be rented from several places including Frontenac Outfitters, Jenda Watersports, Canal Gallery, Ahoy Rentals, Big Rideau Lake Boat Rentals, Perth Outfitters, and Trailhead. For more information visit their websites which you will find linked from the Canoes & Kayaks section on www.rideau-info.com/canal/boat_rent.html.

What should I bring to fully enjoy the Rideau experience?

The Rideau is not only a lovely waterway to paddle, it is also an historic waterway. For current information about the Rideau, the best guide is the *Rideau Boating and Road Guide*. To get the most about the history and heritage of the Rideau, a copy of Ken Watson's *"A History of the Rideau Lockstations"* is a must have, it provides an historic visitors guide to the locks. Ken's book *"The Rideau Route: Exploring the Pre-Canal Waterway"* is of interest to paddlers since it documents the early surveys of the Rideau (done using birch bark canoes). Other very interesting history books are Robert Legget's *"Rideau Waterway"* and Robert Passfield's *"Building the Rideau Canal: A Pictorial History"*. For a good read along the way, you may also wish to pick up a copy of Ken's *"Tales of the Rideau"* (17 non-fiction tales).

CAMPING ON THE RIDEAU CANAL

Where is the best place to camp?

The lockstations are the most convenient. Camping is allowed at 24 of the 26 lockstations (only Smiths Falls Combined and Ottawa don't have camping facilities), plus Colonel By Island. Camping at Old Slys and Hogs Back, while allowed, is not recommended. There is a fee for camping, either a mooring permit for your canoe/kayak or just a camping fee (most people prefer to pull their canoe/kayak out of the water and therefore pay the camping fee). A few lockstations also offer oTENTiks (a canvas covered A-frame cabin). Those are best reserved in advance, but are available on a by chance basis if you arrive during operational hours and one is available. Each oTENTik can sleep up to 6 people. There are also several private campgrounds along the Rideau that offer more facilities than available at the lockstations. In

addition, there are two provincial parks, Murphy's Point and Rideau River that offer camping options. For listings of private campgrounds, check the accommodations page at www.rideau-info.com/canal/accommodations.html.

Can I Reserve a Campsite at a Lockstation?

No, there are no reservations for camping spots at lockstations. You'll be pitching your tent on one of the lawns at the lockstation so there is always room.

What camping services are offered at lockstations?

All lockstations offer toilets, picnic tables and water. Many also offer BBQ grills and a few lockstations sell ice. Showers are offered at lockstations with oTENTiks (available to anyone with paid access to the Rideau Canal - lock pass, mooring pass or a camping pass). Camping usually involves pitching a tent on the lawn of the lockstation. Large shade trees are present at many lockstations. For more information on lockstation services see the chart on page 9 or go to: www.rideau-info.com/canal/lock-services.html. For information about camping at a lockstation see www.rideau-info.com/canal/lock-camping.html.

Are there non-camping options?

Yes – many B&Bs, motels, inns and lodges line the Rideau. Unfortunately at this time there is no indication of which of these will directly cater to the canoeist (i.e. offering a pull-out and overnight storage of canoe and gear), so it best to ask each potential accommodation directly. You can find listings of B&Bs and hotels on various tourism websites such as the Rideau Heritage Route Tourism Association: www.rideauheritageroute.ca.

Do I have to stock up on supplies?

No – there are many services available along the Rideau. There are several communities along the Rideau that have grocery stores within easy walking distance of a docking area so you can stock up on food, ice, drinks, etc. You'll find links to many of the towns, with maps and a listing of services from the maps page at: www.rideau-info.com/canal/maps.html. These are also listed in the individual section listings in this guide.

May I have an open fire while camping at a lockstation?

Only in the designated BBQ grill. You may burn charcoal or wood. If you plan to burn wood, you must bring your own since Parks Canada does not sell campfire wood or allow it to be cut or scavenged on site. If you bring your own wood they ask that it not be Ash because of the risk of importing the emerald ash borer insect.

May I use a camp stove?

Yes – using the appropriate fuel and following the manufacturer's safety guidelines.

May I drink alcohol at a lockstation?

No – the land (including wharfs) of a lockstation are considered to invite or allow public access and therefore no alcohol can be consumed on Rideau Canal property.

Where do I put my garbage?

All lockstations provide garbage cans (green barrels) and most also provide recycling options for aluminum and glass (blue barrels). Of note, Colonel By Island does not have garbage bins so you'll have to pack your garbage out if you stay there.

Are there any wildlife issues?

No. The most common wildlife in the vicinity of most lockstations are muskrats, raccoons, porcupines and the occasional skunk. Deer are common in the area but not often seen. Black bears, while present in some areas, are extremely uncommon (there has not been a bear sighting at a lockstation in recent years). There are some snakes, none are venomous and they all keep away from people. Normal wildlife precautions, such as keeping food in well sealed containers, cleaning your meal dishes, and properly disposing of garbage should be taken.

It's been reported that the Colonel By Island raccoon are experts at raiding food caches so make sure that yours is critter proof.

May I bring my pet?

Yes – however, while on the grounds of a lockstation, the pet should be:

a) restrained by a harness or a leash that is no longer than 3 m or

b) confined in a container or enclosure

and every person who is in charge of a pet shall ensure that any excrement or other solid waste that originates from the pet is disposed of in a receptacle. [Historic Canal Regulations]

OTHER

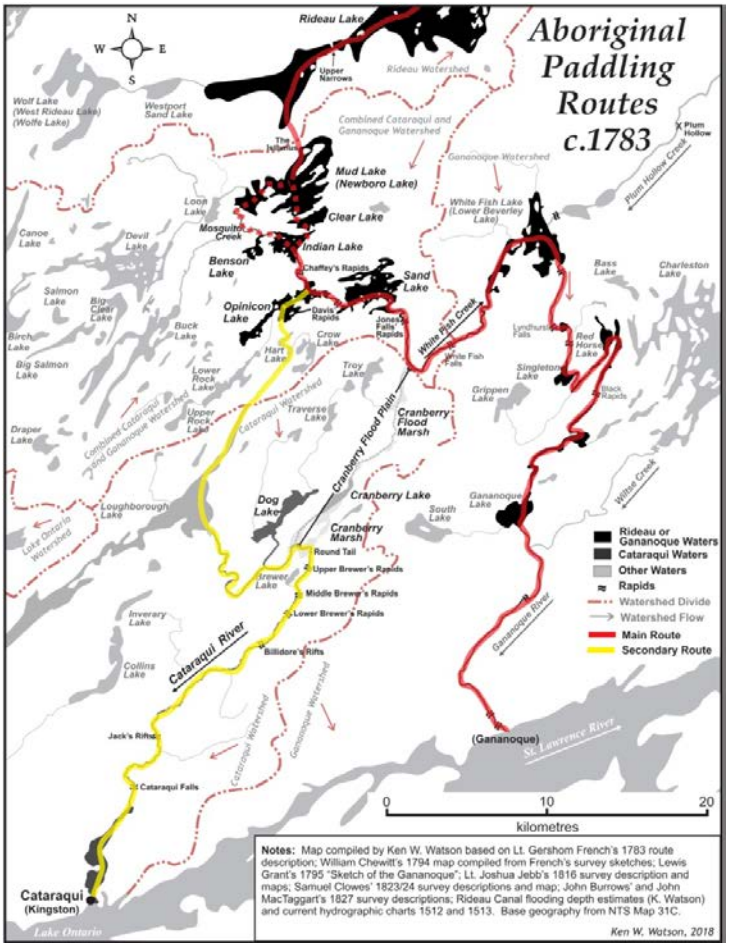
Can I go Swimming in the Rideau Canal

Yes – EXCEPT in the immediate vicinity of any lock and in the Ottawa section of the canal, from Hogs Back to the Ottawa Locks (swimming is prohibited in this entire section). Water quality (see Water Quality on page 14) is generally fine for swimming. The exception can be near public beaches at times (they will be posted). Please use common sense and don't swim in narrow boat channels (there are lots of spots to go swimming away from boat traffic).

AN HISTORIC PADDLEWAY

This section provides a brief overview of the history of paddling on the Rideau waterway, the early surveys and the man-made alterations that resulted in the paddling routes we have today.

The First Paddlers



You'll be paddling a waterway that has a paddling history stretching back to a time just after the last ice age. At its peak, 20,000 years ago, the Rideau area was covered with a 1.5 km (1 mile) thickness of ice and the entire topography was depressed from that weight by about 175 m (575 ft). The ice retreated about 13,000 years ago and by about 10,000 years ago the area had risen (isostatic rebound) above sea level revealing the topography we see today (lakes & rivers). There is some evidence of people, nomadic hunter-gatherers, using dug out canoes on the Rideau as far back as that time. By about 3,000 years ago, birch bark canoes started to replace dug-out canoes. These were much lighter than dug-out canoes and could be easily portaged.

Those people were using the Rideau region as seasonal hunting and gathering grounds. Campsites have been found all along the Rideau waterway. An archaeological investigated indigenous site on Lower Rideau Lake shows seasonal use from about 6,000 BCE to 1,100 AD. The Rideau corridor was also used as a travel way between the Ottawa Valley and the St. Lawrence River/Lake Ontario. The main route led from Ottawa to Gananoque, since the part of the Rideau today occupied by Whitefish and Cranberry lakes was not navigable by canoe at that time (there were no lakes, it was a forested area that was above water in the summer). That canoe route went from the Rideau River to the Rideau lakes to the White Fish River (Jones Falls to Lower Beverley Lake) and down the Gananoque River. The Cataraqui River, which at the time had its headwaters in Dog and Loughborough lakes, was used as a secondary southern route to the Rideau. That route went from Lake Ontario at Kingston, up the Cataraqui River to its headwaters in Loughborough Lake and from there to Hart Lake and then to Opinicon Lake on the Rideau.

The route was not as easy to travel as it is today, there were several portages around non-navigable rapids at places such as Ottawa, Merrickville, Smiths Falls, Chaffeys and Jones Falls, the latter two being long portages (over a kilometre in length). There was also a long portage over the watershed divide at Newboro (then known as the Isthmus) plus several portages along the Gananoque section such as at Whitefish Falls (Morton) and the Great Falls at Lyndhurst. The route from Kingston up the Cataraqui River to Loughborough and Hart lakes and then to Opinicon Lake also had many portages.

European Surveys

(full details of the main surveys can be found in my book, The Rideau Route. Uncredited quotes in this section have been taken from the Rideau Route).

R. du Rideau

A section from a 1713 map (based on an earlier 1703 map) that names the Rideau River. On the map, Frontenac (Fort Frontenac) is today's Kingston and Toniata is today's Brockville. The greenish area is Algonquin territory and the red is Iroquois territory (dividing line is near the watershed divide at Newboro). "Canada ou Nouvelle France Suivant les Nouvelles Observations" by Pieter van der Aa, 1713 – based on an earlier 1703 map by Guillaume De L'Isle – from www.raremaps.com

1613

The first European to see the Rideau may have been Etienne Brulé, who in 1610 expressed a desire to the great explorer, Samuel de Champlain, to go among the Algoumequins [Algonquins] to master their language and learn about the country they lived in. He did exactly that, returning in 1611 to tell Champlain what he found. We don't know the exact route he followed, but it was most likely up the Ottawa River, a route that Champlain would travel in 1613.

On Champlain's 1613 trip he described the twin Rideau falls as *"Where this river [Gatineau River] has its debouchure is another [Rideau River] coming from the south, at the mouth of which is a marvellous fall. For it descends a height of twenty or twenty-five fathoms with such impetuosity that it makes an arch nearly four hundred paces broad. The natives take pleasure in passing under it, not wetting themselves, except from the spray that is thrown off."* (from "Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604-1618", edited by W.L. Grant, 1907).

A bit later in his narrative he continues *"When the natives desire to enter the river they ascend the mountain, carrying their canoes, and go half a league by land. The neighbouring country is filled with all sorts of game, so that the natives often make a stop here. The Iroquois also go there sometimes and surprise them while making the passage."* Champlain was describing the portage along the northeast side of Rideau Falls and was also describing the tensions at the time between the Algonquins and Iroquois.

The twin falls where the Rideau River joined the Ottawa River had the appearance of a curtain, the word "rideau" in French. The name Rideau is generally attributed to Champlain. The name Rivière du Rideau started to appear on maps by about 1700.

1783

The first European survey of the Rideau Route was in 1783 by Lt. Gershom French. French, an American (born in 1753 in Southbury, Connecticut) was an Assistant Engineer with the Corps of Loyal Rangers, a loyalist unit (on the British side during the American Revolution). By this point in time it was known from local indigenous groups that there was a waterway connection between the Ottawa River and the St. Lawrence River via the Rideau River. French's survey party travelled in two birch bark canoes, with *"seven men of the Provincials, Two Canadians and an Indian as Guide."* Provincials were men of the Provincial Corps of the British Army and the Canadians were French-Canadians (voyageurs). Their native guide led them from the Ottawa River, up the Rideau River to the Rideau Lakes, then down through the south-central lakes, Newboro, Indian, Opinicon and Sand lakes. At this time, Sand Lake was the southernmost lake, from there the water went through the Jones Falls rapids which formed the head of the White Fish River. That river went through Morton Bay (then 7.6 m /25 ft lower) to Lower Beverley Lake and from there to Gananoque. Today's Morton Creek is the flooded remnant of the White Fish River.

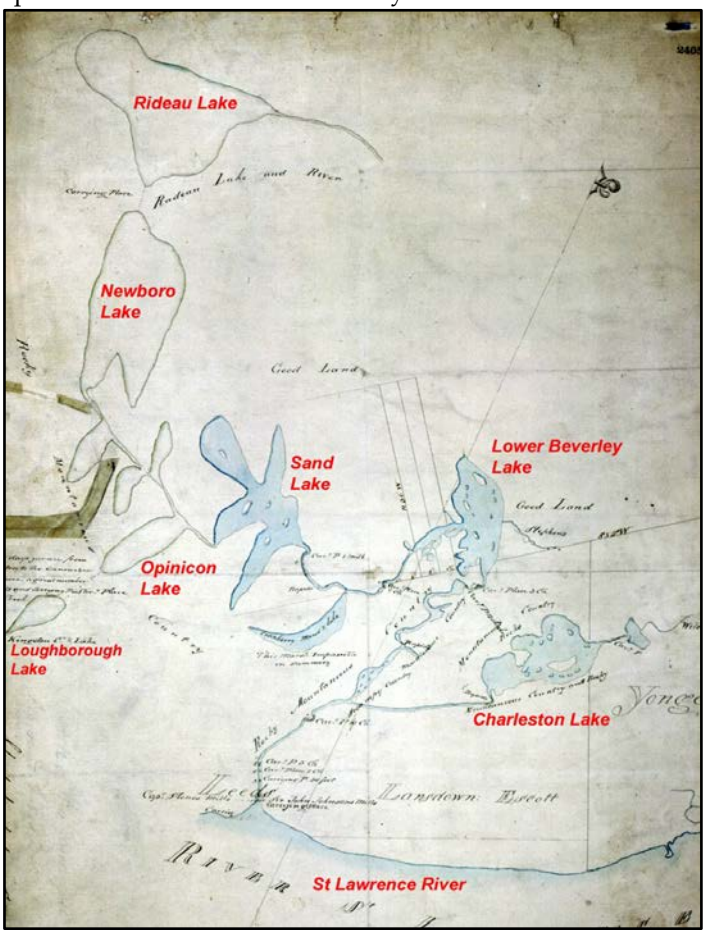
French wasn't looking for a navigation route, he was looking at the land on either side of the waterway in terms of settlement. Every so often he'd send a survey party to investigate the character of the land. He found good land along the Rideau River section, his description of the land on the lower Rideau River (Ottawa area) is *"it is a Dark Soil from 7 to 10 Inches Deep, with a Sandy Loam below, clear of Rocks and Stones, Timbered with Maple, Beech, Birch, Elm, Butternutt &c. with an Edging of Cedar and Pine always covering the Banks of the River."* However, as he travelled further south into the southern lakes section and down the Gananoque, he found rocky land unsuitable for cultivation *"the Lands laying in the Route is Intirely too rocky to Cultivate, the Timber is Pine, Cedar and Mountain Oak, the whole bad of its kind"* – he was on the rocky exposures of the Frontenac Axis (see Geology Section).

1795

In the late 1700s, townships were being surveyed in the Rideau region. These surveyors weren't investigating the route, but they were picking up the rivers and lakes where they were encountered with survey lines. One notable survey was on done by provincial surveyor, Lewis Grant, who was tasked with surveying what was to become Bastard Township (now part of the Township of Rideau Lakes) in 1795. Settlers were already in the area and a township needed to be created in order to grant them land.

Grant created a map which went from Gananoque to Sand Lake based on a scouting survey he did in 1795. It also showed some of the other lakes based on a native sketch. In addition, the map had a note about the secondary Cataraqui route, which stated, in part, *"a great number of rapids and carrying places. [portages]"* It also had an abbreviated sketch of the Cranberry Marsh (today's Whitefish and Cranberry lakes area) noting that it was impassable by canoe (due to the area being above water in the summer).

Major changes were about to come to the southern Rideau, changing watersheds and paddling routes, and it all started with twin brothers, Lemuel and Carey Haskins.



1795 Map of Gananoque to Rideau Lake

On this annotated (current lake names shown in red) section of Lewis Grant's 1795 map, the areas in blue are ones he explored – to quote "the parts in blue were sketched by me going up the river in a canoe". He's got Charleston Lake well mapped since he made a wrong turn as he headed up the Gananoque River and ended up in Charleston Lake rather than his original destination, Lower Beverley Lake. He notes that the other features were "taken from an Indian plan of the River Gananoque and adjacent country." The blobby lakes between Newboro Lake and Sand Lake most likely represent a route through what is today Mosquito Lake and Benson Lake rather than today's route via Clear Lake. He also notes that many of the rapids could be made navigable by clearing trees from the banks (to be able to line (tow) boats up or down the rapids), but that at Lyndhurst (Great Falls) and Morton (White Fish Falls) locks would be needed to provide navigation. Section from: "Sketch of the Ganonoque" by Lewis Grant, 17th June 1795, Archives of Ontario, AO 1532

c.1803

In about 1803, twin brothers, Lemuel and Carey Haskins decided to build a sawmill using the water power of White Fish Falls. They dammed the White Fish River at the head of the falls, very close to where the canal dam at Morton is today. But they had a problem. No matter how high the dam, they could only raise the water by about 2.1 m / 7 ft, they had an escape of water somewhere.

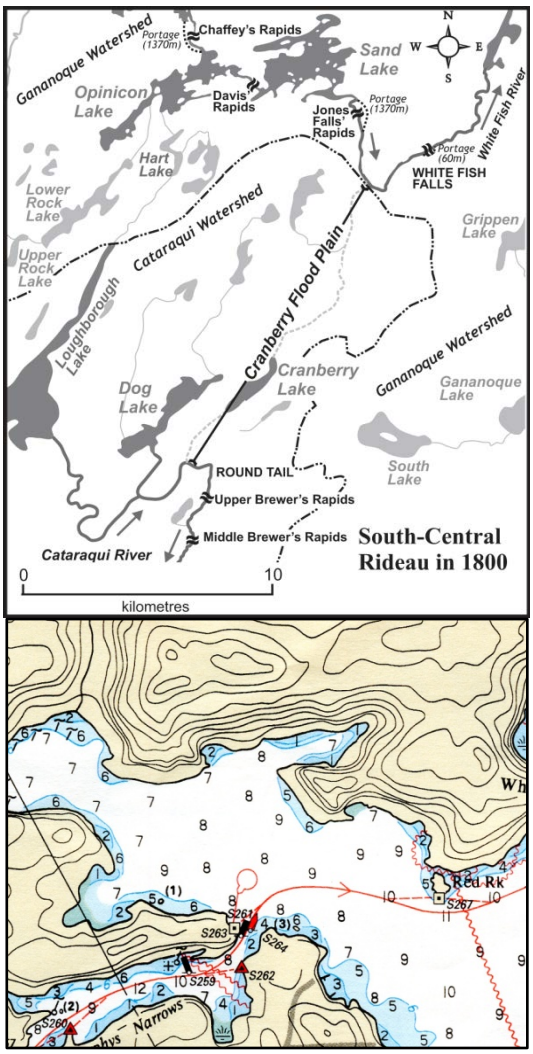
That escape turned out to be the Cranberry Flood Plain (aka Cranberry Marsh). Water backed up by the dam located at the foot of Morton Bay was now flowing over the Cranberry Flood Plain to join the Cataraqui River at the Round Tail, a narrow constriction above Upper Brewers.

So, to gain more head (water elevation), they built a dam at the Round Tail, raising the water there by about 1.8 m / 6 ft, resulting in about a 4 m /13 ft head of water on their dam at White Fish Falls. That flooding made the Cranberry Flood Plain navigable by canoe for the first time and provided a new direct connection between the Rideau lakes and the Cataraqui River. The route wound through large areas of drowned forest, which became known as the "Drowned Lands."

1816

The War of 1812 (war with the U.S. from 1812 to 1814) exposed the vulnerability of the British naval base at Kingston. That naval base was key to the defence of Lake Ontario, but supplying it via the St. Lawrence River was problematic since the U.S. bordered part of that route. The British looked for a safe backdoor route and they found it in the Ottawa River and the Rideau Route. But now they needed to investigate how to make that route navigable for larger bateaux (shallow draft boats/barges), which couldn't be easily portaged.

A young Royal Engineer, Lt. Joshua Jebb, was tasked with investigating the route, to see how it could be made navigable for boats drafting up to 0.9 m /3 ft. He did a full survey from Ottawa to Kingston, paddling the route we travel today, since the area from Jones Falls to Upper Brewers was now navigable by canoe thanks to the Haskins brothers' dams. Jebb also investigated a shortcut, the Irish Creek Route, which went up Irish Creek (just south of Merrickville) and over the watershed divide into Upper and then Lower Beverley lakes, returning to the Rideau Route in the Drowned Lands area (through Morton Bay to today's Whitefish Lake).



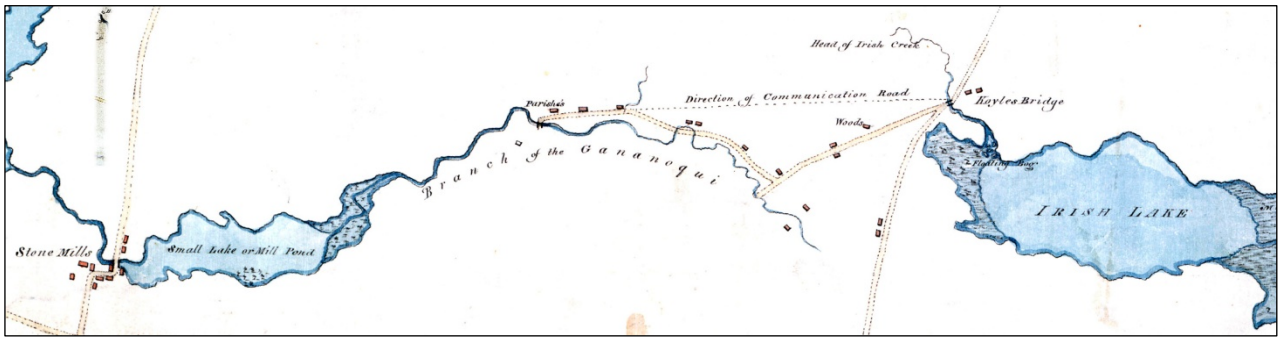
Cranberry Flood Plain

The upper map shows the pre-mill dam configuration of the watersheds in the lower section of the Rideau and the location of the Cranberry Flood Plain. Bathometry (lower map, western edge of Whitefish Lake) shows a flat bottom due to sediment infill. Water, carrying sediment, was flushed through this area during spring flooding and then the area was above water for the rest of the season. The region was mostly forested with black ash trees (wet ground tolerant).

In the hydrographic map you can also see the contrast between shoreline topography and the depth of the lake bottom. When boating through this area you'd think the water should be 30 m / 100 ft deep – but it's only 2.7 m / 9 ft. deep. The bedrock depth is much deeper than the sedimentary infilled lake bottom depth. Top map by Ken W. Watson. Bottom bathymetric map part of Sheet 4, Map 1513, Canadian Hydrographic Service.

Lt. Jebb preferred the Irish Creek Route over the route through the Rideau lakes since it was shorter. The fact that there was no water at the top of that route didn't deter Jebb, he planned an 8 km / 5 mi long railway to connect the Irish Creek area with the Beverley lakes area. Jebb noted that cargo and people could be offloaded from a boat, railed across the watershed divide and then loaded into a boat on the other side.

Jebb notes the Round Tail dam in his survey report, indicating it raised the water over the Cranberry Flood Plain by 1.8 m / 6 ft.



The Irish Creek Route

A section of Joshua Jebb's 1816 map showing his Irish Creek Route. On the left is Upper Beverley Lake (Stone Mills is today's Delta) and on the right is Irish Creek. His "Direction of Communication Road" is his proposed line for his railway over the watershed divide (between the Rideau River watershed and the Gananoque River watershed). From "Plan of the Water Communication from Kingston to the Grand River" by Lt. J. Jebb, July 8, 1816, Library and Archives of Canada, NMC 21941 2/3.

1823-24

The route was now well documented from Jebb's 1816 survey, but only for boats drafting 3 feet or less. In 1821 the legislature of Upper Canada (Ontario) decided to investigate inland navigation, including the Rideau route. Civilian surveyor Samuel Clowes was tasked with this and in 1823 and 1824 he surveyed the Rideau Route. He was tasked with surveying and costing out a canal with depths of 4, 5 and 7 feet (3 cost estimates based on those depths). The first thing Clowes did was to discount the Irish Creek Route since there was no water in the top part of that route in contrast with the route via the Rideau Lakes where the top of the route was a lake (Rideau Lake).

Clowes was surveying for a standard type of canal, one with tow paths, designed for boats that were manually propelled (sail, poles, paddles). This was the common canal model of the era, a path along the canal where a draft animal would pull barges along the canal. His survey reports are less than clear on how he proposed to run a tow path around the lakes. He also advocated the standard canal building technique of the day, cutting canal channels around rapids. His report did however note one exception to this method.

In the area of the drowned lands he noted that 16 km / 10 mi of navigation had been achieved by simply flooding the area (the Haskins brothers' dams at White Fish Falls and the Round Tail). He recognized the huge cost saving of providing navigation by flooding compared to the challenges that would be encountered if trying to dig a ditch through this area. *"Very formidable difficulties would be encountered in attempting to cut through the marshy land, it is now proposed to drown, …"*. This technique of building dams to drown rapids and land in order to create a navigation depth of water is known as the slackwater system. Part of the Rideau Canal's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site is that *"The Rideau*

Canal remains the best preserved example of a slackwater canal in North America demonstrating the use of European slackwater technology in North America on a large scale." (part of UNESCO's designation statement)

1826-1827

First Camp, 1826

This painting, attributed to Lt. Colonel John By, shows his camp on the Ottawa River after his arrival in the area in the fall of 1826. He travelled by water from Montréal using French-Canadian voyageurs as paddlers in medium sized birch bark canoes. First Camp, By-Town, 1826 by John By. McCord Museum, M386.

When British Royal Engineer, Lt. Colonel John By, arrived in the Ottawa area in September 1826, he was already planning the Rideau to be done in its entirety as a slackwater canal. Military vessels were now being powered by steam and steamboats didn't need tow paths. Steamboats also replaced draft animals in the role of towing barges. Colonel By wanted to build a steamboat canal and he was going to do it by building dams and drowning rapids. This technique couldn't be used on big rivers such as the Ottawa or St. Lawrence, but the Rideau, White Fish and Cataraqui rivers were small enough to be dammed with the dam building techniques of the day. It was a faster and less expensive technique than trying to excavate canal cuts. As one of the British surveyors, John MacTaggart noted, the hard rock along the route *"defies the strength of gunpowder or crow-bars to remove it, and would weary the British treasury with expenses."* (quote from Three Years in Canada by John MacTaggart, 1829).

At this point in time the surveyors were using larger birch bark canoes paddled by French-Canadian voyageurs. They'd get up at dawn and paddle until they camped at the end of the day. To keep spirits up and to maintain a constant paddling rhythm, they'd sing songs as they paddled. On one survey trip (May 1827), surveyor John Burrows noted that as it was turning to dusk they were still 8 miles short of their intended destination *"Rum renewed the men and, singing, pulling and striving for the lead of canoes, on we went …"* (quote from surveyor John Burrows in Sights and Surveys by Edwin Welch).

In the fall of 1826, Colonel By did his first trip along the Rideau, in the company of surveyor Samuel Clowes, using voyageur canoes paddled by French-Canadian voyageurs. In 1827, British Royal Engineers, along with the Clerk of the Works John MacTaggart and surveyor John Burrows, did surveys of the route of the canal. These were very cursory, they were mainly looking at the navigation impediments (rapids) and working out the methods by which these would be made navigable. No new

map showing the overall waterway was done – Colonel By generally used Jebb's 1816 map as the base map for his maps of the proposed Rideau Canal.

Voyageur Canoe on Upper Rideau Lake in 1830

These large birch bark voyageur canoes were used to transport people and goods during the building of the Rideau Canal. In this 1830 painting we can see the voyageurs dressed in their typical dress, including a wool cap and a red sash around their waist. The three gentlemen in the middle (one with the gun shooting at ducks) are British Royal Engineering staff (one is likely the artist, Thomas Burrowes) Upper Rideau Lake:- from the North side of the Isthmus, by Thomas Burrowes, 1830. Archives of Ontario, C 1-0-0-0-34.

1832+

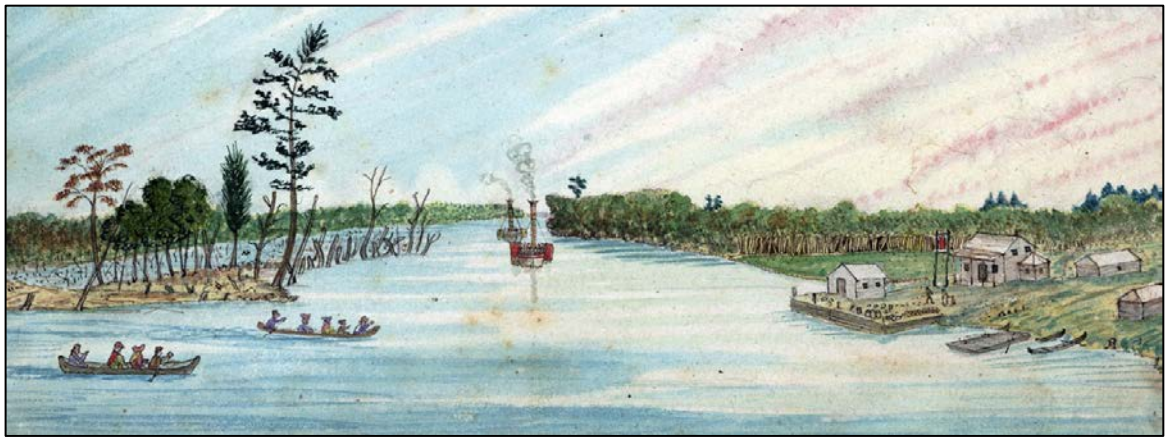
In late 1831, all the dams were completed, raising the water levels to what we see today. The Rideau Canal was opened to full navigation in July 1832 (the first steamboat trip of the entire route was in May 1832, but several locks were still having the finishing touches completed).

Every section of the Rideau was flooded by this slackwater technique, with increases in water elevations ranging from 1.8 to 14 m / 6 to 45 ft. The southern Rideau showed the most extreme changes, previous forested areas, now became lakes (Colonel By, River Styx, Cranberry & Whitefish). For instance, the canal dam at Kingston Mill (at the head of Cataraqui Falls) raised the water in that area by 7.9 m / 26 ft, creating two new lakes, Colonel By Lake and River Styx and flooding all the way to the lock at Lower Brewers. The mill dam at the Round Tail which raised the water there by 1.8 m / 6 ft was replaced by a canal dam at Upper Brewers, raising the water there by 5.5 m / 18 ft, flooding all the way to Jones Falls and creating greatly expanded Cranberry and Dog lakes and new lakes, Little Cranberry and Whitefish lakes.

In the northern part of the Rideau, the rapids along the Rideau River were, for the most part, drowned. An interesting example is at Hogs Back, the location where the canal from the Ottawa River joins the Rideau River. The dam here (which fell down three times during construction) raised the water in the Rideau River by 12.5m / 41 ft. That location used to be known as Three Rock Rapids which had a fall of about 1.8m / 6 ft over a distance of 600 m / 2,000 ft. There was no portage at these rapids in the pre-canal era, canoes were hauled up the rapids. Surveyor John Burrows provides a description *"… over shoals and rapids the canoes were to be lifted, while the passengers waded – at times dropping off large stones up to the armpits in water"* (from Sights & Surveys by Edwin Welch). Today's falls are man-made due to the 12.5m / 41 ft rise of water created by the dam at Hogs Back. But if you go down below those falls, you can still see the lower part of the original Three Rock Rapids.

Traditional native use of the waterway (hunting and gathering) continued during and after the building of the Rideau Canal. The early lock records show many instances of "passing Indian canoes" – those

references faded as land along the Rideau was developed into farmland, eliminating native hunting and gathering opportunities. Early settlers tended to use dug-out canoes since they could make these themselves. The invention of the canvas canoe brought canoes to the masses – we see these being paddled on the Rideau by the late 1800s.



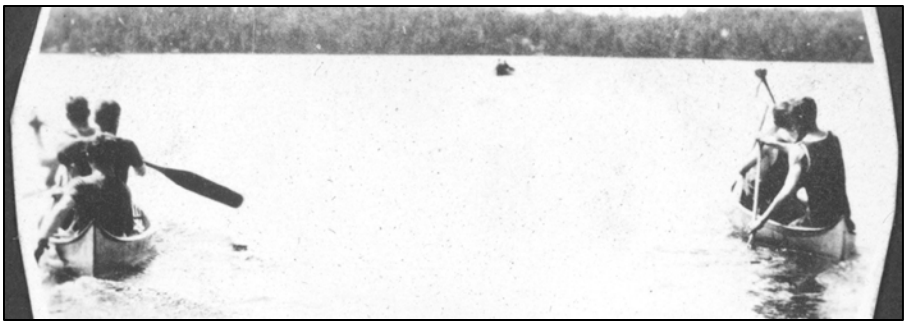
Becketts Landing in 1835

In this image we see local settlers paddling across the Rideau River in dugout canoes. In the background are steamboats (side paddlers) that were plying the Rideau at that time. Section from "Beckett's Landing & Ferry, Long Island Reach or stillwater, looking towards Long Island, Bytown, &c." by Thomas Burrowes, 1835, Archives of Ontario, I0002140

1860+

The recreational canoe we know today was invented in 1856 in Peterborough by John Stephenson who got tired of lugging a 200 pound dug-out canoe on camping trips and figured that there had to be a better way. He created a lighter weight canoe made of planks known as the planked dugout or board canoe. He sold these as fast as they could be made in his carpentry shops in Peterborough. These were made from cedar, basswood or butternut and light enough that they could be easily paddled or portaged.

The more affordable wood-canvas canoe was developed in the early 1870s. E.H. Gerrish of Maine is credited with being the first person to commercially sell these, starting in about 1878. By the end of the century, companies such as the Chestnut Canoe Company in New Brunswick and the Old Town Canoe Company in Maine were bringing wood-canvas canoes to the masses.



Paddling Indian Lake c.1917-18

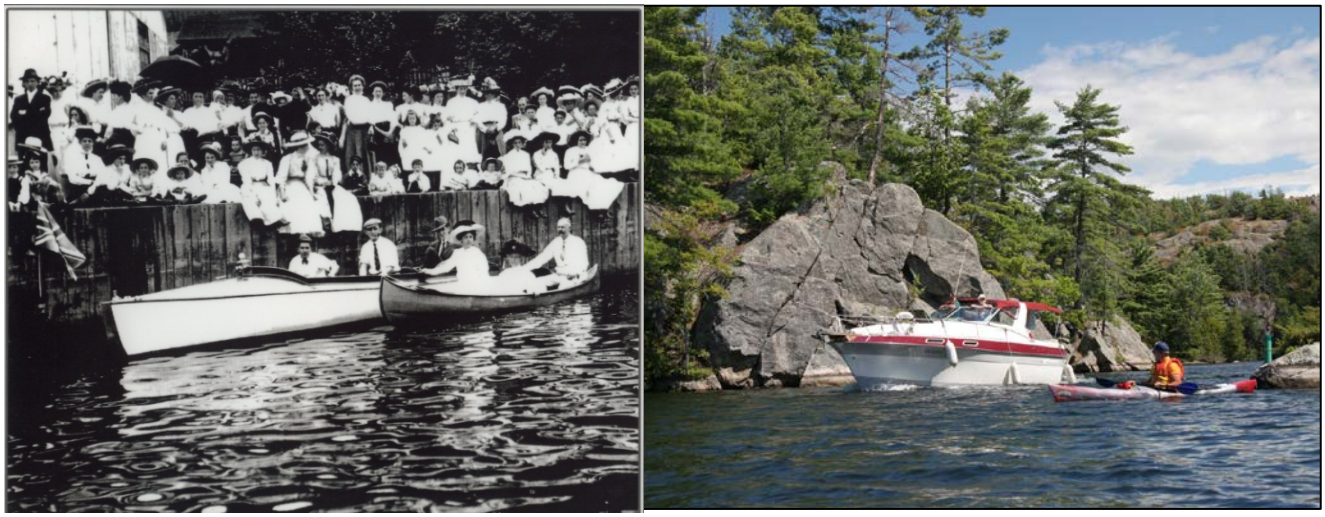
These are WWI soldiers enjoying a paddle on Indian Lake. During WWI, a hospital to house convalescing soldiers was built on Fettercairn Island (known today as Richardson Island), located on Indian Lake near Chaffeys Lock. Soldiers would arrived at Chaffeys by train and then be transported by boat to the island. The purpose was to allow them to recover in the peace and beauty of the Rideau. Recreational activities included canoeing. Rideau Lakes Library collection, RLPL002261458f

It was also in the late 1800s that we seen cottage development along the Rideau, starting as early as the 1870s. Then, as today, many cottage owners had a canoe (rowing skiffs were also very popular at the time). Camping along the Rideau was also popular, locals using skiffs, canoes and the newly developed power boats to take them to their favourite camping spot.

While there were adventuresome spirits who would transit the Rideau Canal, paddling remained a generally local activity on the Rideau for much of the 20th century. This started to change in the 1990s as longer distance recreational paddling became more popular and now included the use of kayaks which are very well suited to paddling the Rideau Canal. With the availability of camping (pitching a tent) at most lockstations, the Rideau started to become known as an easy paddling route for either weekend trips or days long paddling of the route.

In 2009/10, Parks Canada made the Rideau Canal much more paddling friendly by installing official paddling docks with established portage routes at all the lockstations. It was also in 2009/10 that I developed 18 day paddling guides covering the Rideau from Kingston to Ottawa, which I had (and still have) as individual website pages. In 2012 I amalgamated those into this document, a single paddling guide to the entire Rideau Canal (since I was getting emails from people complaining about having to print out 18 individual guides).

This history of paddling the Rideau section of the guide was added in 2018 to give you, the paddler, a sense of your place in Rideau paddling history. You're following a very long tradition of paddling this area. Enjoy!



Sharing the Waters – 1905 and Today

Power boats and paddlers have been sharing the waterway for well over a hundred years. The photo on the left, taken in the Tay Basin (Perth) in 1905, shows a power launch and a wood-canvas canoe. The photo on the right shows a cruiser and kayak at the entrance to Morton Bay. 1905 image from the Perth Museum Collection. Contemporary photo taken by the author at the entrance to Morton Bay (Whitefish Lake).

DETAILED PADDLING GUIDES

This guide is divided into 18 sections, each with its own detailed map. These go south to north so Section 1 starts in Kingston and Section 18 ends in Ottawa.

Each section contains a detailed write-up plus maps of each lockstation. The route maps have been grouped together at the end of the write-ups for easier use when paddling the route and to make it easier to print out all the maps.

See the index map on next page for a visual location of each section.


N
W
E
S
Ottawa River
Gatineau (Hull)
OTTAWA
Ottawa
Hartwells
Hogs Back
Black Rapids
Long Island
Manotick
Kars
Rideau River
Kemptville
Burritts Rapids
Nicholsons
Clowes
Merrickville
Smiths Falls
Old Slys
Kilmarnock
Poonamalie
Perth
Tay Canal
Beveridges
Rideau Ferry
Lower Rideau Lake
Edmunds
Big Rideau Lake
Narrows
Upper Rideau Lake
Portland
Westport
Newboro
Newboro Lake
Clear
Indian
Elgin
Delta
Chaffeys
Sand Lake
Lyndhurst
Opinicon Lake
Jones Falls
Davis
Morton
Whitefish Lake
Charleston Lake
Brockville
Seeleys Bay
Little Cranberry Lake
Loughborough Lake
Cranberry Lake
Dog Lake
Upper Brewers
Lower Brewers
River Styx
Cataraqui River
Gananoque
U.S.A.
St. Lawrence River
Colonel By Lake
Kingston Mills
KINGSTON
Lake Ontario
Rideau Canal
World Heritage Site
Ontario, Canada
Paddling
Maps
Index
= Town
= Lockstation
= Rideau Canal
= Other Water
10 = Paddling Map Number
1
2
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18
0 kilometres 20
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©2012 Ken W. Watson - www.rideau-info.com

The Strauss trunnion bascule lift bridge on the Lasalle Causeway that marks the southern end of the Rideau Canal

SECTION 1: Kingston to Kingston Mills Locks

This area is bounded by the City of Kingston at the south end (the Lasalle Causeway marks the southern limit of the Rideau Canal) and the lower end of Colonel By Lake to the north. It includes Cataraqui Bay – the foot of the Cataraqui River. The southern area (south of the Lasalle Causeway) has exposed open water and is subject to wave action so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should ensure that they do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out.

Water Access

At the south end, the quietest access is the small concrete ramp (44° 14.550'N - 76° 28.790' W) in **Emma Martin Park** (formerly Orchard Park) at the foot of Cataraqui Street in Kingston. It's located adjacent to the Cataraqui Canoe Club. There is also the public ramp at the foot of **West Street** (44° 13.430'N - 76° 29.140'W), but the caveat with this is that you're putting into Lake Ontario which can have severe waves. There are also several marinas in this area; Rideau Marina, Kingston Marina and Confederation Basin Marina.

At the north end, there is the **Kingston Mill Locks** – although a portage will be required to either the top or bottom of the locks from the parking area. You can also put into Colonel By Lake at the beach or ramp at **Rideau Acres Campground** (44° 18.440'N - 76° 25.560'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also campgrounds, B&Bs and hotels/motels in Kingston. For information about local accommodations see: www.tourism.kingstoncanada.com and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is Kingston (full services).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Lasalle Causeway to Kingston Mills along navigation channel: 6.9 km (4.3 mi)
- Cataraqui Bay (Lasalle Causeway to Kingston Mills) circumference: 18 km (11.2 mi).

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Cataraqui River

Lasalle Causeway to Kingston Mills Locks

In the pre-canal era this area was much the same geographically as it is now, the outflow of the Cataraqui River through marshland. Some of the geography is affected by the rise and fall of Lake Ontario, which since 1918 has shown a fluctuation of 4.6 feet / 1.4 m (which is close to the 4 foot / 1.2 m fluctuation of the lake noted by surveyor Samuel Clowes in 1824). There was some minor deepening of shoals during the construction the canal.

Belle Island (originally Bell Island) was a height of land in a swampy area – much of that swampy peninsula (a golf course today) has been filled – but the originally outline remains mostly unchanged. The outer end of the point is a park (Cataraqui Park).

One of the earliest detailed maps we have of this area, Joshua Jebb's 1816 map, shows essentially what you will be paddling through today.

An interesting geographic feature in this area is the southern limit, on the Rideau Canal, of the Frontenac Axis, a neck of the Canadian Shield (very old metamorphic and intrusive rocks). This is located just south of Kingston Mills and you'll see it as a significant topographic change caused by exposures of granite and syenite just north of Highway 401.

In the southern section of the Cataraqui you'll see a fair bit of urban development on or near the shoreline but as you paddle north this changes into natural shorelines (marshlands).

Route Suggestions

The only suggestion, other than your own putterings, is to make sure to take a poke up the river to see Cataraqui Falls. When you come to the foot of the locks at Kingston Mills, stay in the river (bearing east/right), head under the railway bridge and paddle up to the falls (only 300 m / 1,000 ft from the locks).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 1 for locations)

Kingston: Known as the Limestone City for its many stone buildings, Kingston has many attractions. It's worth taking a wander through the downtown, starting with Confederation Park on the waterfront.

Kingston, in particular the naval harbour, was the reason for building the Rideau Canal. Kingston was found to be potentially vulnerable to not being supplied with men and materials during the War of 1812 (war with the U.S.) since the supply route, from Montreal to Kingston, up the St. Lawrence River, was in

range of American guns. So the Rideau Canal was proposed (and eventually built) to create a safe supply route from Montreal to Kingston.

For details about Kingston visit the many Kingston websites.

Kingston Harbour: If you're in a kayak or a good canoeist (or it's a calm day) it's certainly worth a tour of the Kingston waterfront – to see Kingston and Fort Henry from the water. Check the weather before you do this. Early morning is usually best since wave action often increases as the day progresses.

Fort Henry: This fort was built to protect the naval harbour in Kingston. Today's fort and the four associated Martello towers were built between 1832 and 1837 and are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site that includes the Rideau Canal. The fort seen today replaced a much smaller fort originally built during the War of 1812. Fort Henry was garrisoned firstly by British troops and then by Canadian troops until 1891. In 1936 the first restoration project was done on the fort and it was opened as a public museum in 1938. It remains one of Kingston's most popular tourist attractions – visit www.forthenry.com for full details.

LaSalle Causeway: The LaSalle Causeway marks the southern limit of the Rideau Canal. The most prominent feature of the causeway is the Strauss trunnion bascule lift bridge, built in 1915-16. Paddlers can easily slip under the bridge. There is also a channel on the east side for small boats which has a clearance of 4.3 m / 14 ft. The earliest bridge in this location may date to 1819 but the first documented bridge dates to 1829, a wooden bridge on masonry piers with a draw bridge at the west end (later replaced by a swing bridge). The causeway, opened in 1917, has three bridges, one at each end and the bascule lift bridge in the centre. The end bridges, originally steel truss bridges, were replaced with concrete beam bridges, the east bridge in 1962 and the west end bridge in 1993.

The LaSalle Causeway is named after René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, a French explorer who oversaw the construction of Fort Frontenac in 1673 (area to the western (downtown) side of the causeway).

Cataraqui Bay: There are urbanized shorelines until you get north of Belle Island (originally called "Bell Island"). The west side of the river from this point north features extensive marshlands.

Third Crossing Bridge: Construction on this new bridge is scheduled to start in 2019. It presently has the name "third crossing" since it's the third bridge (after the Lasalle Causeway and the Highway 401 bridge) to crossing the Cataraqui River/Bay in this area. It will likely be given a new name upon completion.

Highway 401 Bridge: This is a fixed high level (6.7 m / 22 ft) bridge which carries Highway 401 across the Rideau Canal. It was built in the late 1950s (lane expanded in 2017-2020).

Frontenac Axis: Just north of the Highway 401 Bridge you'll see the topography start to change, with granitic outcrops marking the southern edge of the Frontenac Axis. These are very old rocks, originally formed 1.35 to 1.06 billion years ago (Precambrian: middle to late Proterozoic age) and then deformed and metamorphosed 900 million years ago. These rocks are part of the Canadian Shield. The rock types that you'll be able see as you travel through the Frontenac Axis include granite, syenite, monzonite, migmatite, gabbro, quartzite, marble, gneiss, pegmatite and conglomerate. Many of the lakes are underlain by marble (crystalline limestone) which provides some buffering against acid rain. This neck (axis) of rocks connects the extensive area of the Canadian Shield to the north and the Adirondack mountains to the south. On the Rideau, the Frontenac Axis extends to the northern part of Big Rideau Lake. On either side of the Frontenac Axis are younger, 520 to 460 million year old (Paleozoic: Cambrian

to Lower Ordovician age) rocks including limestones, sandstones, dolomites and shales (laid down in a shallow sea that covered this area at that time). For more information see the Geology section.

Kingston Mills Railway Bridge: The first railway bridge, a wooden bridge, was built by the Grand Trunk Railway in 1855. In 1890 it was rebuilt as a steel bridge with a double track and in 1924 the pier stands were rebuilt with concrete. It is presently owned and used by the CNR.

Cataraqui Falls: The hard granitic rocks of the Frontenac Axis in this area are the reason for the Cataraqui Falls, the lower part of which can still be seen today (the dam, basin and power dam cover the upper part of the falls). A native portage used to lead around the falls for paddlers travelling along the Cataraqui River. These falls, which originally had a drop of about 20 feet (6.1 m), were the site of the first mills in the area, the King's Mills, built in 1784. A succession of both timber mills (1794-1863) and grist mills (1794-1904) were built and used here. In 1913-14, the hydro generating station that can be seen today was installed.

Kingston Mills Lockstation: See description in next section.

SECTION 2: Kingston Mills Locks to Lower Brewers Lock

(includes Colonel By Lake and River Styx)

Taking a break on River Styx

This area is bounded by Kingston Mills Lockstation to the south and the head of River Styx to the north. It includes all of Colonel By Lake and River Styx. Both lakes are open and subject to wave action so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should ensure that they do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out on these lakes.

Water Access

Colonel By Lake: The lake can be accessed from either **Kingston Mills Lockstation** (portage from the parking area to the dock at the head of the locks) or the beach or ramp at **Rideau Acres Campground** (44° 18.440'N - 76° 25.560'W). It is recommended that Rideau Acres Campground be used for those wishing to leave their vehicle overnight.

River Styx: The lake can be accessed from **Lower Brewers Lock** (2.6 km / 1.6 mi to the north of River Styx). A short portage from the parking area is required to bring boats to the lower dock.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There is also a campground and few B&Bs (Kingston). For information about local accommodations see: www.rideauheritageroute.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/

Supplies: A local source for supplies is Kingston (full services) or Seeleys Bay (grocery, some hardware).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Kingston Mills to top of River Styx along navigation channel: 13.1 km (8.1 mi)

- Kingston Mills to Lower Brewers Lock along navigation channel: 15.7 km (9.7 mi)
- Colonel By Lake circumference: 22 km (13.7 mi)
- River Styx circumference: 24 km (14.9 mi).

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Colonel By Lake

In the pre-canal era this was a meandering section of the Cataraqui River which wound its way to Cataraqui Falls (location of Kingston Mills Lockstation). The damming of the river at Cataraqui Falls with the building of the first mills in 1784 created the initial lake – a mill pond that extended to just south of Caseys Island. The lake was expanded to its current size with the completion of canal dam and extensive berms at Kingston Mills in 1831. This raised the water level at this end of the lake by 26 feet (7.9 m).

The lake is shallow, the deepest point is 25 feet (7.6 m) and the lake averages about 10 to 15 feet (3.0 to 4.6 m). The shallow nature of the lake and the fact that it's at the lower end of the watershed means that it is nutrient loaded, the water normally being green (algae). A potential hazard located outside of the marked navigation channel are stumps (drowned trees), mostly in the northern part of the lake, with the tops just a few inches below the water at normal navigation level. Shallow drafting vessels such as canoes and kayaks will normally not have any problems with these except in times of low water. The green algae in the water make the stumps very hard to see.

The land bordering the lake is privately owned except for the federal lands around the lock. Much of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

River Styx

Similar to Colonel By Lake, this was a meandering section of the Cataraqui River that was drowned by the raising of the canal dam and berms at Kingston Mills. After the opening of the canal in 1832, this region and Colonel By Lake were collectively known as the "Drowned Lands." The area of River Styx had been a standing forest, the navigation channel was chopped out and the rest of the forest drowned. An 1851 painting shows it as "River Sticks (Styx)" but by the early 20th century is was known solely as River Styx.

It is a very shallow lake, it averages only 7 to 10 feet (2 to 3 m) deep in the navigation channel.

The lands bordering the lake, with the exception of the federal lands of Joyceville Institution (a medium security penitentiary) are privately owned. Most of the lake is surrounded by farmland with a few areas of moderate density cottage/summer home development.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 2 for locations)

Kingston Mills Lockstation: This lockstation features four locks, three in-flight and a detached lock. The total lift is 48.0 feet (14.6 m). The lockmaster's house (Robert Anglin House) now serves as a visitor's centre for the locks. The small blockhouse dates to 1832 and is one of only four built along the Rideau. It has been restored to the military period and is sometimes open with an interpreter [closed by Parks Canada in 2012 due to budget cuts].

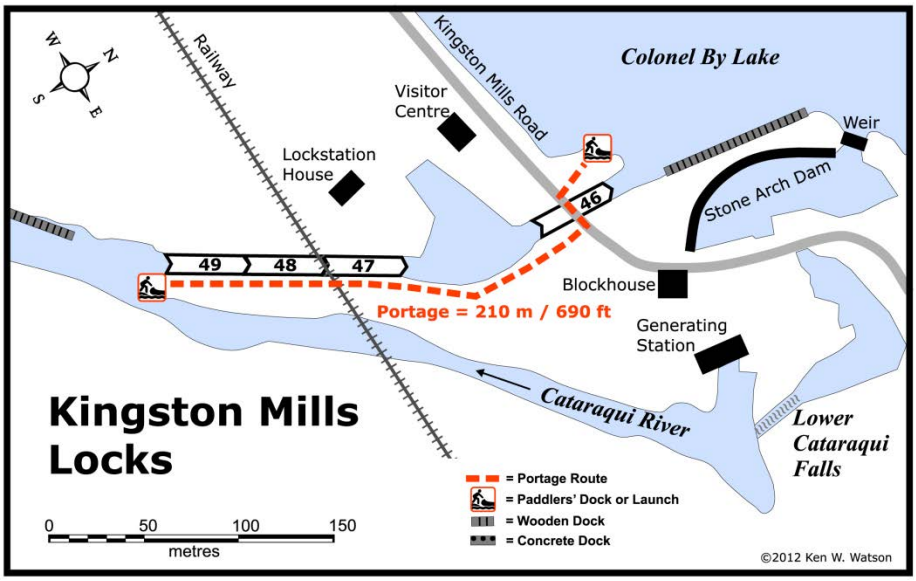
An interesting configuration at Kingston Mills is the basin formed by the old dam and the new dam. Originally there was just the stone dam with incorporated waste water weir (sitting on the bedrock head of Cataraqui Falls). When it was proposed to add a hydro generating station in 1913, a new concrete dam was built below the stone dam – this formed the basin. The configuration is such that the Rideau Canal (Parks Canada) maintains full control the water flow (via their weir).

Note too the large berms (rebuilt in 2004) to both the east and west of the locks. Originally, two locks were going to be placed farther upstream (at Jack's Rifts and Billidore's Rifts), but as with all the lockstations, plans had to be changed to meet conditions. It was decided to put all the locks at Kingston Mills and raised the water from here all the way to Lower Brewers. This meant creating these large embankments (berms) to help impound the water.

The original bridge across the upper lock was a double leaf timber drawbridge built in 1831. It was replaced some time later by a wooden swing bridge (easier to use than a drawbridge). In 1956 a steel through plate girder swing bridge was installed. That bridge was replaced by another steel swing bridge in 1988. This bridge was rehabilitation in the fall/winter of 2016-17.

The first bridge at Kingston Mills was a fixed timber bridge, placed across Cataraqui Falls, when the Kingston-Montreal road was completed in about 1801. In 1909 a steel bridge was built to replace the previous wooden structure. This fixed bridge was replaced during the fall/winter of 2016/17.

The railway bridge that crosses the locks was first constructed by the Grand Trunk Railroad as a wooden bridge in 1855. In 1890 it was rebuilt as a steel bridge with a double track and in 1924 the pier stands were rebuilt with concrete. It is presently owned and used by the CNR.



The locks bypass Cataraqui Falls of which only the lower portion is visible today (the canal dam is built on the head of the falls). A native portage used to lead around the falls. These falls, which originally had a drop of about 20 feet (6.1 m), were the site of the first mills in the area, the King's Mills, built in 1784. A succession of both timber mills (1794-1863) and grist mills (1794-1904) were built and used here.

Colonel By Lake: The west side of this man-made lake is mostly undeveloped (farm frontage) while the east side has cottage and summer home development – so you'll find the best wildlife viewing opportunities along the west shoreline. The foot of the channel at the head of the lake (Harriet Point) is the location of Jack's Rifts – a small set of rapids (now drowned) where a lock was originally proposed.

Colonel By Lake Stumps: If you're off the navigation channel in the northern part of the lake, you may notice some stumps sitting a few inches underwater. These are what are left of the forests of the region, which were drowned when the water was raised with the building of the locks, dam and embankments at Kingston Mills. These are still rooted trees, if you're carrying the navigation charts you'll be able to see how tall these are (if you see a stump in 20 feet of water, you're looking at the top of a 20 foot tree trunk).

When the Rideau Canal was built, Colonel By had a wide (about 60 m / 200 ft) swath cut through the existing forest in the vicinity of the Cataraqui River between Kingston Mills and Upper Brewers before the area was flooded. This cut path followed a much straighter line than the meandering river and this is what today's buoyed navigation way represents. Canal era maps show this cleared route in relation to the original meandering river. The forests on either side of this cleared channel were simply drowned.

Most of these and other stumps that you will see in standing water on the Rideau Canal date to about 1831, when the canal dams were completed and the area above those dams flooded. If the tree was 100 years old when flooded, then you're looking at a tree stump that started off as a sapling in 1731.

In the case of Colonel By Lake, the original mill dam (for the King's Mills and subsequent timber and grist mills) flooded the Cataraqui River and surrounding forest up to the area of Caseys Island, starting in 1784. So, some of the stumps in that area may date back to that time. Originally they were full size dead trees. A few were cut but most have simply been broken or rotted off at the water/ice line.

A painting showing River Styx in 1844 shows a forest of dead standing timber, many with either an Osprey or Great Blue Heron's nest near the top. Herons in particular prefer to make a nest at the top of a dead standing tree, there are still heron rookeries (nesting areas) today in swampy areas with dead trees bordering the Rideau Canal.

Jack's Rifts: The foot of the channel between River Styx and Colonel By Lake (Harriet Point) is the location of Jack's Rifts – a small set of rapids where a lock was originally proposed. These rapids were drowned by the water raised by the canal dam and berms at Kingston Mills.

River Styx: Much of the shoreline of this man-made lake is undeveloped (farm frontage). Keep your eye out for Green Herons, a colourful smaller member of the heron family. As with Colonel By Lake, you may see stumps off the navigation channel, remains of the drowned forest, and the reason for the original name of the lake as River Sticks.

As noted in the Colonel By Lake writeup, the buoyed channel doesn't directly follow the original channel of the Cataraqui River, which was more of a meandering creek. As of this writing, the present navigation channel and old meandering creek channel can be seen in satellite photos (i.e. Google Earth) at the head of River Styx.

Joyceville Institution: This is a medium-security federal penitentiary.

Billidore's Rifts: The head of River Styx marks the location of Billidore's Rifts, a small set of rapids where a lock was originally proposed. These rapids were drowned by the water raised by the canal dam and berms at Kingston Mills.

Cataraqui River: The Cataraqui River is a deeper, straighter river than the original meandering creek. Much of today's navigation way was cut through the pre-canal forests (to straighten the route). But you can still spot some of the meanders of the original creek.

Just south of Lower Brewers, you'll find some apple trees growing on the banks of the river (presumably grown from seeds blown from the apple orchard located near Lower Brewers). So, if you're paddling that area in September and want a snack, you may find some nice apples within picking range from your boat.

Lower Brewers Lock: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

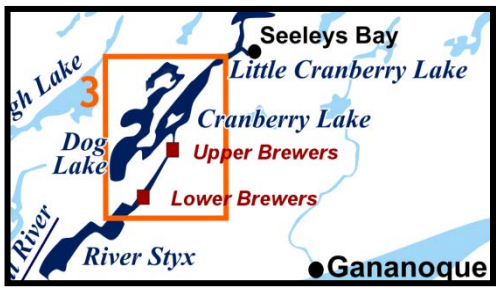
No specific route suggestions have been provided. These lakes are most interesting for shoreline putterings.

SECTION 3: Lower Brewers Lock to Brass Point Bridge

(includes Cataraqui River, Cranberry Lake and Dog Lake)

Early Morning Paddling near Fiddlers Elbow

This area is bounded by the top end of River Styx to the south and Brass Point Bridge (top of Cranberry Lake) to the north. It includes part of the Cataraqui River, Cranberry Lake and Dog Lake. The area provides great day paddling experiences. In most areas, the irregular shorelines and islands provide shelter and so can be paddled even when the wind is up.



Water Access

Cranberry Lake: The easiest point of access is **Upper Brewers Lockstation** which has lots of parking and a small gravel ramp. You can also paddle down to the lake from the ramp or paddling dock at **Seeleys Bay** (see Map 4).

Dog Lake: As with Cranberry Lake, it can be accessed from **Upper Brewers Lockstation**. You can access the west side from a public ramp on Gilmore Point Road (44° 25.950'N - 76° 21.540'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also several campgrounds and few B&Bs. For information about local accommodations see: www.rideauheritageroute.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/.

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the village of Seeleys Bay (grocery, some hardware).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Top of River Styx to Lower Brewers along navigation channel: 2.6 km (1.6 mi)
- Lower Brewers to Upper Brewers along navigation channel: 2.8 km (1.7 mi)

- Upper Brewers to Brass Point Bridge along navigation channel: 6.5 km (4.0 mi)
- Cranberry Lake circumference (main shorelines): 33 km (20.5 mi)
  (entire lake: Fiddlers Elbow to Brass Point Bridge)
- Dog Lake circumference: 55 km (34.2 mi).
  (South Dog = 22.5 km (14 mi), Long Reach = 8 km (5 mi) , North Dog = 24.5 km (15 mi))

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Cataraqui River

This section, from the head of River Styx to the Round Tail, is a flooded remnant of part of the original Cataraqui River. The meandering nature of the original creek is obscured today due to channel straightening carried out during the building of the canal. Water levels are also elevated due to the canal dams at Kingston Mills, Lower Brewers and Upper Brewers. The land bordering the river is privately owned, the exception being federal lands in the vicinity of the locks.

Cranberry Lake

In the pre-canal era this was a very small lake (the area north of Beaupre Island bounded by the west shore, Big Island and Track Island). It was greatly expanded by the flooding caused by the canal dam at Upper Brewers lockstation (water impounded in conjunction with the canal dam at Morton). The deepest part of the lake at 17 feet (5.2 m) in the original lake section, the rest of the lake averages about 10 feet (3 m) in depth.

In the pre-canal era, the area from the Round Tail (just north of Upper Brewers Locks) to Deans Island (in the north end of Whitefish Lake – see Map 4), was the Cranberry Flood Plain. It was above water in the summer (non-navigable). This former flood plain, filled with sediment to form an almost flat bed, provides a contrast of high steep cliffs (particularly on the western shore) plunging into shallow water, not the deep water that the topography would imply.

The land bordering the lake is privately owned (the exception being the federally owned Beaupre Island, the southern section of which is leased to a private owner). Much of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

Dog Lake

This is really two different lakes. The north end is an original pre-canal lake while the south end is a man-made lake, a result of the flooding from the dams at Upper Brewers and Morton. The lake also differs greatly in depth from north to south.

The north end of the lake is very deep with a maximum depth of 167 feet (51 m). It averages about 50 feet (15 m) deep. It hosts typical Rideau warm-water species of fish (largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, northern pike and crappie). The deeper part of the lake used to host lake trout but they have disappeared

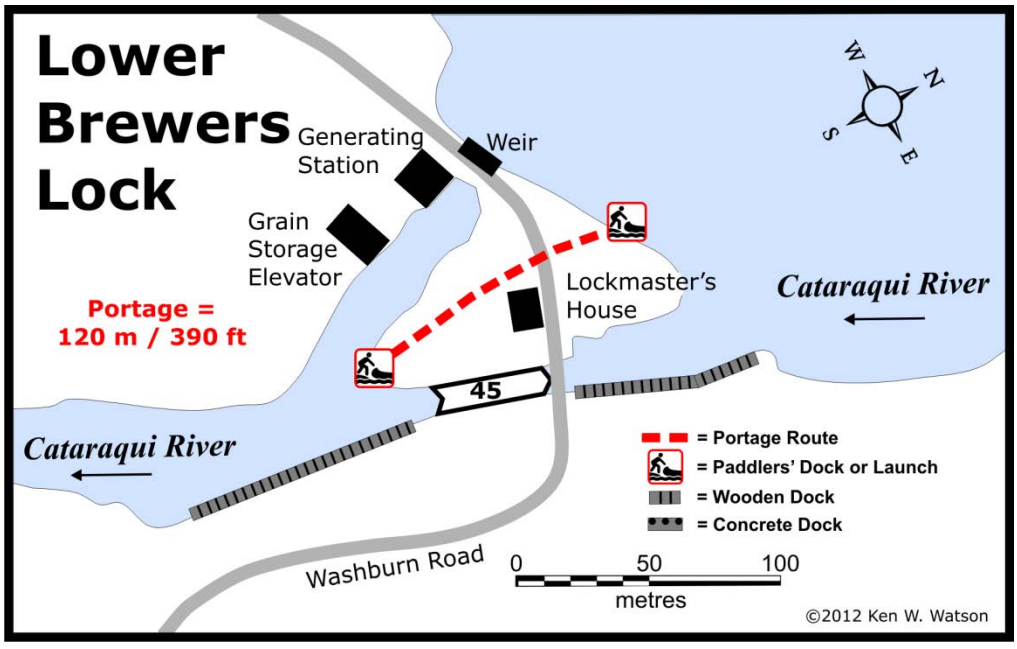
due to overfishing and development. It is a typical Canadian Shield lake, with some beautiful rocky exposures.

In the pre-canal era, the man-made south end of Dog Lake was the upper reaches of the Cataraqui River (or creek) which flowed through this area from its headwater in Loughborough Lake (now Milburn Creek). This was part of a native travel route from the mouth of the Cataraqui River to the Rideau at Opinicon Lake. There was no direct connection at the time, the native canoe route went up Milburn Creek (then part of the Cataraqui River) to Loughborough Lake, then to Hart Lake and from there to Opinicon Lake.

The land bordering the lake is privately owned. Much of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

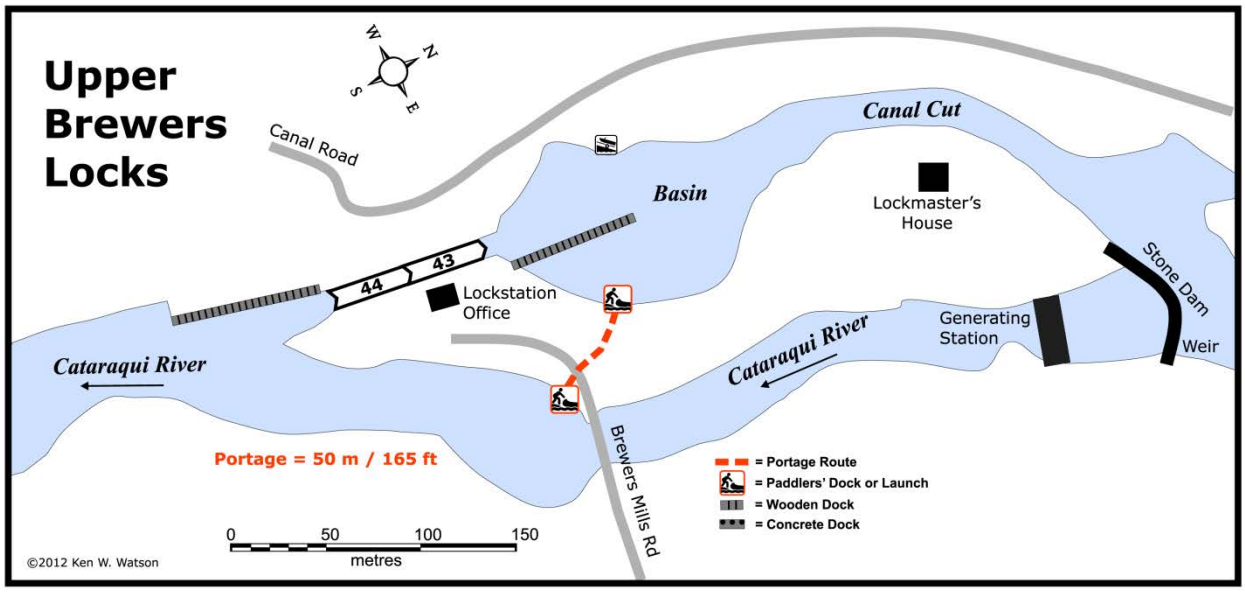
POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 3 for locations)

Lower Brewers Lock: This is a single lock with a lift of 4.0 m / 13.3 feet. A feature of this lockstation is the unequal arm, center bearing timber swing bridge, one of only four remaining on the Rideau. It also has a defensible lockmaster's house, originally a one storey stone building, built in the early 1840s. The second wooden storey was added in about 1899. A grain storage elevator located adjacent to the bywash was built in about 1865. The hydro generating station at this site was erected in 1942.



Sunbury Road Bridge: This fixed high level (6.7 m /22.0 ft) bridge was built in 1967. It carries Country Road 12 over the canal. Prior to this bridge, Country Road 12 went across a timber swing bridge over Lock 44 (the first swing bridge over the lock was installed in 1850) and a low level fixed bridge (still existing) over the Cataraqui River.

Upper Brewers Locks: There is a set of two locks with a lift of 5.9 m / 19.5 feet. The locks were constructed to the west side of the Cataraqui River in order to bypass the mills at this location and leave them intact. A man-made cut leads to the basin (formed by two embankments) above the locks. The defensible lockmaster's house on the top of the knoll was built in 1842 (today leased to a private owner). The hydro generating station below the dam was erected in 1939.



The Ark: On the west side of the Upper Brewers' basin, hidden behind cedar trees is a large houseboat (now a private residence) known as "The Ark." The original name for this houseboat was the "Wenona" and it was owned by Otto Rohr of Rochester, N.Y. It was towed to this location sometime between 1900 and 1915 (it shows up in a 1915 air photo of Lower Brewers).

Upper Brewers Canal Cut: The canal, from the basin to the dam, is an artificial cut. If you look closely at the vertical rock face on the east side of the cut, you'll see some half round vertical indentations, there are the inner half of drill holes (hand driven) used for blasting out the rock in the cut. Also, about halfway along the cut was the location of a safety gate designed by Colonel By. It was a gate that lay flat on the floor of the channel, which could be raised in the event of flood waters. The gate was placed there since a flood did occur in 1832 when a private miller's dam on Loughborough Lake (at today's Battersea) broke and almost flooded out the lock (this story is told in *Tales of the Rideau*). The gate was removed in 1847.

The Duke's Profile: Just south of The Round Tail is "The Court of the Duke" and on the east side there is a rock outcrop that juts out over the water, named the "Duke's Profile" for the Duke of Wellington, the Iron Duke – the man who was responsible for initiating the project to build the Rideau Canal.

The Round Tail: This rocky constriction had a profound impact on the Rideau Canal. Prior to the early 1800s, if you were paddling north through here, you would make almost a 90 degree turn left (west) to follow the Cataraqui River up to its headwater, Loughborough Lake. To get back to the Rideau you would go from the northern exit of Loughborough Lake to Hart Lake and then to Opinicon Lake. You couldn't continue north by canoe, it was semi-dry land (a flood plain). But, sometime after 1803 and prior

to 1816, a miller by the name of Lemuel Haskins erected a mill dam here in order to increase the head of water for his mill at Whitefish Falls (Morton). This put about 6 feet (2 m) of water over the flood plain, making it navigable. This "navigation by flooding" so impressed surveyor Samuel Clowes in 1824/25 that instead of proposing a conventional canal (canal cuts) such as he did for the rest of the Rideau, he proposed converting these mill dams (Round Tail and Morton) into canal dams to create a navigation way – a slackwater system. Colonel By ended up doing the entire Rideau as a slackwater system. This slackwater design is one of the reasons the Rideau Canal was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Did the idea to make the Rideau Canal a slackwater system originate right here at the Round Tail? Something to think about as you enjoy easy slackwater paddling.

Also of note, is that the marked navigation channel in this location is an artificial cut. The west (non-navigation channel) opening is the original, now drowned channel of the Cataraqui River.

Dog Lake: The north end of the lake features typical shield terrain, pine trees and rocky exposures with deep clear water. The south end of the lake is a typical shallow water lake (this side of the lake is manmade, created by the flooding from the canal dam at Upper Brewers Locks), a mix of marshy and rocky shorelines. There are many interesting cottages on the lake.

Carrying Place: Although the trail is not visible today, the narrow neck of land between Dog Lake and Cranberry Lake (directly west of the south tip of Beaupre Island) was a native portage route between Cranberry Marsh and the original pre-canal Dog Lake, which, due to its depth, offered fishing for Lake Trout (the trout disappeared a number of years ago due to development and overfishing).

Cranberry Lake: An expansive lake created by flooding by the canal dam at Upper Brewers, it has some interesting undeveloped shorelines and cottage development. Note the restoration of a lovely old cottage at the south end of Beaupre Island (winner of the 2015 Peter John Stokes Award for heritage preservation).

Brass Point Bridge: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

No specific route suggestions have been provided – but Dog and Cranberry lakes do provide some nice day paddling experiences. The sizes of the lakes are such that, depending on your launch point and paddling speed, they can make three nice day trips – one doing Cranberry Lake, one doing the north half of Dog Lake and one doing the south half of Dog Lake. I tend to launch from Upper Brewers Lockstation since it provides an easy launch point and lots of parking.

SECTION 4: Brass Point Bridge to Jones Falls Locks

(includes Little Cranberry Lake, Whitefish Lake and Morton Bay)

At the entrance to Morton Bay

This area is bounded by the middle of Cranberry Lake at the south end and Jones Falls lockstation at the north end. It includes part of Cranberry Lake, Little Cranberry Lake, Whitefish Lake and Morton Bay. The area provides great day paddling experiences and features narrow sections and winding shorelines and so can be paddled even when the wind is up.

Water Access

Cranberry Lake: The easiest point of access is Upper Brewers Lockstation (see Rideau Paddling Guide 3) which has lots of parking and a small gravel ramp.

Whitefish Lake: There are two options in Seeley's Bay – one is the Paddling Station in Centennial Park (accessed via Haskins Point Road) which has a paddling dock (44° 28.695'N - 76° 14.290'W). The other is the launch ramp and public docks (44° 28.730'N - 76° 14.210'W). Near Morton there is a public dock and a paddling dock (Parks Canada) with a small parking lot by the dam at the end of Morton Bay (at 44° 32.210'N - 76° 12.250'W, accessed by road from Morton). You can also launch from the Shangri-La Cottages & Campground (at Jones Falls) for a fee. There are also campgrounds on Cranberry Lake that provide access to the water.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also several campgrounds and some B&Bs. For information about local accommodations see: www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the village of Seeleys Bay (grocery, some hardware).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel and the scenic routes are shown on the map.

- Brass Point Bridge to Jones Falls Locks along navigation channel: 10.8 km (6.7 mi)
- Scenic Route from navigation channel to Seeleys Bay (return): 1.7 km (1.0 mi)
- Scenic Route from navigation channel into Morton Bay (return): 7.0 km (4.3 mi)
- Cranberry Lake circumference (main shorelines): 33 km (20.5 mi)
  (entire lake: Fiddlers Elbow to Brass Point Bridge)
- Little Cranberry Lake circumference (main shorelines): 21 km (13.0 mi)
- Whitefish Lake circumference (main shorelines): 28 km (17.4 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Cranberry Lake

In the pre-canal era this was a very small lake (the area north of Beaupre Island bounded by the west shore, Big Island and Track Island). It was greatly expanded by the flooding caused by the canal dam at Upper Brewers lockstation (water impounded in conjunction with the canal dam at Morton). The deepest part of the lake at 17 feet (5.2 m) in the original lake section, the rest of the lake averages about 10 feet (3 m) in depth.

In the pre-canal era, the area from the Round Tail (just north of Upper Brewers Locks – see Map 3) to Deans Island (in the north end of Whitefish Lake), was the Cranberry Flood Plain. It was above water in the summer (non-navigable). This former flood plain, filled with sediment to form an almost flat bed, provides a contrast of high steep cliffs (particularly on the western shore) plunging into shallow water, not the deep water that the topography would imply.

The land bordering the lake is privately owned (the exception being the federally owned Beaupre Island, the southern section of which is leased to a private owner). Much of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

Little Cranberry Lake

This is a man-made lake – in the pre-canal era it was part of the Cranberry Flood Plain, an area of forest, streams, ponds and marshes. The lake was created by the canal dams at Upper Brewers and at Morton. The water depth in the lake (near the navigation channel) averages about 9 feet (2.7 m).

Whitefish Lake

This is a man-made lake – in the pre-canal era the northern part of the lake was the White Fish River and the southern part was the northern end of the Cranberry Flood Plain. Prior to the lake being created by the flooding from the dams at Upper Brewers and Morton, the Jones Falls Rapids marked the start of the White Fish River which flowed past Hog Island, around the south end of Deans Island, through Morton Bay and over White Fish Falls (location of the dam today) before continuing to Lower Beverley Lake and eventually to the St. Lawrence River at Gananoque. The southern part of the lake was a forest of ash trees which only saw water in times of spring flood.

The depth of the lake itself averages about 9 feet (2.7 m)

Morton Bay

Dominated by the large granite exposures of Rock Dunder and Dunders Mate (part of the Lyndhurst Granite Pluton) on the west side of the Bay, in the pre-mill dam/pre-canal era this was a deep gorge with water levels 20 to 25 feet (7.5 m) lower than they are today. The White Fish River ran through here on its way to White Fish Falls (site of today's canal dam). Today this is a beautiful deep water bay. The water that flows through the dam goes into Morton Creek and on to Lower Beverley Lake (and eventually to the Gananoque River).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 4 for locations)

Brass Point Bridge: You can't miss this – a long and narrow steel bridge with wooden decking which incorporates a wooden swing bridge (an unequal arm, center bearing timber swing bridge, one of only four remaining on the Rideau) at the west end. The swing bridge is operated by Parks Canada. This long (148 m / 485 ft) bridge was originally built in 1887. The wooden spans were replaced with steel spans in 1903 and new cribbing was installed in 1978. Paddlers can easily pass under the bridge.

This is the only remaining bridge of this type (multi-span with a swing bridge) on the Rideau Canal. There used to be similar bridges at places such as Rideau Ferry, Becketts Landing, Kars and Manotick – those have all been replaced by fixed high level bridges.

Little Cranberry Lake: This is a narrow section connecting Whitefish Lake with Cranberry Lake. There are a number of nooks and crannies that harbour wildlife, so it is worth staying off the navigation channel and paddling along the shorelines.

Haskins Point: This spot is named after Samuel Haskin who purchased the point in 1840 and set up commercial wharves to serve steamboat traffic. It was also known for a time as Ferry Point with a ferry service (small hand operated ferry) operating between the point and Hewitt Island, from the late 1880s to 1996.

Seeleys Bay: A lovely little village – there are extensive public docks and a ramp, plus a paddling station. The paddling station, located in Centennial Park just south of the public docks, features a paddling dock, two large racks that will hold 4 canoes or kayaks each and four large and lock-able stow bins that are big enough for paddles, life jackets and lots of gear. There is also a map and information sign to point people to the nearby public toilets and showers, and info about services in Seeleys Bay.

Although the flooding of the Cranberry Flood Plain in 1832 created the bay we see today, it wasn't until the mid-1800s that the removal of stumps and floating marshes in the bay allowed the village to flourish. It became a regular stop for steamers plying between Kingston and Ottawa.

Whitefish Lake: The west side of the lakes features some interesting topography – hills and cliffs. There are lots of interesting looking cottages along both shorelines.

Native Paddling Route: Today we can easily paddle from Kingston to Jones Falls, but in the pre-dam era this couldn't be done. The area from the Round Tail to near the channel entrance to Morton Bay (i.e. part of Cranberry Lake, Little Cranberry Lake and part of Whitefish Lake) was above water. It was a flood plain dominated by forests made up mainly of ash trees, marshy areas, streams and ponds. The main native paddling route to get from the Ottawa River to the St. Lawrence River was via the White Fish River, which had its headwaters in Sand Lake and flowed through today's Morton Bay on its way to the Gananoque River. So, today, if you head into Morton Bay, you'll be floating over part of an original native paddling route (much changed now due to dams and flooding).

Morton Bay: This sheltered bay is a very pretty area dominated by large granite outcrops; Rock Dunder and Dunders Mate (part of the Lyndhurst Pluton). Much of the land in the vicinity of Rock Dunder is owned by the Rideau Waterway Land Trust and a trail leads to the top. The trail is a bit hard to access from the water – look for a good landing spot between the peak of Rock Dunder and Floods Island and head uphill until you intersect the trail (see the exact location of the trail on Map 4).

In the pre-dam era (before 1803), the water level was 23 ft / 7 m lower that it is today – it was a river running through a rocky gorge. The scenery is impressive today, it would have been even more impressive before the water level was raised.

Morton Dam: Easy access to the dam is provided by a public dock maintained by Parks Canada at the head of Morton Bay. The dam is near the location of the original mill dam at White Fish Falls, erected by Lemuel and Carey Haskins in about 1803. Haskins' dam blocked the flow of the original White Fish River (the western part of which is now known as Morton Creek), which drained the southern Rideau lakes (Newboro, Clear, Indian, Opinicon, Sand) to the Gananoque River (via Lower Beverley Lake).

Prior to the dam being put in place, this was the main native paddling route from the St. Lawrence River (at Gananoque) to the Ottawa River (at Rideau Falls) since there was no water connection to the Cataraqui River. The original 1803 mill dam, and now the canal dam, stopped the flow to the Gananoque River and diverted it to the Cataraqui River. It is this dam, together with the dam at Upper Brewers, that made the area between Deans Island and Upper Brewers navigable (flooding the Cranberry Flood Plain, the area now occupied by parts of Cranberry, Little Cranberry and Whitefish lakes). The concrete dam that can be seen today was built in 1919 and substantially rebuilt in 1982.

On the north side of the dam, you'll find a trail leading to the top of the cliffs. A wooden guardhouse was built here in 1838 in response to the Upper Canada Rebellion. It deteriorated and was torn down in 1929. Today, a walk to the top provides a fine view.

Morton Creek Portage Road: Those interested in a bit of milling history will wish to follow the old road on the south side of the creek (from the parking lot above the dam). About 325 m / 1,075 ft down that road you'll find the remains of George Morton's mill site, originally established in the late 1850s. He sold his mills in the 1870s and they burned down in about 1886, but were rebuilt. Today only the foundations remain. In the 1880s, plans were drawn up to put two locks in this location, part of a scheme to make a navigable waterway connecting the Rideau Canal to Gananoque on the St. Lawrence River. It

never got off the ground. If you follow this road for another 235 m / 775 ft you'll end up at Highway 15 where there is a launch point into Morton Creek (allowing you to paddle all the way to Gananoque).

Jones Falls Lockstation: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Morton Bay Scenic Route (7 km): It is well worth a paddle into this bay to enjoy the scenery, have a swim and/or hike to the top of Rock Dunder and/or the cliffs above the dam.

Seeleys Bay Scenic Route (1.7 km): The village of Seeleys Bay is a short diversion off the route – a place to stop and relax, maybe pick up a few supplies.

Off The Beaten Path

Morton Bay to Lower Beverley Lake: At the foot of Morton Bay (location of the canal dam) is an old road (now trail) that follows Morton Creek for 560 m (612 yards) to the bridge crossing the creek on Highway 15. There is spot by the bridge where can put your canoe or kayak into Morton Creek. From there it is 5.5 km (3.4 mi) to Lower Beverley Lake. Morton Creek has little current (except in early spring) and so can be easily paddled both ways. Once into Lower Beverley Lake you can paddle to Delta and/or Lyndhurst (and with portages at Lyndhurst and Marble Rock, all the way to Gananoque). A paddling guide to the Lower and Upper Beverley lakes can be found in the tours section on www.deltamill.org

SECTION 5: Jones Falls Locks to Chaffeys Lock

(includes Sand Lake and Opinicon Lake)

On Sand Lake near Davis Lock

This area is bounded by Jones Falls Locks at the south end and Chaffeys Lock at the north end and includes Davis Lock, Sand Lake and Opinicon Lake. Both lakes offer many islands and winding shoreline and so can be paddled even when the wind is up.

Water Access

Sand Lake: There are several points of access to the lake. The two municipal boat launches, one at the end of **Battams Road** (44° 35.110'N - 76° 14.910'W – gravel, no dock) and one at the end of **Glovers Road** (44° 34.040'N - 76° 14.700'W – paved, small dock), have very limited parking but do offer direct water access. The other options are the two lockstations**, Davis and Jones Falls**, both require a short portage from the parking area to a launch point. At Jones Falls, if you just wish to paddle Sand Lake, you can go into the **Jones Falls Dam** parking lot (44° 32.925'N - 76° 14.160'W) and then launch from the top of the dam (a picnic area with docks, including a paddling dock). You can also launch at Sand Lake Marine (44° 33.490'N - 76° 14.930'W) for a fee.

Opinicon Lake: At **Chaffeys Lock**, you can launch from the ramp (44° 34.695'N - 76° 19.145'W) adjacent to the docking for the Opinicon Hotel. You can also park at **Davis Lock** (44° 33.825'N - 76° 17.440'W) and launch from there. You can also launch from Franklin's Marina (44° 34.890'N - 76° 18.600'W) for a fee.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also several campgrounds, a host of B&Bs and several hotels such as the Hotel Kenney at Jones Falls, and the Poplars and Stirling Lodge in Newboro. For information about local accommodations see: www.westportrideaulakes.on.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: Some limited supplies are available at local marinas.

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel and the scenic route are shown on the map.

- Jones Falls to Davis Lock along navigation channel: 7.0 km (4.3 mi)
- Jones Falls to Davis Lock taking the scenic route: 6.5 km (4.0 mi)
- Davis Lock to Chaffeys Lock along navigation channel: 3.3 km (2.0 mi)
- Davis Lock to Chaffeys Lock taking the scenic route: 6.1 km (3.8 mi)
- Sand Lake Circumference (main shorelines): 35 km (22 mi)
- Opinicon Lake Circumference (main shorelines): 45 km (28.0 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Sand Lake

This is the southernmost of the original Rideau lakes. In the pre-canal era, the lake was 8 feet (2.4 m) lower than it is today and drained, through the Jones Falls Rapids, into the White Fish River to Lower Beverley Lake. The completion of the Great Stone Arch Dam at Jones Falls in the fall of 1831 drowned the rapids and raised the level of the lake to what it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 50 ft (15 m) and averages 20 to 25 ft (6 to 7 m). It's a mesotrophic lake (moderately enriched with nutrients). The water temperature reaches 20°C (68°F) by early June and stays that way until mid-September (peak temp is generally 25°C / 77°F). Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned (the exceptions being federal land in the vicinity of the lockstations). About two-thirds of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development, the rest remains in its natural state. Wildlife is abundant, particularly loons, herons, ospreys, turtles, frogs, muskrats and beavers. The main game fish is large mouth bass (small mouth bass, northern pike and crappie are also present).

Opinicon Lake

In the pre-canal era, this lake was about 10 ft (3 m) lower than it is today. The outflow was to Sand Lake through Davis' Rapids and the inflow was mostly from Indian Lake, through Chaffey's Rapids. In the fall of 1831, the completion of the lock and dam at Davis Lock raised the water in the lake to the level it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 27 ft (8 m) and averages about 20 ft (6 m). It's a mesotrophic lake, slightly more enriched with nutrients than Sand Lake. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned (the exceptions being federal land in the vicinity of the lockstations and several large tracts of land owned by Queen's University). About two-thirds of the

lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development, the rest remains in its natural state. Wildlife is abundant, particularly loons, herons, ospreys, turtles, frogs, muskrats and beavers. The main game fish is large mouth bass (small mouth bass, northern pike and crappie are also present).

Of note reference to the lake as "Lake Opinicon" is incorrect, that's the name of an old abandoned community at the southwest end of the lake (see map).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 5 for locations)

Jones Falls Lockstation: This is one of the prettiest lockstations on the entire Rideau. It consists of an upper lock, a turning basin and a flight of three locks (total lift of 17.3 m / 56.9 ft). At the foot of the locks is the historic Hotel Kenney (closed put up for sale in 2019). The link from the hotel to the locks is over a wooden bridge, originally built in 1883. This was part of a roadway that led to a swing bridge over the middle lock. Today only the abutments for that swing bridge remain, it was removed in the late 1970s when a fixed high level bridge was built upstream of the locks.

You'll find a small visitor centre (with washrooms) near the top of the combined locks. The road leads from there to the upper lock. As you walk up that road and look down, you'll see an old road angling down to Jones Falls Bay. This is part of the original haul road for the stones (sandstone) used in the building of the locks, which were brought by wagon from a quarry near Elgin, 10 km (6 mi) away.

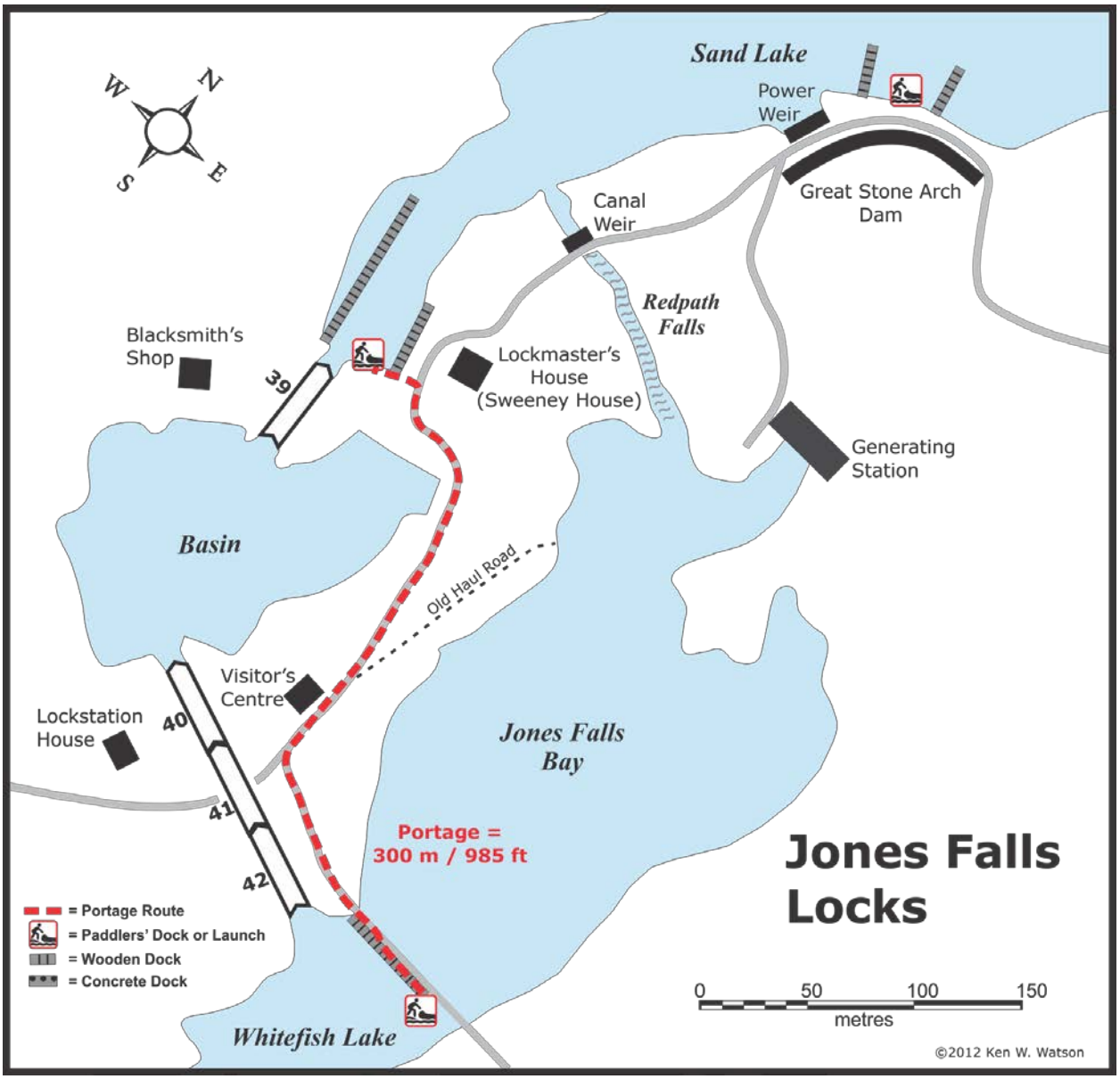
Just below and to the west of the upper lock is a blacksmith's shop built in the 1840s. It sometimes has a blacksmith in attendance.

Above the upper lock is a defensible lockmaster's house (a stone building with gun slits, built in the 1840s), usually open during the summer with an interpreter. It is known as Sweeney House, after the first lockmaster, Peter Sweeney (a diary that he kept while living there with his family is available in book form as *The Sweeney Diary*).

Between Sweeney House and the dam you'll find the waste water weir, blasted (using black powder) through a bedrock ridge (you can still see the remains of some of the hand-drilled blast holes). The present weir was rebuilt in 2011. The water flows through this weir to form Redpath Falls, named after the contractor who built the locks and dam, John Redpath.

A walking trail runs around the west side of the basin (from the Lockstation House to the Blacksmith's Shop).

At the time of the building of the Rideau Canal, the locks at Jones Falls featured the greatest lift (15 ft / 4.6 m each) and consequently the tallest lock gates of any lockstation. There was some worry about the size of the gates, whether they could stand up to the water pressure. They served well, being replaced with new gates on a regular basis (every 20 years or so). However, in 1869, the gates between Lock 40 and 41 apparently failed, allowing one barge to crash into another. Two men were killed. As it turns out, the failure of the gates was a result of the accident, they were not the cause, and that full story is related in *Tales of the Rideau*.



Jones Falls Dam: The most impressive feature at Jones Falls is the Great Stone Arch Dam – the largest dam built during the construction of the Rideau Canal. It is 107 m (350 ft) wide at the top (following the arch) and 30.5 m (100 ft) wide at ground level. The height of the stonework from its base (buried 1.8 m (6 ft) below surface) is 17.4 m (57 ft) and an earthen berm adds about another 1.2 m (4 ft), making the dam about 18.6 m (61 ft) high. It is known as the "whispering dam" since a person standing at one end, talking in regular conversational tone, can be heard by someone at the other end of the dam – the face of the dam providing a reflecting surface for sound.

The dam is located in the bed of the original Jones Falls Rapids. These rapids dropped 18.9 m (62 ft) over a distance of a 1.6 km (1 mile). The dam is actually located some 440 m (1,450 ft) up from the foot of the rapids (today's bridge below the locks marks the foot of the original rapids). It was placed in a constriction in a rocky gorge that allowed the dam to lock itself into the bedrock on either side. This is the purpose of the arch shape of the dam, it throws part of the immense weight of water that it is holding back into the bedrock on either side of the dam.

As you look down to the valley below the dam, you're looking at the original channel of the White Fish River, one of the very few "natural topography" spots remaining on the Rideau (since most of the original topography on the Rideau is now below water).

The power generating station, built in 1947, required tunnels to be excavated through the dam for the three penstocks. The penstocks leading down to the power station are built of wire wrapped wood. This privately owned power generating station is still in use today. You can tell which penstocks are being used at any given time by the sprays of leaking water.

Jones Falls Bridge: This is a fixed high level (7.0 m / 22.7 ft) bridge which carries the Jones Falls Road (Cty. Rd. 11) across the Rideau Canal. It was built in the late 1970s. Prior to this bridge being built, road access was over the wooden swing bridge at Lock 41 (which ceased being used when the fixed bridge was completed).

The Quarters/Jones Falls Portage: As you paddle north from Jones Falls, you're paddling over the now flooded, Jones Falls Rapids. The head of the rapids was at the first narrow constriction at the foot of Eel Bay. The south shore of the pond just downstream from this first constriction is known as The Quarters. The Jones Falls Rapids were not navigable by canoe and so there was a 1,370 m (1,500 yd) portage going around the rapids. The Quarters is at the head of this portage, so named since it was the location of the Officer's Quarters (Royal Engineers) during the construction of the locks and dam at Jones Falls (1827-1831). This location was chosen since any people or goods arriving by water from Sand Lake had to disembark at this location. It also provided the only access to the site prior to a road being built from the quarry (near Elgin) to the lock site in 1827.

Sand Lake: This is a typical Rideau lake, its many bays and islands offering the paddler several choices of route. Several of the back bays feature marsh land and you'll find an abundance of birds and animals that prefer this type of habitat. The lake hosts a healthy population of loons (normally about 22 adult loons), and if you look up to the tree tops, you'll see several osprey nests. Recently, bald eagles have returned to nest on the lake. A typical cottaging lake, it offers a wide variety of architectural styles of cottages and boathouses. In 1827, surveyor John Burrows wrote, when entering the lake (from Davis' Rapids) at sunrise, "*The view of Davies Lake [Sand Lake] is very pleasing. The many islands, as if floating on a transparent mirror which mellowed and reflected by the tint of the morning, strikes the contemplative mind with a sensation of pleasure not easily forgotten.*"

Birch Island: this island was a peninsula prior to the flooding of Sand Lake by the dam at Jones Falls. Farming started on the island in the mid-1800s. In the 1890s, cottage development started on the east end of the island. The west side of the island was purchased in the late 1890s by a local farmer, Lotan Burtch. He used it to graze sheep and cattle. His son, Howard, sold his island holding in 1968 to Birch Island Estates, allowing for extensive cottage development of the island. An interesting feature on the south side of the island is an **old lime kiln**. This kiln was used by the Jackson brothers to make quicklime in the early 1900s. The bedrock of Birch Island is Precambrian crystalline limestone.

Birch Island Culverts: normally culverts do not constitute a Point of Interest, but the ones at the west end of Birch Island do – you'll see these if you take the scenic route around Birch Island. The culverts are what is left of a road crossing from the mainland to the island. The story goes that sometime in the 1960s, a landowner on the island made a deal with the farmer who owned the mainland property to provide a road right of way. The landowner constructed the road, a causeway and a bridge. In the late 1960s, the island was developed with cottage lots and many people started to use the road. The farmer objected, his deal had been to allow one person road access, not to everyone wanting access to the island. The dispute ended up in court, the farmer won and the bridge was removed. Today you can see the bridge

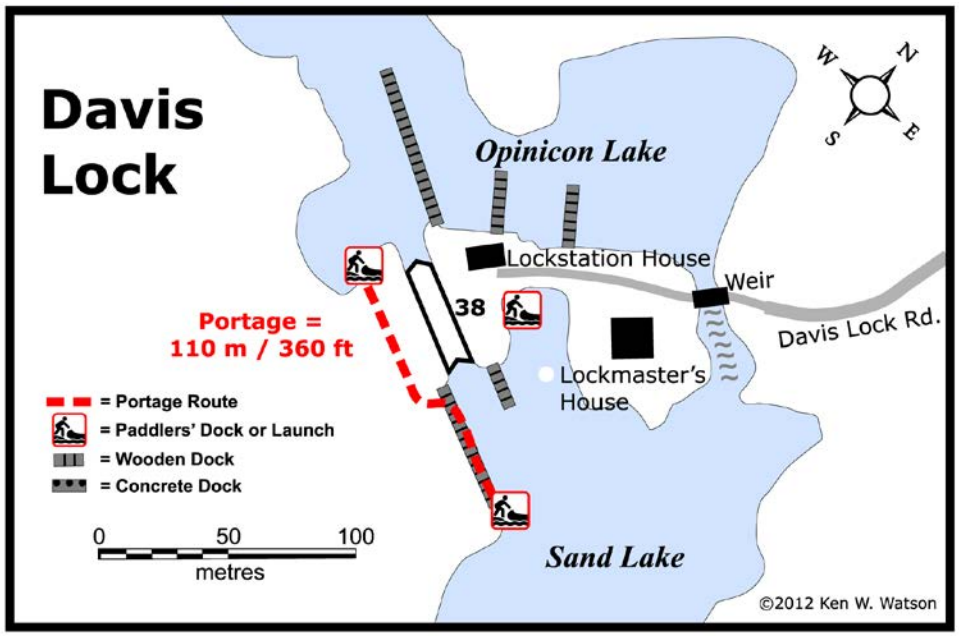
abutments, but no bridge, as you paddle around the west end of the island. The culverts under the causeway remain in place.

Freed Island: This island features a beautiful old summer home. Originally known as **Cordwood Island**, it was used to stockpile cut wood for use by the steamships that plied the Rideau Canal in the 1800s. In about 1889 the island was sold to David Freed of Philadelphia who developed it as a summer estate. It was sold in 1983 to the Marshall family. **Chicken Island**, just to the west, was used to raise chickens for the Freed family.

Davis Lock: Known as a "solitude lock" since there is no nearby community, it has a single lock (lift of 2.6m / 8.7 ft). It also has one of the best preserved examples of a defensible lockmaster's house, built in 1842 (now rented out to summer visitors). The grassy knoll between the lock and the weir is actually the canal dam which has raised the level of Opinicon Lake by about 10 ft (3 m).

Prior to the canal, this was a set of rapids (no portage) which drained Opinicon Lake into Sand Lake. A miller, Walter Davis Jr., built a dam and sawmill here in about 1820. The sawmill was located at the lock-side foot of the knoll on which the lockmaster's house sits today. Colonel By bought out Davis's mill property to allow the lock and dam to be built (in fact, Davis' mill dam was used as a coffer dam to aid the construction of the canal dam).

The weir opening, which today drains Opinicon Lake into Sand Lake, was blasted (using black powder) though the bedrock ridge.



Opinicon Lake: Very much the same as Sand Lake, it has mostly low density cottage and summer home development. It does offer a couple of "off the beaten path" paddling possibilities (access to Hart Lake and to Lower Rock Lake; see below). Wildlife in abundant (see Sand Lake description), you may even spot swans that have been known to reside in the lake. Of note, references to the lake as "Lake Opinicon" are incorrect. That name is for a former community on the lake (see below).

Queen's University Biology Station: On the northwest shore of the lake you'll see a large white building. This is part of the Queen's University Biology Station. The idea for the station was conceived in 1936, but it was not until 1944 that the land on which the station is now located was purchased. The building that you can see by the water was built in 1946. Queen's owns several large tracts of land on Opinicon Lake and does extensive biological (flora and fauna) studies of the area. As you paddle the lake you may see biology students out and about investigating various things. They have an open house once a year and sometime offer public interpretive programs.

Deadlock Bay: The name "Deadlock Bay" is from a tale that this was to be part of the original route of the Rideau Canal, a route that would take the canal through Hart Lake. Evidence for this is in the form of a lock started but never completed, a "dead lock." It's a tall tale but you can still evidence of the dead lock today.

The Dead Lock is a constriction in the channel at the head of Deadlock Bay, the outlet today of Peterson Creek which flows from Hart Lake into Opinicon Lake. This small canyon with its vertical rock walls may have looked like the start of a lock to some. Prior to the rapids at Davis Lock being dammed, Opinicon Lake was much smaller, ten feet lower than it is today. There would have been rapids at the location of the small canyon. Today, with the water in the lake raised due to the dam at Davis Lock, there is still water in that location, making it look more "lockish". You can also see stones piled up on the upstream side of the canyon, a clear sign of human activity. These stones are the remains of the abutments of a bridge for a wagon road that went to phosphate mines located to the west of Peterson Creek (just south of Hunter Bay). Those mines operated, on and off, between 1870 and 1892 (see Hunter Bay below.

There is a second, less likely, but perhaps more interesting candidate for the dead lock, large stacked stones located just a bit downstream of the head of Peterson Creek, the outlet to Hart Lake. You'll see these stones on the west side of the creek, just a few metres upstream from the foot of the short portage that leads to Hart Lake. Those stones were part of a dam built to supply water to a sawmill, most likely built by Robert Drummond in about 1832. Just upstream for that site are piles of smaller stones, the remains of a Rideau Canal reservoir dam originally built in 1872 and rebuilt in 1889. It was torn down (or blown up) by local residents after the 1889 rebuild.

Native Canoe Route from Kingston: Deadlock Bay is also the location of a native canoe route from Kingston to the Rideau. Prior to mill dams, and later Rideau Canal dams, making the section north of Upper Brewers to south of Jones Falls navigable, the native travel route from Kingston was up the Cataraqui River to its headwaters in Loughborough Lake. Then from Loughborough Lake down Loughborough Lake Creek to Hart Lake and from there down Peterson Creek into Opinicon Lake. At that time there was no Deadlock Bay, Opinicon Lake was 10 feet lower than it is today and the edge of the lake was near the foot of today's Deadlock Bay.

Hunter Bay - Milling and Mining: Opinicon Lake was an active area for both milling and mining in the late 1800s and early 1900s. A good example of both can be found in Hunter Bay. At the head of this bay is a constriction, the location of the old Hunter Mill, established by James Hunter in the 1850s or early 1860s. It occupied the site of a former sawmill, Brewer's mill, that was built sometime before 1833 (the name shows up on an 1833 map). By 1841 a fellow named Mathewson was operating the sawmill at this location.

Above that constriction is the old mill pond, and on either side of that you can see evidence of mining activity. These were phosphate mines and/or exploration trenches. Phosphate is contained in the mineral apatite and was mined for its use as fertilizer. Exploration was done by digging trenches across the strike

(direction) of the rock units that would potentially hold apatite (the mineral that contains phosphate). If they found some they would simply continue by digging deeper – the distinction between an exploration trench and mine is fuzzy. The first mining in this spot was done by Alexander Cowan in 1870. The mines are very small by today's standards, the largest one in this location was the Opinicon Rock Lake Phosphate Mine which was done as an angled cut, 75 feet (23 m) wide and extending down 225 feet (68 m) on a 45° incline. It operated under a couple of owners from 1888 to 1892 and extracted about 1,500 tons of phosphate which was then loaded onto barges and eventually shipped to England and Germany.

Sometime in the late 1800s or early 1900s the property was purchased from the Hunter estate by a fellow that went by the name "Admiral Horatio Nelson Sharp" who started the Opinicon Ranching Company. In about 1919, Sharp sold the property to the Wright family who continued farming the land for some time. In 1989 this 315 acre property was purchased from Opinicon Properties Ltd. by Queen's University. It was named the Cape-Sauriol Environmental Studies Area in 1990 in honour of Brigadier General John M. Cape, who made a generous donation towards the acquisition of the land, and Charles Sauriol, who played a crucial role in the fund raising efforts.

Lake Opinicon: This is the site (see map) of a former community established in the late 1870s. It became a village that serviced the very active milling and mining industry on the lake. As economic activity faded (phosphate (apatite) mining by the early 1890s, mica mining and sawmills by the early 1900s), so did the village. Today only a few houses mark the location of this once bustling community.

Barrel Point: The name comes from a tale of a lost treasure, a barrel of silver coins. The tale could well be true since during the construction of the Rideau Canal the workers were paid using silver coins (American half-dollar coins). These coins had to be transported from Bytown to the worksites, and in one tale, a canoe carrying a barrel of these coins overturned in Opinicon Lake, somewhere off of Barrel Point. Those lost coins have yet to been found (other silver coins have been). This story is recounted in detail in my book *Tales of the Rideau.*

Navigation Channel near Chaffeys Lock: You'll notice that the navigation channel takes a somewhat circuitous route into Chaffeys Lock. That's because the channel, starting from a point opposite Rabbit Island, is following the course of the rapids (river) that originally flowed from Indian Lake into Opinicon Lake. The dam at Davis Lock drowned this original channel, but today's navigation buoys mark its location.

Chaffeys Lock: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Sand Lake

Scenic Route: Follow the main navigation channel from Jones Falls to Eel Bay. Once in the bay, stay to the south shore and paddle past the south side of Birch Island. A small channel at the west end of Birch Island puts you back into the main part of Sand Lake. Continue hugging the south shore to Fahey Island. Pass south of the island and then turn north to Davis Lock.

Opinicon Lake

Scenic Route: From Davis Lock, turn west towards Goose Island and then follow along the south shore to Eightacre Island. Swing around the west end of the island and cross the lake to the north shore at Steele

Briggs Island. Paddle towards Cow Island (past the Queen's University Biology Station), swing around Cow Island and then paddle north to Chaffeys Lock.

Off The Beaten Path

For the adventuresome that don't mind slogging it through a portage (or humping over a beaver dam) there are a couple of trip options from Opinicon Lake.

Opinicon to Hart Lake (20 km / 12 mi – direct distance return trip): For this trip, you can leave from either Davis Lock or Chaffeys Lock (about the same distance). Paddle through the Dead Lock at the head of Deadlock Bay and up Peterson Creek, the outlet of Hart Lake. A short (80 m / 260 ft) portage leads from a landing point near the head of the creek to Hart Lake. Once in Hart Lake, you can paddle to the dam at the east end of Loughborough Lake. There is one small (road crossing) portage in Loughborough Lake Creek (just west of the big power lines).

This is part of an old native canoe route that led from Kingston, up the Cataraqui River to its head at Loughborough Lake and then down Loughborough Lake Creek to Hart Lake and from there down Peterson Creek to Opinicon Lake.

See the Deadlock Bay write-up in the previous Points of Interest section.

Opinicon to Lower Rock Lake (25 km / 15 mi – direct distance return trip): This is a bit more challenging than the Hart Lake option. You can leave from either Davis Lock or Chaffeys Lock (about the same distance). Access is from Hunter Bay that leads to Rock Lake Creek. At the head of this bay is a constriction, the location of the old Hunter Mill. Beavers often like to dam this, so you may have to portage that dam. You'll then enter into a pond (a mill pond) at the head of which you'll find a small stream. You'll have to drag your canoe/kayak up that stream (about 100 m / 110 yd), to put in at the head of it (sometimes beaver dammed). From there you can paddle into Lower Rock Lake.

The Hunter Mill was operated by James Hunter from about 1860 to the late 1870s or early 1880s. It was the location of an earlier mill, belonging to a "Mr. Brewer," which was established prior to 1833. By 1841 the sawmill was being operated by a fellow named Mathewson. In 1886, Hunter's dam and mill were purchased for the government, so that the dam could be used to make Rock Lake a reservoir lake for the Rideau Canal. Local residents tore the dam down in 1889.

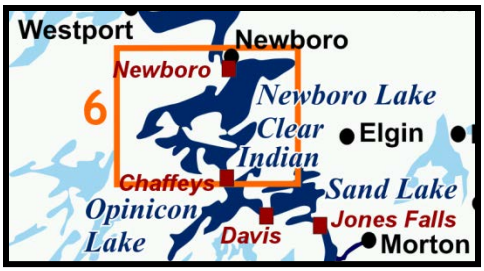
As you paddle through the mill pond, you may notice the remains of some of the old phosphate mines, part of the rich history of this area (see the Hunter Bay - Milling and Mining Point of Interest).

SECTION 6: Chaffeys Lock to Newboro Lock

(includes Indian, Clear, Newboro, Benson, Mosquito and Loon lakes)

Cedarman on Newboro Lake

This very scenic section of the Rideau Canal has dozens of back bays and many kilometres of shoreline to explore. These lakes have many islands and winding shoreline and so can be paddled even when the wind is up.



Water Access

Indian Lake: This lake is easily accessed from **Chaffeys Lock**, you can launch from either the dock at the lockstation, or from the public ramp down **Iron Bridge Lane** (44° 34.940'N - 76° 19.050'W – small paved ramp). You can also launch from Indian Lake Marina for a fee.

Newboro Lake: This lake is easily accessed from Newboro at either the **Newboro boat launch** (44° 38.835'N - 76° 19.200'W – paved ramp) or from a small beach just south of the launch. A small fee applies for using the parking lot and a fee also applies for using the launch.

Loon Lake: A small gravel public launch is located just north of the bridge at Bedford Mills on **County Road 10** (44° 36.465'N - 76° 24.060'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also several campgrounds, a host of B&Bs and several hotels such as the Poplars Lodge and Stirling Lodge in Newboro. For information about local accommodations see: www.westportrideaulakes.on.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: Some limited supplies can be obtained from local marinas and at Kilborn's in Newboro. Full groceries can be obtained in Westport.

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel and scenic routes are shown on the map.

- Chaffeys to Newboro along the navigation channel = 7.9 km (4.9 mi)
- Chaffeys to Newboro taking the scenic route = 12 km (7.5 mi)
- Indian Lake circumference = 12 km (7.5 mi)
- Benson Lake circumference = 10 km (6.2 mi)
- Mosquito Lake circumference = 12 km (7.5 mi)
- Newboro Lake circumference = 43 km (27 mi)
- Loon Lake circumference = 13 km (8.1 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

General Notes

The following applies to all the lakes. They are all mesotrophic lakes (moderately enriched with nutrients). Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant, particularly loons, herons, ospreys, turtles, frogs, muskrats and beaver. The main game fish is large mouth bass (small mouth bass, northern pike and crappie are also present).

Indian Lake

In the pre-canal era, the lake was about 8 feet (1.2 m) lower than it is today. Its source water was from Newboro Lake by way of Mosquito Creek, there was no water connection at that time to Clear Lake. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 92 ft (28 m) and averages about 40 ft (12 m). The land bordering the lake is all privately owned. Most of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development along its shoreline. There are a few areas that remain in their natural state (mostly along Scott Island shorelines).

Clear Lake

In the pre-canal era, this lake was about 6.5 ft (2 m) lower than it is today. A narrow channel connected it to Newboro Lake. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today. The name Clear Lake was given to it since the lake is clear of islands, unlike the other lakes in the region.

The lake has a maximum depth of 113 ft (34.5 m) and averages about 50 ft (15 m). The land bordering the lake is all privately owned. Most of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development along its shoreline. There are a few areas that remain in their natural state, mostly along Scott Island shorelines.

Benson Lake

In the pre-canal era, this lake was about 6 ft (2 m) lower than it is today and about half its present size. The outflow was to Indian Lake through Benson Creek. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 45 ft (14 m) and averages about 13 ft (4 m). The back bays are mostly a shallow water environment, with extensive aquatic vegetation.

The land bordering the lake is all privately owned. About one-third of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development along its shoreline. There are a several areas that remain in their natural state.

Mosquito Lake

In the pre-canal era, this was a creek, flowing out of Newboro Lake and into Indian Lake. A tributary to the creek was Massassauga Creek. The water was about 6 ft (2 m) lower than it is today. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 6 ft (1.8 m) and averages about 5 ft (1.5 m). The back bays are mostly a shallow water environment, with extensive aquatic vegetation.

The land bordering the lake is all privately owned. About one-quarter of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development along its shoreline. The rest of the lake remains in its natural state.

Loon Lake

In the pre-canal era, this lake was about 5 ft (1.5 m) lower than it is today. The inflow to the lake was a creek originating at Buttermilk Falls, the outflow from Devil Lake. The lake drained through Stevens Creek to Newboro Lake. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today.

The lake has a maximum depth of 30 ft (9 m) and averages about 25 ft (7.5 m).

The land bordering the lake is all privately owned. About half the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development along its shoreline. There are several areas that remain in their natural state.

Newboro Lake

In the pre-canal era, this lake was about 6 ft (2 m) lower than it is today. The completion of the lock and weir at Chaffeys in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the lake to the level it is today. Up until the late 1800s it was known as Mud Lake, so named for the depth of mud on the bottom of the lake.

The lake has a maximum depth of 85 ft (26 m) and averages about 20 ft (6 m). Many of back bays, particularly at the east end, are shallow water environment, with extensive aquatic vegetation.

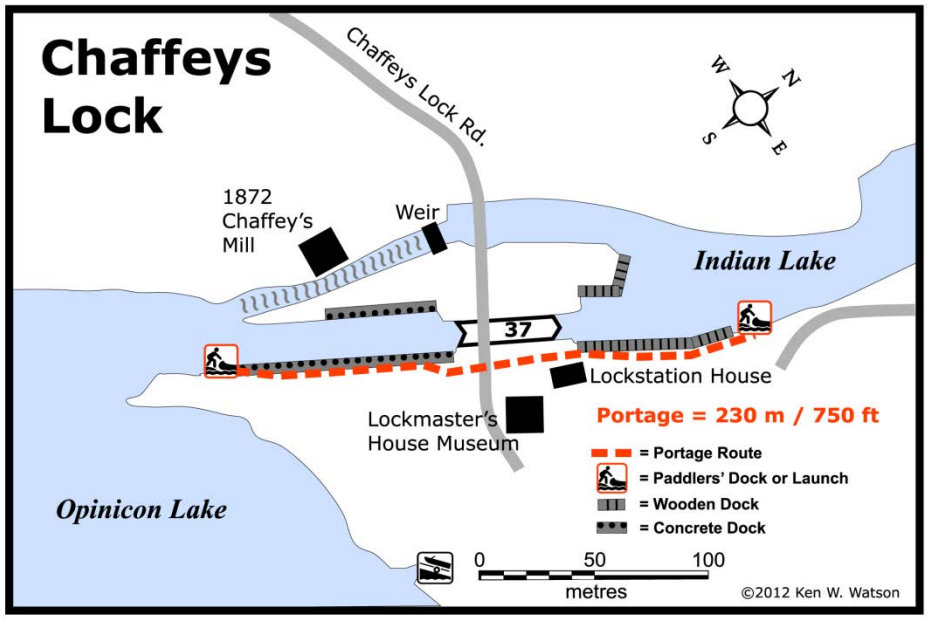
The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned (the exceptions being federal land in the vicinity Newboro Lock). About half the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development, the rest remains in its natural state.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 6 for locations)

Chaffeys Lock: The lockstation has a single lock (lift of 3.3 m / 11.0 ft) and a swing bridge. The lock is located in the middle of what used to be the Chaffey's Rapids which drained Indian Lake into Opinicon Lake. A long (1,370m / 1,500 yd) portage used to lead around these rapids. In 1820, brothers Samuel and Benjamin Chaffey erected a sawmill here. In 1822 Samuel started building other mills and by 1826 had a sawmill, grist mill, carding mill and distillery in operation. He died in 1827 and sometime after that Colonel By tried to buy out the milling operation in order to build the lock and weir. However, an ownership dispute between Samuel's widow Mary Ann and his brother Benjamin prevented settlement, and it wasn't until October 1829 that Mary Ann and Benjamin resolved their dispute allowing the mills and land to be purchased for £2,000 (equivalent to several million dollars today). The mills were removed in 1830 to make way for the lock construction.

The first bridge across the lock was a kingpost truss wooden swing bridge installed in 1884. It was repaired over the years and replaced in 1949 by a steel through plate girder swing bridge. That bridge was replaced by one of a similar design (but a much higher load rating) in 2015.

The defensible lockmaster's house, built in 1844 with the second storey added in 1894, has been converted into a museum, the **Lockmaster's House Museum**. It is operated by the Chaffeys Lock and Area Historical Society and houses interesting photos and exhibits. It is well worth a visit.



You'll also see the old Chaffey's Mill (built by John Chaffey in 1872) which used the flow of water from the canal weir to power its operation. It is privately owned and currently being restored and converted into a B&B.

Chaffeys Locks: This is the small community at this location. It was established in the early 1870s when John Chaffey (a nephew of the original miller, Samuel Chaffey) came here and built a mill (the old Chaffey's Mill that you can see today). It's known as Chaffeys Locks since two locks were originally proposed for this location, but in the end, only one was built. In "town" you will find the entrance to the **Chaffey's Lock Cemetery and Memory Wall** , located beside the Brown's Marina store. This cemetery was used for those who died during the construction of the canal at this location and also for local residents (to the late 1800s). You can also get to the cemetery (or return from the cemetery) by taking the **Marion Dunn Heritage Trail**, the entrance to which can be found near the Community Hall.

The grand looking **Opinicon Hotel** started out in about 1899 when Lockmaster William Fleming acquired the property and built a tourist lodge. In about 1902, William Laishley bought the property, added a wing to the building and called it Idylwild. He operated it as a tourist resort until 1904 when he sold it a fishing club from Youngstown, Ohio, who operated it as a private club known as the "Opinicon Club". In 1921 it was purchased by Mae and William Phillips of Pittsburgh who turned it back into a public tourist resort. It stayed in the hands of Phillips' descendants until was put up for sale in 2014. In January 2015 it was purchased by Fiona McKean and Tobi Lütke who are restoring it to its former glory.

A walking tour brochure of Chaffeys Locks is available in the hamlet and on-line.

Iron Bridge/Cataraqui Trail: Just to the north of the locks you'll paddle under the old Iron Bridge (9.1 m / 29.5 ft above the water), built in 1912 by the Canadian Northern Railway as part of their Montreal to Ottawa to Toronto line. The tracks were lifted in the early 1990s and, in 2000, it became a crossing for the Cataraqui Trail, part of the Trans-Canada Trail system. The old Chaffey's railway station is located just a few hundred metres southwest of the bridge. Chaffeys Locks is at km 42 of the 102 km long trail which stretches from Smiths Falls (km 0) to the east to Strathcona (km 102) to the west.

Indian Lake: There are some very nice old cottages along the southeast shoreline of the lake.

Richardson (Fettercairn) Island: This island has a fascinating history. It was originally known as Fettercairn Island, a name meaning "rock surrounded by water" given to the island by the Richardson family who purchased it in 1901. The Richardsons also acquired property on Scott Island.

During WWI, Agnes Richardson (later Agnes Etherington) had a 45-bed hospital built on the island, to be used for convalescing injured and shell-shocked soldiers. It opened in May 1916. A large boathouse was added in 1917. The Richardsons also owned 139 acres on Scott Island and, in the fall of 1916, 45 acres of that property was devoted to additional housing for the men. When WWI ended the facility was no longer needed and it closed down.

Shortly afterwards, the Richardsons gave the island and part of the Scott Island property to the Girl Guides of Canada for use as a training centre. The island at that time became known as Girl Guide Island. The Richardsons retained the name "Fettercairn" for their own Scott Island property and built a pergola and dry stone walls near the shore (these can be seen today). The Girl Guides used the island as a training centre, known as the Dominion Training Centre, starting in the 1920s and continuing until sometime in the 1930s. The only indications today of the hospital are its foundations and the rebuilt stone chimney. The island became known as Richardson Island, although locals still refer to the little island beside the main island as Girl Guide Island.

Benson, Mosquito and Loon Lakes: For those taking a scenic tour of this area, see the section after Newboro in this list.

Little Isthmus Channel: Prior to the canal being built, Indian Lake and Clear Lake were separated by a narrow neck of land, the Little Isthmus (today just called "The Isthmus"). A 35 m (40 yd) portage was required to cross between the lakes. A channel was excavated through the isthmus during the construction of the Rideau Canal and widened in the mid-1800s. A manual ferry has been in use in this location for almost 100 years.

Clear Lake: The name of this lake derives from the fact that it is "clear of islands". The cliff on the south shore, just to the west of Little Isthmus Channel, is a popular high diving spot for the brave.

Elbow Channel: The connection between Clear Lake and Newboro Lake is a natural one. Early (1830s) steamboat captains coined the name "the Devil's Elbow" for the narrow channel and tricky turn which took some skill to do with a paddle wheel boat.

Newboro Lake: Newboro Lake has a long history of cottaging and you'll notice many lovely old cottages on the lake, both on-shore and on the islands. The original name for the lake (through to the late 1800s) was Mud Lake, named for the depth of mud on the bottom of the lake.

Iron Island: This is the site of the earliest mining, outside of the quarries for the stones to build the locks and dams, on the Rideau Canal. The Chaffey brothers; John, Benjamin and Elswood appear to have acquired the mining rights to this deposit in about 1850. It was reported that they shipped 340 tons of iron ore that year to Kingston. The deposit was investigated by Alexander Murray of the Geological Survey of Canada and samples of this magnetic ore were shown at the first World's Fair in London, England in 1851. The Chaffey Mine, as it became known, consisted of four small open pits that were used to extract the ore (magnetite). Sir William Logan of the Geological Survey reported that the Chaffey brothers had mined 2,000 tons of iron ore from this deposit in 1858 and 4,000 tons in 1859 and shipped it, via the Rideau Canal and Lake Ontario, to Pittsburgh.

A causeway (still existing, just a bit underwater) linked the island with the mainland, with a gap between it and the island so that a barge could be slipped in. A boarding house stood at the mainland end of the causeway.

In about 1860, a second iron mine, the Matthews Mine (also known as the Yankee Mine), was opened on the mainland by Frank and Eugene Fifield. It was located about 350 m inland from the north shore of Iron Mine Bay. It consisted of a single open pit 300 feet long by 100 feet wide by 40 feet deep.

There are no definitive figures on the total amount mined from these two mines. In 1871 it was reported that a crew of 12 men had mined 3,500 tons from the Chaffey mine that year. That same year, at the Matthews Mine, a crew of 15 men mined 4,000 tons. This ore at this time was being shipped to Cleveland, Ohio. The mineralization was low grade (52% iron) and was only economic due to its location on the Rideau Canal, which allowed for direct on-water shipping to market. By 1885 both mines had closed.

Excitement was sparked in Newboro in the late 1950s with the arrival of exploration crews from New Mylamaque Explorations Ltd. Diamond drilling was carried out which delineated a potential open pit deposit containing 50 million tons grading 26.7% iron and 6% titanium dioxide. The two old mines, which sit about 800 metres from each other, are part of this single deposit which is about 100 m wide and 1000 m long. The deposit was (and remains) uneconomic. Today the mining of this deposit (or any deposit on the Rideau Canal) would never be allowed due to strict provincial mining regulations.

If you have a magnet or a magnetic compass handy when you visit the island, see if you can identify the magnetite rich rock. People exploring for iron in the 19th century used a dip needle (basically a compass placed on its side) to locate magnetite deposits.

Newboro Lock: See next section.

Benson and Mosquito Lakes: Benson was a small lake in the pre-canal era and Mosquito Lake didn't exist, it was a creek that drained the west end of Newboro Lake into Indian Lake. The flooding of the area from the lock and weir at Chaffeys Lock created Mosquito Lake and flooded the low land around Benson Lake. So today, there are many areas of shallow water, home to marshland wildlife.

One of the original native paddling routes went by way of Mosquito Creek since it avoided the portage between Clear Lake and Indian Lake (both routes were used).

Loon Lake: Keep an eye out for ospreys which have nests around this small lake.

Bedford Mills: This is a spot with a long history of both milling and shipbuilding. The outflow from Devil Lake dropped over Buttermilk Falls and then continued to Loon Lake. It was these falls that attracted two fellows, Barnet and Legg, to set up a sawmill here by 1829. They were squatting on the site and in 1831, Benjamin Tett acquired the milling rights and continued to operate the sawmill. A sawmill operated in this location until 1920. You'll notice docks made of slab wood – these were used to pile the lumber sawn by the mill, ready to be loaded onto barges. The beautiful stone grist mill, now a private residence, was built in 1850 and operated until 1904. This was also the site of shipbuilding – at least 29 vessels, mostly barges, were built here between 1855 and 1921.

In the 1880s, a proposal was put forward to build a canal link between Devil Lake and the Rideau Canal. Plans for a set of locks, to be located here at Bedford Mills, were drawn up, but that's as far as it went.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Chaffeys Lock to Newboro Lock Scenic Route (12 km)

Follow the main navigation leaving Chaffeys Lock, but then head west, along the south shore of Indian Lake. When due south of Richardson Island, turn north and paddle to the island. This was Fettercairn Island where you can see the remains of the old hospital. Continue to the north shore of the lake and turn east and paddle along shore to the narrow cut between Indian and Clear Lakes. Going through the cut you'll notice one of the shortest ferry crossings in Canada (40 m / 130 ft). Turn west and follow the south shore, paddling past a favourite rock cliff diving spot. Then turn north and paddle to the narrows between Clear and Newboro lakes. Once in Newboro Lake, paddle past the west side of Goat Island and continue north to the Green Islands. Turn west and paddle along the shore until you are south of Channel Island. Turn north and paddle across the lake to Iron Island. Note the old (1850s) open pits on the island, used to extract iron. Note the causeway, now a few inches underwater, that linked the island with the mainland. Now turn east and paddle to Newboro.

To Bedford Mills

Two interesting paddling routes can be taken to get to Bedford Mills, from either Chaffeys or Newboro.

From Chaffeys, paddle to Richardson Island. From there, turn west and paddle to Mosquito Lake. Paddle through that lake into Pollywog Lake and then through the channel into Newboro Lake. Cross Newboro Lake to Stevens Creek, turn west and head into Loon Lake. Paddle straight through Loon Lake to the County Road 10 bridge. Paddle under the bridge into the pond below the mills. Please note that the old mill is now a private residence. The one way distance is 12.5 km (7.8 mi).

From Newboro, paddle south along the shoreline to Iron Island. Note the old (1850s) open pits on the iron, used to extract iron. Continue paddling west to Stevens Creek and follow the directions shown above. The one way distance is 9.5 km (5.9 mi).

SECTION 7: Newboro Lock to Narrows Lock

(includes Upper Rideau Lake)

Dog Paddling

This is the area of Upper Rideau Lake, with Newboro Lock at the south end, Narrows Lock at the east end and the village of Westport at the west end. There is quite a bit of unsheltered open water, so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out.

Water Access

Upper Rideau Lake: There are four points of access to the lake; Newboro Lock, Narrows Lock, Forrester's Landing ramp and the public ramp in Westport. The first three offer the easiest access (lots of parking + access).

At **Newboro Lock**, there is a bit of a portage from the public parking area (a day fee for parking applies) to the docks above the lock. However, with the lockmaster's permission, you can bring your vehicle to near the docks via Lock Road and then after unloading, park in the public parking area. At **Narrows Lock** there is lots of parking available and a small gravel ramp (44° 42.200'N - 76° 17.770'W) that provides access into the lake. At the end of **Forrester's Landing Drive** there is a gravel ramp (44° 40.240'N - 76° 26.160'W) maintained by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. In **Westport**, there is a public ramp at the foot of Bedford Street (44° 40.780'N - 76° 23.640'W). Parking in Westport during the summer can be problematic.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also a few campgrounds, many B&Bs and hotels (in both Westport and Newboro). For information about local accommodations see: www.westportrideaulakes.on.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: Limited supplies can be found at Kilborn's in Newboro and full supplies (hardware, grocery) can be found in Westport.

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Newboro to Narrows along the navigation channel = 8.4 km (5.2 mi)
- Newboro to Westport along the navigation channel = 9.2 km (5.7 mi)
- Westport to Narrows along the navigation channel = 8.4 km (5.2 mi)
- Upper Rideau Lake circumference: = 34 km (21 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Upper Rideau Lake

In the pre-canal era this was the west end of a large single Rideau Lake. The dam and lock at Narrows (a narrow constriction in the original lake) raised the water in this area by about 8 feet (2.5 m). The lake has a maximum depth of 76 feet (23 m) with an average depth in the main part of the lake of about 40 feet (12 m). The west end of the lake is shallower with an average depth of about 18 feet (5.5 m).

The north side of the lake features a large exposure of syenite and monzonite (types of granite: the Westport Pluton) and much of the northern shoreline marks the trace of the Rideau Lake Fault.

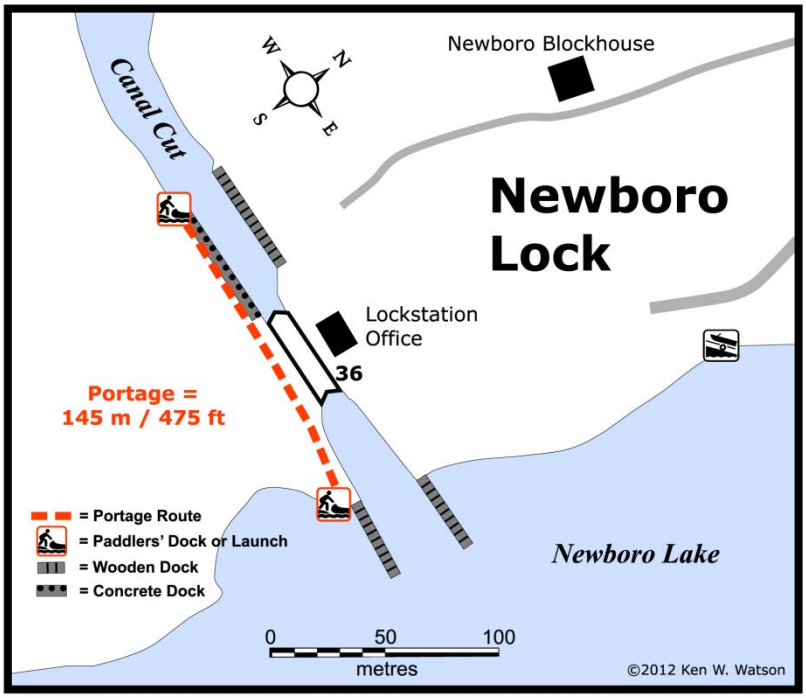
The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned (the exceptions being federal land in the vicinity of the locks and the Foley Mountain Conservation Area). Most of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

Upper Rideau Lake is part of the Rideau River watershed. While it is the highest lake on the Rideau Canal, 99.9% of its flow goes north to the Rideau River. There is no south flow to the Cataraqui River, the only contribution to that watershed is the small amount of water that gets locked through at Newboro (there is no weir at Newboro). Some assume that since Upper Rideau Lake is the highest spot on the Rideau Canal, that it must contribute water to both “sides” of the Rideau. That assumption is incorrect.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 7 for locations)

Newboro Lock: The lockstation here has a single lock (lift of 2.6 m / 8.7 ft). It is located on "The Isthmus," the watershed divide between the Rideau River watershed to the north and the Gananoque/Cataraqui watershed to the south. In the pre-canal era, a 2,400 m (2,600 yd) portage connected Rideau Lake with Newboro Lake. The original intention for the canal was to simply excavate an open cut between the two lakes. But the water couldn't be sufficiently raised at Chaffeys so Colonel By decided to put in a lock here at Newboro. In the end, with many difficulties, a lock and an excavated channel leading to Upper Rideau Lake were completed. At the lockstation you'll find a blockhouse, built in 1832, one of only four built along the Rideau. The lock was converted to electrical operation in 1966.

An interesting feature of this lock and also of Narrows Lock is that both were built without breastworks (an upper foundation). Colonel By didn't intend for these locks to be permanent, he thought that when conditions and technology permitted, his original plan, of simply having the isthmus at Newboro crossed by an open cut, with no locks here or at Narrows, could be implemented.



Newboro: Newboro features some excellent shopping opportunities for those who wish to exercise their credit cards.

This community had its roots with the building of the Rideau Canal. Originally it was just the portage route across the isthmus separating Rideau Lake from Mud (Newboro) Lake with no permanent settlement. A fair sized community grew during the building of the canal, but this was abandoned once the canal opened. It wasn't until about 1836 that Benjamin Tett built the first permanent home that was to form the nucleus of a new community, known as New Borough. He also became the first postmaster for the village, whose name was later shortened to Newboro'. It was officially incorporated as a village in 1876.

The village features lots of interesting history and a heritage walking tour brochure of Newboro is usually available in the village (and also on-line).

Royal Sappers and Miners Cemetery: For those willing to take a little hike, this cemetery, first used as a burial ground for workers who died during the construction of the canal at Newboro, is located on the north side of County Road 42, 300 m (1,000 ft) to the west of the bridge over the canal. If you're at the lock, a shortcut is to walk up the road on the south side of the lock (Fire Rd H1) to County Road 42. You'll find the cemetery about 140 m (450 ft) west of that point. The area around Fire Rd H1, near County Road 42, was the site of the main construction camp (1829-1831) for the building of the Newboro Lock.

There is a plaque commemorating the Royal Sappers and Miners (who worked to help build the Newboro lock and cut). A memorial notes that 13 of them are buried in this cemetery although the actual

number is 12. The present name of the cemetery is misleading, the original name was the Military and Civilian Cemetery since civilian workers, along with some of their wives and children who died during construction of the canal, are also buried here. That cemetery saw continued use as a burial ground until the 1940s and had the name "Old Presbyterian Cemetery" for many years.

There is a myth that the soldiers and civilians were originally buried in unmarked graves. That is pure myth, funerals were held for everyone who died and their graves were marked with wooden markers (which have long since rotted away). Their graves often had field stones as footstones which were later incorrectly interpreted as the unmarked (no name) grave marker.

Newboro Cut: This is the channel extending from the Newboro Lock to Upper Rideau Lake. It was excavated through hard bedrock (migmatite) during the building of the Rideau Canal. If the original canal design for an open canal cut to link Newboro Lake with Rideau Lake had been implemented, there would now be a very long stretch of canal, from Chaffeys to Poonamalie, with no locks. In the end, due to problems with the hard bedrock of the Isthmus, disease and a survey error of the levels of the two lakes, a lock had to be put in at Newboro and another lock at Narrows in Rideau Lake (the full story is told in my book *Tales of the Rideau*). In the 1890s, the cut was deepened and also widened a bit in places. However most of the piles of rock that line the shores of the cut are the original rocks excavated during the building of the Rideau Canal. You'll also notice a few drill holes in the bedrock lining the cut. These are most likely from the original excavation (hand drilled, blasted with black powder), but it is possible they could be related to later channel widening.

Newboro Bridge: While this high level bridge (8.2 m / 27 ft above the water), built in 1952, is no visual treat, it does sit in the location of Tett's wharf and warehouse, a major dockage for goods and people for almost 100 years. The original wharf was built by Benjamin Tett and John Kilborn, two of the early entrepreneurs in Newboro, sometime after 1840 (when they acquired the lease). It seems to have been solely in Tett's hands by 1849. It was still in use in the early 20th century with both cargo barges and passenger steamers such as the Rideau King and Rideau Queen docking there.

Newboro Cut – Stone Bridge Abutments: You'll paddle past two sets of cut stone bridge abutments. The one closest to the lock (southern set) is on the original road alignment (former Canal Street in Newboro) across the cut. The first bridge here was a high level timber bridge erected during canal construction. It was replaced in 1860 and rebuilt in 1897, these are the stone abutments that you can see today. The bridge itself was removed in 1952 when the present day concrete bridge was erected.

The second northern set are the abutments for the railway bridge, erected in 1886 by the Brockville, Westport and Sault Ste. Marie Railway and rebuilt in 1919 by the CNR. The bridge was removed in 1953 after the rail line had been abandoned.

Upper Rideau Lake: Due to the underlying geology, Upper Rideau Lake is a contrast of topography, with the large granitic (syenite and monzonite) exposures on the north shore and low lying flat lands (generally Paleozoic sandstones) on the south shore (see map in Geology section). The plutons (large rounded areas of igneous rocks) are Precambrian, between 1.06 and 1.09 billion years old. They intrude into older (1.3 billion year old) marbles and quartzites. Near Westport is the Westport Pluton (Foley Mountain) and near Narrows is the Rideau Pluton. Running along the north edge of the lake is the Rideau Lake Fault – some of the cliff faces in the area are due to this fault. There are a few scattered very small scale mica mines (from the late 1800s) in this area.

The lake has a long history of cottaging and there are some lovely old cottages to be seen along the route.

Westport: This is a lovely little village with many interesting shops and is well worth a stop. It's also home to the **Rideau District Museum** which showcases local heritage. Westport Harbour (run by the village) is on a little island (the navigation channels leads to it) with an arch concrete walkway over the channel leading to the village. Public washrooms and showers are available at the Visitor's Centre in the village.

The village got its start in the 1820s. Part of the attraction was the water potential of the flow from Westport Sand Lake to the western end of Rideau Lake (one single lake at that time). The first person to tap this potential appears to be Sheldon Stoddard, who built a sawmill here in 1828. The little community that started to form was known as "Head of the Lake". In 1829, David Manhard built a dam and mill downstream of Stoddard's mill, creating a mill pond. That pond still exists today. The opening of the Rideau Canal in 1832 allowed the village to flourish. It became known as Manhard's Mills until 1841 when the name "Westport" was adopted. It was incorporated as a village in 1904.

A heritage walking tour of Westport is available on-line.

Foley Mountain Conservation Area: This large conservation area covers part of Westport Mountain. Not far from the road entrance to the conservation area (off of County Road 10) is **Spy Rock** which provides a great view of Westport and the surrounding countryside (well worth the hike). There is a beach and picnic area in Little Bay. There are also numerous interesting walking trails in the conservation area, including those which are part of the Rideau Trail (see below). The conservation area is run by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

The Rideau Trail: This hiking trail, marked with orange triangles (blue for side loops), extends from Kingston to Ottawa. In this area it runs along the north shore of Upper Rideau Lake (see map). For those interested in the trail, the Rideau Trail Association provides maps on their website, www.rideautrail.org.

Narrows Lock: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

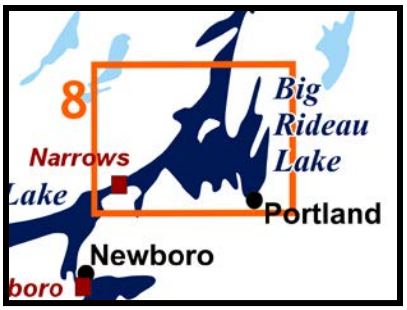
No specific route suggestions have been provided – but the circumference of Upper Rideau Lake can be done as a day paddle. I usually do this by launching from Narrows (with the prevailing westerly winds, odds are that I'll get blown back to the lock in the afternoon). If you're paddling this as a route trip along the entire Rideau, then it is worth following the shorelines to Westport (from either Newboro or Narrows).

SECTION 8: Narrows Lock to Tar Island

(includes the southern part of Big Rideau Lake)

Locking through Narrows Lock into Big Rideau Lake

This is the main body of Big Rideau Lake, with Narrows Lock at the west end, the village of Portland on the east side and Tar Island (and also Murphys Point Provincial Park) at the north end. There is quite a bit of unsheltered open water, so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should ensure that they do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out.



Water Access

Big Rideau Lake (south): There are five points of access to this section of Big Rideau Lake; Narrows Lock, Hudson Bay ramp, Portland Public Ramp, MacDonalds Bay ramp and the ramp in Murphys Point Provincial Park.

At **Narrows Lock** it is a short portage to the canoe/kayak dock. The **Hudson Bay ramp** (44° 41.860'N - 76° 16.360'W) can be accessed from either McCann Rd (off of Narrows Lock Road) or Big Rideau Lake Road (off of Hwy. 15). It is located at the foot of Big Rideau Lake Road and consists of a grated steel ramp with limited roadside parking. In **Portland**, there are two public options. There is the public ramp right in town at the foot of St. Mary's Street (44° 41.935'N - 76° 11.550'W). Just to the north of town, there is a public ramp in **MacDonalds Bay** (44° 42.655'N - 76° 10.580'W). Portland is also home to two large marinas; Bayview Yacht Harbour and Len's Cove Marina. Just north of the map for this section (map 8) is the ramp in **Murphys Point Provincial Park** (44° 46.815'N - 76° 13.030'W) – it is shown on map 9.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations and Colonel By Island are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are also a few campgrounds, many B&Bs and hotels (in Westport, Newboro and Smiths Falls). For information about local accommodations see: www.westportrideaulakes.on.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: Local sources for supplies Westport (grocery and hardware), Portland (grocery) and Smiths Falls (full services).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Narrows Lock to Murphys Point Provincial Park (ramp) along the navigation channel = 11.2 km (7.0 mi)
- Narrows Lock to Portland along the navigation channel = 9.5 km (5.9 mi)
- Portland to Murphys Point Provincial Park along the navigation channel = 9.5 km (5.9 mi)
- Narrows Lock to Colonel By Island = 7.0 km (4.3 mi)
- Portland to Colonel By Island = 4.7 km (2.9 mi)
- Colonel By Island to Murphys Point Provincial Park = 5.5 km (3.4 mi)
- Big Rideau Lake south circumference (Narrows Lock to Rocky Narrows) = 88 km (55 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Big Rideau Lake

In the pre-canal era this was a single lake that stretched from Westport to Stonehouse Island (Stonehouse Point at the time). The dam at Poonamalie raised the water in the lake by about 6 feet (1.8 m). The lock and dam at Narrows created a separate lake (Upper Rideau Lake) from the western end of the original Rideau Lake. Big Rideau Lake has a maximum depth of 330 feet (100 m) with an average depth in the western part of the lake of about 100 feet (30 m) and in the eastern part of about 40 feet (12 m).

The western side of the lake features a large exposure of granite (the Rideau Lake Pluton) and much of the northern shoreline marks the trace of the Rideau Lake Fault. The north and west sides of the lake exhibit the rugged topography of the Frontenac Axis, the Pre-Cambrian rocks of the Canadian Shield while the south side of the lake exhibits flat-lying Palaeozoic rocks (mostly sandstone). See the map in the Geology Section.

The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned, the exceptions being federal land in the vicinity of the locks, Colonel By Island (federal), the Mill Pond Conservation Area (provincial - 437 ha), Murphys Point Provincial Park (provincial – 1243 ha) and the Portland Bay Conservation Area (provincial – 4 ha). Most of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

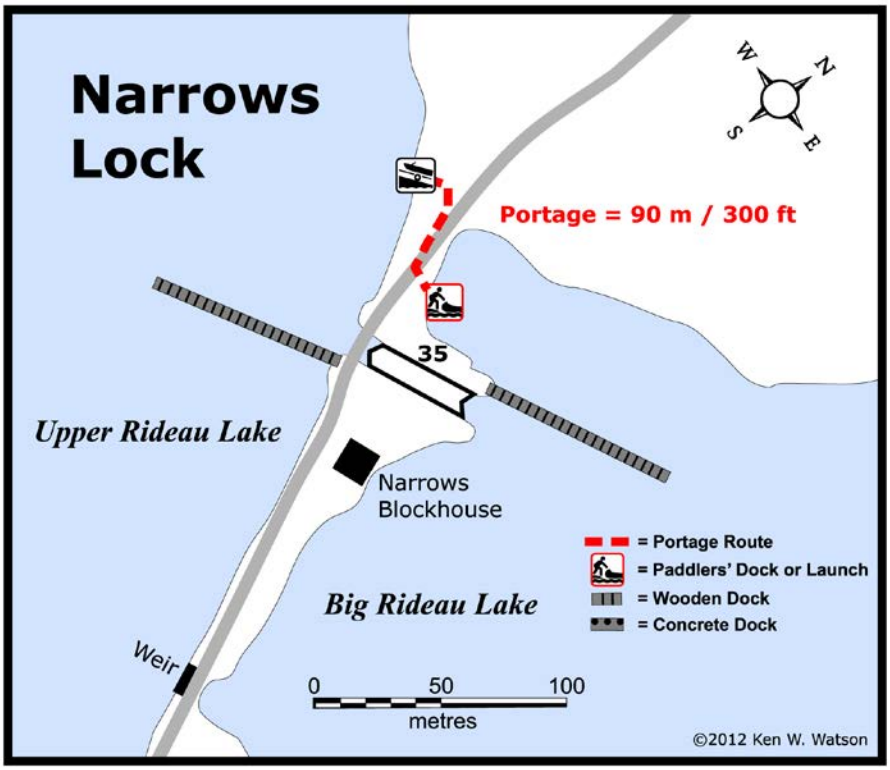
POINTS OF INTEREST (listed counter clockwise from Narrows – see Map 8 for locations)

Narrows Lock: The lockstation here has a single lock (lift of 0.8 m /2.5 ft). It is located on a narrow spit of land, originally known as First Narrows, where the width of the channel in this area prior to the canal

being built was only about 30 m (100 ft). For a short time it was used as a ford, connecting to a road (bridle trail) that led to Perth. By the time of lock construction (late-1820s) this path was out of use. The lift of the lock used to be about 4.8 feet (1.8 m) but the rebuilding of the dam at Poonamalie has raised the level of Big Rideau Lake, lowering the lift at Narrows to its present day 2.5 feet (0.8 m).

The lock was excavated into the bedrock of the spit, with the waste weir positioned near where the original channel existed. The spit was raised (dammed) to impound more water. A blockhouse, one of only four on the Rideau, was built here in 1832 to protect the lock. It is used today as the lockmaster's office (and public washrooms). The reason this lock is here, in the middle of a lake, is a story of disease and geology as recounted in *Tales of the Rideau.*

An interesting feature of this lock and also of Newboro Lock is that both were built without breastworks (an upper foundation). Colonel By didn't intend for these locks to be permanent. He thought that when conditions and technology permitted, his original plan, of simply having the isthmus at Newboro crossed by an open cut, with no locks here and at Newboro, could be implemented.



Big Rideau Lake: As with Upper Rideau Lake, Big Rideau Lake is a contrast of topography with the large granitic (syenite and monzonite) exposures on the west shore, low lying flat lands on the south shore (generally Paleozoic sandstones) and a bit more topography with Precambrian marble (crystalline limestone) on the east shore. The Rideau Lake Pluton (a large rounded area of igneous rock) is Precambrian, between 1.06 and 1.09 billion years old. It intrudes into older (1.3 billion year old) marbles and quartzites. Running along the west edge of the lake is the Rideau Lake Fault – the cliff faces that can be seen just north of Narrows are due to this fault. In the northern region of the lake (very generally in the area of Otty Lake and west of Nobles Bay – see Map 9) there was quite a bit of small scale mining done in

the late 1800s and early 1900s, primarily for phosphate (apatite) and mica, plus a bit for graphite. See the maps in the Geology of the Rideau Canal section.

The lake has a long history of cottaging (from the 1870s) and there are some lovely old cottages to be seen along the route, a few of these are identified in the text below.

Donovans Point: An interesting part of local history is that it tends to get clouded with anecdotal tales – people, places and time periods get mixed up and erroneous conclusions are drawn. We have two such tales for Big Rideau Lake, that of Donovans Point and that of Murphys Bay. The tale for Donovans Point is that an Irish canal worker fell sick and on his deathbed requested that he be returned to Ireland so that he could be buried in Irish soil. There was no money to return him to Ireland, so instead a small plot of land was consecrated as being Irish and he was buried on the Rideau, in "Irish soil." A much more embellished version of this fictional tale appeared as a factual article in the Sept 2, 2007 edition of the Ottawa Citizen.

This tale has its roots in the burial of Dennis Donovan. Dennis, born in about 1795, immigrated to Canada from County Cork, Ireland. He may have ended up working on the Rideau Canal (not substantiated, there is no actual evidence for this). What we do know for sure is that in 1842 he bought 50 acres of land in the area near Donovans Point. He and his family operated an apple orchard and truck (market) garden in this location. He died on December 18, 1851 (suicide) and was buried on his property. When his widow and son sold the property in 1860, it was for the entire 50 acres with the exception of a small parcel, 9 feet long by 6 feet wide, the burial place of Dennis Donovan. One story (not verified) goes that the deed for this 9 foot by 6 foot wide plot was given to the City of Cork in Ireland. These are the roots of the fictional "Rideau Canal worker buried in Irish soil" story. Donavan's headstone was found in 1970, it read "*DENIS DONOVAN departed this life Dec. 18, 1851 aged 56 years, a native of the County Cork, Ireland."*

Murphys Bay: The tale here is that this was the original location for the route of the Rideau Canal – that the plan was to do a canal cut from here, cross country via Crosby, to Newboro Lake. It is said that a warehouse and wharf were constructed here at that time in anticipation of the canal coming through. While these structures may have been built, they certainly weren't to service a canal in this spot – the surveys and plans for the Rideau Canal in this area always showed it going through First Narrows and over the Isthmus (Newboro). There were never any plans to take it by way of Murphys Bay.

Murphys Bay also holds a role in the settlement of Perth in 1816. It was named after David Murphy, who had a farm here, but there was an earlier settler in this area, referenced as "old man Lindsay" in an 1879 book, in 1816 he would have been young man Lindsay. One of the earliest maps of the region, Joshua Jebb's 1816 map, shows the only road in the area to "Lindsay's," located at the head of Murphys Bay. The story of the settlement of Perth says that Lindsay operated a large scow and that he transported settlers in April 1816 down Rideau Lake to a landing in Beveridge Bay. We also have an account from John Kilborn (a young, 21-year-old military officer in 1816) that he escorted the settlers to Rideau Lake and "had to cut a road the last three miles, to reach the lake." He says the location they ended up in is that of today's Portland. Their actual destination was Old Landing, a spot a few hundred metres east of today' downtown Portland. The most likely scenario is that Lindsay overwintered his scow in the sheltered Old Landing Bay and this was the destination of the new road. The actual landing is now underwater, near the east side of Sheep Island. The settlers were then taken down Rideau Lake to a spot in Beveridge Bay (near where the locks are today) where they disembarked and went overland to the Tay River at a point above the lower set of rapids in the river, where they continued by scow into Perth, arriving there on April 17, 1816. We can imagine the trepidation of these settlers as they headed out onto the waters of Big Rideau Lake to make a new life for themselves in the newly established community of Perth.

Portland: This small community features two large marinas plus a public docking area. It has services such as a grocery store and bank. Originally known as Old Landing, it was settled in the early 1800s with a community forming by the early 1820s. In 1833 it was renamed Portland in honour of William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, the 3rd Duke of Portland. A feature building in the village is the Emmanuel Anglican Church, built in 1862, located at the south end of the village. A heritage walking tour brochure of the village is available in the village or on-line.

Colonel By Island: This is an island owned by Parks Canada. Paddlers can camp here (for a fee – cash only). Of note to paddlers, there are no garbage cans, only recycling cans, so you'll have to take your garbage back out with you. Also, the water at this location is not potable. There is a 3 km long hiking trail looping around the island. The two "inland" lakes, Long Island Lake and Lost Lake, make for nice sheltered paddling.

The island has an interesting history. It was originally known as the "Isle of Guernsey" and was used as a cow paddock. The first building, a hotel, was built by R.G. Harvey in about 1889. Harvey was one of the entrepreneurs behind the Brockville, Westport & Sault Ste Marie Railway. Despite the name, the actual railway, built between 1886 and 1888, only made it from Brockville to Westport (the company went bankrupt in 1894). This first hotel appears to have been partially or completely burned down in 1889 (shortly after it was built).

In 1893, the property was purchased by a syndicate, mostly men working for the CPR. It's a bit unclear whether there was a building on the site at the time or if they built a new lodge. It was operated as the CPR Angler's Club (or just Angler's Club) with membership limited to 100. To service the club, they had a fast steam launch stationed in Smiths Falls.

Sometime in the early 1900s, I.G. Ogden, the vice-president of the CPR, took over the lodge to use as his summer cottage. It burned down in the fall of 1915 and 1916 found Ogden busy building a new cottage, called the "Angler's Inn." This building was being "fitted with all modern conveniences," including a power plant to generate electricity and pump water.

The Angler's Inn was still there in 1920. It seems to have fallen out of use sometime in the 1920s.

The flat roofed building that you can see today on the Island is "Wag's Lodge," built by Danny Arnstein (co-owner of Yellow Cab in New York and Chicago) in 1949-50. The cottage features two massive "peanut rock" fireplaces and "driftwood plywood" walls. It was designed by architect Horace Roberts of Westport. Danny Arnstein had a number of famous visitors to the island including actor David Niven. Arnstein passed away in 1960 and the island passed into new hands. It was sold by its last private owner, Gerry Livingston, to the Government of Canada in 1979. The building is not maintained and is slowly falling apart (marked by Parks Canada with keep out signs).

Other Islands: Islands served many purposed on the Rideau. In the mid-late 1800s, many of them were used for cattle grazing (no fences required) and some were farmed (potatoes were a favourite crop). Cottaging on the islands of Big Rideau Lake started in the late 1800s and several of the present day cottages that you can see date back to that time. Those who like interesting cottage and boathouse architecture will have a great time paddling along the shoreline of the lake and to the various islands. For a history of several of the cottages on Big Rideau Lake visit the library in Portland and have a look at the book *Rideau Passages* by D. Jane Moore (1982). A bit of island history, much taken from Moore's interesting book, is presented below (going from west to east).

Grindstone Island: This was the summer home of Admiral Sir Charles E. Kingsmill, the first head of the Canadian navy (the Canadian Naval Service which later became the Royal Canadian Navy). The navy

was founded in 1910 and he served as its head until 1920. He acquired Grindstone Island in 1914. He passed away here in 1935 and is buried in the Emmanuel Anglican Cemetery in Portland. The name derives from the fact that grindstone (sandstone) was mined here in the 1860s. Some small scale graphite mining was also done here in the early 20th century. A 6 acre part of the island is now the Lady Kingsmill Nature Reserved (Rideau Waterway Land Trust property).

Tower Island: The original cottage and tower on this island likely date back to the early 1900s. It has provided a visual landmark on the lake for many years.

Big Island: When the Rideau Canal was flooded with the building of dams (the slackwater system), forested land was flooded. When these trees died, they remained standing. Dead standing trees are used by the Great Blue Heron as a nesting spot (they build a nest of sticks at the top of the dead tree). By the mid-1800s there were thousands of herons (and also many osprey) nesting in the drowned forest lands of the Rideau. One such spot was Big Island, where the shallow "lake" on the west side of the island was host to many nests. Local history records two residents, Ernie Seward and Sim Scovill, once (likely in the late 1800s) counting over 550 heron nests in this spot.

Cow Island: This island is owned by the Big Rideau Lake Association, purchased by them in 1954. The original cottage on the island was built by the Gallagher family of Portland in the 1890s. The present building was constructed in 1962 by the BRLA.

Lands End: The point of land by Exe Island was the location of Garrett's Rest – a summer hotel built in about 1889 by S. Garrett of Smiths Falls. It had about 20 rooms for guests and at one point cabins were built on Exe Island to accommodate more visitors. The Smiths Falls Record in 1897 described Rideau Lake and Garrett's Rest: *"It is one of the most delightful spots in all Canada. For boating, sailing, fishing and scenery it has no equal. The accommodation at Garrett's Rest is number one. The house this year has been renewed with in and without and presents a charming aspect. The price is extremely moderate and the host and hostess the most genial and obliging to be found anywhere."*

The "Palace Steamers"; *Rideau King* and *Rideau Queen*, both had Garrett's Rest as a scheduled stop. A 1913 brochure shows accommodation at Garrett's Rest to be a bargain at only $1.00 to $1.50 per day. Other hotels in the regions such as the Hotel Kenney at Jones Falls, the Lake Opinicon Club House (the Opinicon) at Chaffeys Locks and The Fisherman's Rest in Westport were charging from $2.00 to $3.00 per night. The last owner, Albert Gallagher, died in 1934 and the building deteriorated, eventually being torn down in about 1946.

Wedding Cake Cottage: As you travel along the east shore of the lake from Lands End to Fancy Free, you'll be sure to notice the Wedding Cake Cottage, built about 1880. It was one of two of this unique style of building built on Rideau Lake, the second one used to be at Rideau Ferry, but it was destroyed (either burned or taken down) in the early 2000s, so this building remains as the only example of this style of architecture on the lake.

Fancy Free: The oldest standing cottage on the lake, the original cottage dates back to the 1870s. It was built by the Washburn family who lived in Smiths Falls. Although expanded a bit over the years, it still retains many of the features of the original building.

Muskrat Hole: On the west side of the lake you'll see a large building at the entrance to Muskrat Hole. This is the site of a failed business venture, Rideau Lakes Vacations, that set up shop here in the 1980s. They generated a great deal of controversy on the lake since, in addition to the lodge, they planned to have 56 large (40-foot) houseboats available for rent (parked in Muskrat Bay). They operated for a few years and then went bankrupt. The property was privately purchased in 1998.

Little Boys Camp: The island in front of Muskrat Hole is the site of Little Boys Camp, built by Charles Parker in 1908. Parker used to entertain many of his American friends here, and, according to local lore, the spot was named due to these men acting like "little boys."

Murphys Point Provincial Park: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

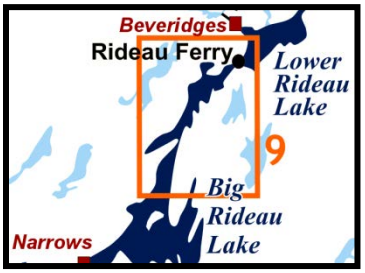
No specific route suggestions have been provided – but it is worth spending some time on the lake. If you are travelling through the Rideau, I'd recommend taking an extra day with a diversion to Portland and include in that a visit to the central group of islands (the area from Long Island, including Colonel By Island, to Big Island). This island tour can also be done as an easy day trip by launching from Portland.

SECTION 9: Tar Island to Rideau Ferry

(includes the northern half of Big Rideau Lake)

Camping at a Lockstation

This is the northern part of Big Rideau Lake, with Tar Island and Murphys Point Provincial Park at the south end and Rideau Ferry at the north end. There is quite a bit of unsheltered open water, so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should ensure that they do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out.



Water Access

Big Rideau Lake (north): The are two points of access to this section of Big Rideau Lake; Murphys Point Provincial Park at the south end and Rideau Ferry Conservation Area at the north end.

Murphys Point Provincial Park offers a ramp (44° 46.815'N - 76° 13.030'W) and lots of parking. Since it's also a campground, it makes a very good "base of operation" for paddling both north and south from the ramp. The **Rideau Ferry Conservation Area** boat launch ramp (44° 51.400'N - 76° 08.130'W) offers easy access with lots of parking to the north end of this section of the Rideau. There is also a small gravel municipal ramp in **Rideau Ferry** (44° 50.900'N - 76° 08.570'W), but there is no parking in the immediate vicinity. There are also two marinas in Rideau Ferry.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). Murphys Point Provincial Park offers both internal camping areas as well as some boat-in camping areas (including a couple of canoe/kayak only camping spots). There are also B&Bs and hotels (in Smiths Falls). For information about local accommodations see: www.smithsfalls.ca and www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada).

Supplies: Local sources for supplies are Portland (grocery) and Smiths Falls (full services).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines and bays. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Tar Island to Rideau Ferry along the navigation channel = 12.5 km (7.8 mi)
- Murphys Point Provincial Park (ramp) to Rideau Ferry along the navigation channel = 10 km (6.2 mi)
- Big Rideau Lake north circumference (Rocky Narrows to Rideau Ferry – not including Adams Lake) = 40 km (25 mi)
- Adams Lake circumference = 8.3 km (5.2 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Lakes

Big Rideau Lake

In the pre-canal era this was a single lake that stretched from Westport to Stonehouse Island (Stonehouse Point at the time). The canal dam at Poonamalie raised the water in the lake by about 6 feet (1.8 m). The lock and dam and Narrows made the western end of the lake into a separate lake (Upper Rideau Lake). Big Rideau Lake has a maximum depth of 330 feet (100 m) with an average depth in the area covered by this guide of about 50 feet (150 m).

This part of Big Rideau Lake marks the northern edge of the Frontenac Axis, the exposure of very old (Pre-Cambrian) rocks of the Canadian Shield. North of Adams Lake, the geology changes to younger Paleozoic rocks – generally flat lying limestone and sandstone.

The land bordering the lake is mostly privately owned (the exceptions being Murphys Point Provincial Park (provincial – 1243 ha), the Mill Pond Conservation Area (provincial) and the Rideau Ferry Conservation area (provincial). Most of the lake has moderate density cottage and summer home development.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 9 for locations)

Murphys Point Provincial Park: This is a large provincial park with many interesting features. For the paddler, there are several boat-in campsites (including a couple of canoe/kayak only camping spots). It also features a number of interesting hiking trails (interpretive brochures are available in the park), the historic Silver Queen Mine (a phosphate and mica mine that operated from 1903 to 1920), old homesteads and an historic sawmill site (dating back to the 1820s). You can do a loop trip through the park from Hoggs Bay to Loon Lake to Nobles Bay and back to Hoggs Bay (12 km with 2 portages). The park is located on a beautiful spot on Big Rideau Lake and well worth a visit.

Hoggs Bay: This is a small, paddling-only lake (power boats are not allowed). At the end of the lake you'll find the historic sawmill site. A wooden sawmill was built here in about 1820 and was replaced by a stone structure in about 1852. It was severely damaged in the Great Fire of 1870 (which decimated large areas of Carleton and Lanark counties). You'll often find loons paddling around the bay.

Frontenac Axis/Lake Iroquois/Champlain Sea: Geologically, as you paddle from Rocky Narrows to Rideau Ferry, you'll be passing through the irregular northern exposure of the Frontenac

Axis, the northern part of glacial Lake Iroquois, and the southern limit of the Champlain Sea. Information about these events can be found in the Geology Section.

In the area near Rocky Narrows (very generally in the area of Otty Lake and west of Nobles Bay) there was quite a bit of small scale mining done in the late 1800s and early 1900s, primarily for phosphate (apatite) and mica, plus a bit for graphite. See the maps in the Geology section.

Conglomerate: A bit of an oddball rock exposure, geologically speaking, can be found on the east shore in the southern part of Rocky Narrows (44° 47.050'N 76° 12.090'W). A conglomerate is a type of sedimentary rock containing poorly or unsorted rocks (often of different rock types). In this case it contains pieces and boulders (up to 0.6 m / 2 feet in size) of marble, granite, pegmatite and some quartz in a matrix of limestone. The oddball part is that it post-dates the older Precambrian rocks (it sits unconformably on top of these) but appears to pre-date the younger sedimentary rocks, perhaps representing the erosional remnant of an early member of the younger Paleozoic rocks.

William McLaren Cottage: As you come into Rideau Ferry, you'll notice a group of red roofed buildings with a distinctive roof shape on the southeastern shore. William McLaren acquired this property in 1898. It contained the pine log house built by the Donaldson family (a neighbour of the Oliver family – see below) in 1817. This log house can still be seen, it's the closest building to the water. In 1901 the veranda, second storey and chimney were added.

Rideau Ferry: There are two marinas, a restaurant and extensive public dockage in this location. In its heyday, this was a busy spot with a couple of hotels servicing the Rideau traveller. This location was originally known as Oliver's Ferry after John Oliver, who set up a ferry business here in 1816 (the same year that Perth was founded). John met an untimely death in about 1821 (suicide) and the ferry business was taken over by his son William (who also met an untimely death – shot by a neighbour in a dispute over trespassing cows in 1842). Over time, stories have grown that the Olivers didn't ferry all their customers, that skeletal remains of some of these unfortunate travellers were found in Oliver's buildings. That story is recounted in *Tales of the Rideau*. The Oliver's ferry business was taken over by Archibald Campbell in about 1832 when he built a wharf and warehouse on the north shore at Rideau Ferry to service both Rideau Canal traffic and his ferry service. He died in 1834 and his wife Elizabeth continued the ferry service.

Rideau Ferry Bridge: This location was used as a crossing to Perth starting in 1816, when a ferry service was set up by John Oliver. A ferry service continued in this spot until 1874, when a fixed bridge with an incorporated swing bridge (located at the north end) was built (similar in style to the Brass Point Bridge). The fully wooden bridge was replaced with fixed steel spans in 1896 (the swing bridge remained wood). The entire bridge was replaced with the present concrete high level (8.0 m / 26 ft) bridge in 1968.

Beveridge Bay/Tay Canal: At Rideau Ferry you have a choice of continuing on the Rideau Canal to the lockstation at Poonamalie or go to the head of Beveridge Bay where you will find the locks marking the entrance to the Tay Canal. Section 10 is a description of the Tay Canal – Section 11 continues along the Rideau Canal.

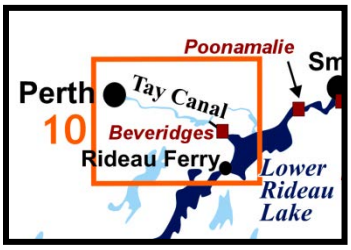
ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

No specific route suggestions have been provided. If you're launching from the ramp in Murphys Point Provincial Park, do a paddle first in Hoggs Bay – motorboats are not allowed in the bay so it can be very peaceful.

Paddlers headed towards Perth

SECTION 10: The Tay Canal

This is an easy paddling river with lots of marshland.



Water Access

Water access is available at **Beveridges Lock 33** (dock access upstream and ramp access downstream) or at **Last Duel Park** in Perth (dock and ramp: 44° 53.970'N - 76° 14.390'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There is also the Last Duel Park (a campground) in Perth, a host of B&Bs and several hotels (Perth and Smiths Falls). For information about local accommodations see: www.beautifulperth.com, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the town of Smiths Falls or the town of Perth, both of which have full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores).

Distances:

Beveridges Lock 33 to the Perth Basin along the navigation channel = 9.7 km (6.1 mi)

Beveridges to Perth Basin via the scenic route = 11.0 km (6.8 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

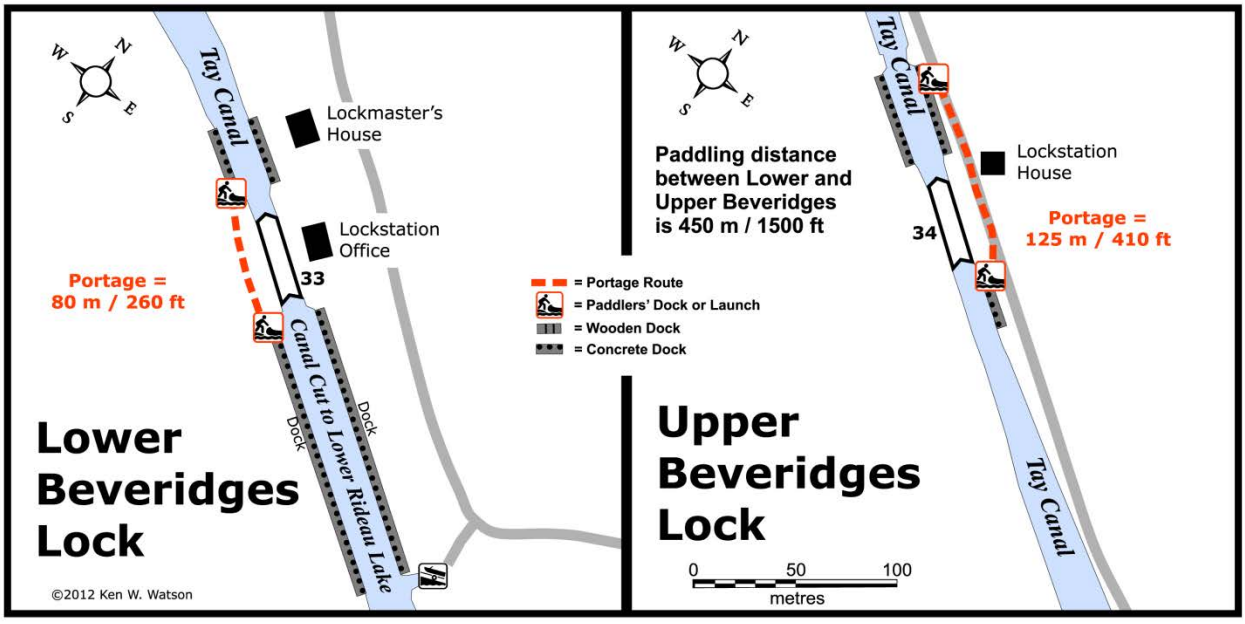
The Tay Canal

The Tay Canal follows a dredged cut from the Beveridges Locks to the original channel of the Tay River. Several sections from that point to Perth have been dredged. There is a slow moving current and extensive marshlands surround the canal in the southern half of the route. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with that have a water depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant, particularly herons, ospreys, ducks, turtles, frogs, muskrats and beavers.

The paddler will have no trouble getting into the Perth Basin. The Craig Street bridge, just north of Last Duel Park, has a fixed height of 7 ft (2.1 m). A little farther up, the Beckwith Street bridge (a swing bridge) has a unswung clearance of 5.2 ft (1.6 m) and past that the Drummond Street fixed bridge has a clearance of 9.5 ft (2.9 m). See Map 10a for downtown Perth details.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 10 for locations)

Beveridges Locks: There are two separate locks at this station (lift of Lower Beveridges = 12 ft /3.6 m – Upper Beveridges = 10.9 ft /3.3 m). Although these look just like original Rideau Canal locks, they were in fact built over fifty years after the Rideau Canal was built. Constructed in the late 1880s, they were built using the original design specifications of the Rideau locks.



Tay Canal: The Tay Canal has a very interesting history. Today's canal, starting at Beveridge Bay, is actually the 2nd Tay Canal, constructed in the late 1880s. The 1st Tay Canal was opened in 1834 and went from Perth to Port Elmsley. It consisted of 5 locks, 6 dams (with timber slides), two swing bridges and several embankments. The locks were 90 feet long by 20 feet wide (27 x 6.1 m) and a depth in the channel

of 3.5 feet (1.1 m). This would accommodate any type of Durham boat and even some small steamers. The 1st Tay Canal was never a commercial success and it fell into disuse and was shut down by 1865.

The 2nd Tay Canal came about from a lobby by Perth business people, championed by local Minister of Parliament, John Haggart. The locks, started in 1885, were built to Rideau Canal standards and were completed in 1887. At this time dredging technology was available, so the required depth of navigation was created by a combination of building a dam and creating/deepening the channel by dredging. Final excavation of the Perth Basin was completed in 1891. For a time this 2nd Tay Canal was knows as "Haggart's Ditch."

The Tay provides many wildlife viewing opportunities, particularly of marsh-loving birds. Take the scenic route along the original channel of the Tay River to view extensive marshland environments. You'll likely see ospreys, herons and the reclusive Pied-billed Grebe (a small diving bird).

Beveridges Bridge: This is a fixed high level (6.7 m / 22 ft) bridge which dates to about 1961. It replaced a swing bridge, built in 1898, that used to be located just south of the present day bridge (you can still see the abutments). That swing bridge was removed in 1961 and installed at Narrows Lockstation in 1964.

First Tay Canal, Lock 5: You can still see the remains of old lock 5 of the First Tay Canal, completed in 1834, on your paddle to Perth. It is located near the confluence of Jebbs Creek and the Tay River, adjacent to the viewing platform in the Perth Wildlife Reserve. The main channel of the present Tay Canal is a dredged cut to the north of the old lock – you can paddle a little ways up the original canal channel. A dock and picnic area were put in place here in 2014.

Perth Wildlife Reserve: This 257 ha wildlife reserve is highlighted by a 2.5 km walking trail. Access from the water is easy via the dock at the location of old lock 5 of the first Tay Canal (see above). You'll also find a viewing platform at this location. The reserve is run by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. More info and a trail guide is available at: www.rvca.ca

Last Duel in Upper Canada: A small meadow on the north side of the north end of an original Tay River meander, just south of Last Duel Park (near where a set of power lines cross the Tay Canal), is the presumed site of the Last Duel in Upper Canada. It happened on June 13, 1833, between Robert Lyon and John Wilson. The loser of the duel (you can read all about it in my *Tales of the Rideau*) is buried in the Old Burying Ground (1821 - 1972) located beside Last Duel Park.

Last Duel Park: This is a public campground operated by the Town of Perth – both day use and camping are permitted. Boater access is from the public docks and boat ramp at the north end of the park.

Craig St. Bridge: This is fixed low level (2.1 m / 7 ft) bridge built in 1954. This bridge effectively cuts off most boat traffic into Perth. It replaced a swing bridge that was originally erected c.1889 with the building of the 2nd Tay Canal. The restriction of boats into downtown Perth had actually started several years before, when, in 1941, the Beckwith Street and Drummond Street swing bridges were both fixed in place.

Beckwith St. Bridge: This is a swing bridge with a closed clearance of 1.6 m / 5.2 ft. The bridge was originally installed c.1890, with the building of the second Tay Canal. It was made into a fixed bridge in 1941 (sealed in the closed position). A local lobby eventually returned the bridge to being a swing bridge (likely in the early 1980s). In 2010 it was extensively rehabilitated.

Drummond St. Bridge: This is a fixed low level (2.9 m / 9.5 ft) bridge. The original bridge in this location was a swing bridge, built at the same time (c.1890) and in a similar style to the Beckwith St. Bridge. It was made into a fixed bridge in 1941 (sealed in the closed position). The bridge was replaced with a new concrete superstructure on the original (rehabilitated) footings sometime after 1976 (likely in the 1980s).

Perth Basin: A harbour in downtown Perth, the basin, as we see it today, was created with the building of the second Tay Canal. After the Craig Street fixed bridge was installed in 1954, the basin silted up (the fixed low level bridge prevented dredge access). It was noted in 1978 that Perth was the only local community with a swamp in the middle of it. Perth initiated a revitalization project in 1980, and it appears the basin was rehabilitated some time after that. Today it presents a lovely appearance to visitors arriving by land or by water. In 2009, Friends of the Tay Watershed installed new low-level docks to make the basin paddler friendly.

Gore St. Bridge: This is a fixed low level (2.7 m / 9.0 ft) bridge. The original bridge near this location was a large elm tree, felled to connect Cockburn Island with the Brockville Road. It was replaced by a timber bridge and then a stone arched bridge. The bridge location became known as Locke's Bridge. In 1890, with the building of the second Tay Canal, the fixed stone bridge was replaced by a swing bridge. The present concrete bridge was built in 1957.

Perth: Perth is a fascinating place to explore. It features many interesting shops and restaurants and makes for a great day tour or weekend outing. It was founded in 1816 and today the many historic stone buildings make Perth one of the prettiest towns in the region. A heritage walking tour of Perth can be found on-line.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Scenic Route (11 km)

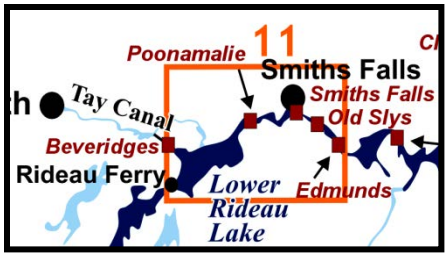
The scenic route simply involves following the original channel of the Tay River. Follow the main navigation channel to marker buoy N11 and then head south (left) into the first meander. This is an area generally undisturbed by boat traffic – go slow and keep your eyes and ears open for wildlife. Continue through the second meander and then back to the main channel.

SECTION 11: Rideau Ferry to Edmunds Lock

(includes Lower Rideau Lake and the start of the Rideau River)

Sunrise Paddling on Lower Rideau Lake

This section has both easy lake and river paddling, with lots of marshland bordering the river in this area. There is some unsheltered open water in Lower Rideau Lake, so paddlers, particularly canoeists, should ensure that they do a weather check to make sure the winds are light prior to heading out on the lake.



Water Access

Water access is available at Rideau Ferry Conservation Area, Lower Beveridges Lock, Poonamalie Lock, Smiths Falls Detached Lock and Edmunds Lock. For direct access into Lower Rideau Lake there are three choices, the **Rideau Ferry Conservation Area** boat launch ramp (44° 51.400'N - 76° 08.130'W), the ramp at **Lower Beveridges Lockstation** (44° 52.465'N - 76° 08.250'W) and the ramp at **Poonamalie Lockstation** (44° 53.470'N - 76° 03.480'W). To access the area between Smiths Falls and Poonamalie (including The Swale) use the ramp at **Smiths Falls Detached Lockstation** (44° 53.755'N - 76° 01.715'W). To do the Rideau River between Smiths Falls and Edmunds, it is easiest to put in at **Edmunds Lock** (lots of parking with dock access above the lock).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). Of note there is no camping at Smiths Falls Combined and while camping at Old Slys is allowed, it's not recommended. There are hotels/motels in Smiths Falls and B&Bs in Westport, Perth and Merrickville. For information about local accommodations see: www.smithsfalls.ca, www.westportrideaulakes.on.ca, www.realmerrickville.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the town of Smiths Falls which has which full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Rideau Ferry to Edmunds Lock along the navigation channel = 19.0 km (11.8 mi)
- Rideau Ferry to Poonamalie along the navigation channel = 10.6 km (6.6 mi)
- Poonamalie to Smiths Falls Detached along the navigation channel = 3.7 km (2.3 mi)
- Smiths Falls Detached to Smiths Falls Combined along the navigation channel = 0.6 km (0.4 mi)
- Smiths Falls Combined to Old Slys along the navigation channel = 1.4 km (0.9 mi)
- Old Slys to Edmunds along the navigation channel = 2.7 km (1.7 mi)
- Lower Rideau Lake – shoreline circumference = 26 km (16.2 mi)
- Poonamalie to Smiths Falls Detached – shoreline circumference = 16 km (9.9 mi)
  (this includes the shoreline along the backchannel (original Rideau River) to the dam)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

Lower Rideau Lake

This is the shallow east end of Rideau Lake, an area that was extensively flooded by the canal dam at Poonamalie, which raised the lake level by about 6 feet (1.8 m). The lake has a maximum depth of 25 feet (7.6 m) with an average depth of about 12 feet (3.6 m). In the pre-canal era, the start of the Rideau River was at Stonehouse Island (then a point), which was also the outlet of the Tay River. The winding navigation channel between Stonehouse Island and Poonamalie marks the course of the original (now drowned) river.

The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstations and the Rideau Ferry Conservation Area. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant.

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river, the only appreciable currents will be from the outflow of the canal weirs during times of high water. The main hazard are these same weirs, some with overflow dams. These are well marked on the upstream side and paddlers should avoid getting too close to these. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant.

Poonamalie Lock to Edmunds Lock

These water in the river between the locks in this section has been raised by the various canal dams to the level it is today. The river channel has a maximum depth of 3 m (10 ft). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 1.2 m (4 ft). The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for

the federal lands at the lockstations and some municipal lands in the section between Smiths Falls Detached and Old Slys.

The flooding by the dam at Smiths Falls Detached has produced some extensive wetlands in this section, including The Swale (see below for details). The river passes through the heart of the Town of Smiths Falls (urban development). Once past Smiths Falls (at Old Slys) the lands bordering the canal have rural development (some cottages, some farms).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 11 for locations)

Lower Rideau Lake: Much of the cottage development is along the southern shore (i.e. Miller's Bay). On the northern shore, in Beveridge Bay, you'll find the entrance to the Tay Canal, via the Beveridges Locks (see Section 10). You can also paddle up the Tay River to Port Elmsley and see the site of the first lock of the first (1834) Tay Canal. The lake east of Stonehouse Island is the flooded headwaters of the Rideau River and there are extensive marshlands with lots of wildlife in this area.

You're not the first paddler to enjoy this region. The oldest archaeological discovery on the Rideau Canal, a site that shows paleo-native occupation dating back to 6,050 B.C., was made in this area. The outflow of Rideau Lake was a prime hunting and fishing area, attracting native use for thousands of years and there are a number of occupation sites. It's unclear if there were ever any permanent settlements, and recent (last 500 year) native use of the Rideau has been transient (hunting and fishing camps).

Ferryland Cottage: Just to the north of the Rideau Ferry bridge, on the southeast shore, is a beautiful old cottage with distinctive turrets. It was built by Alexander Martin of Ottawa in the 1890s. Additions including a gazebo and a boat house were added over time.

Rideau Ferry Conservation Area: This is a day use facility, featuring a sandy beach, picnic tables, outhouses and a boat launch. It is run by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Camp Merrywood: At Stuarts Point, as you come around into Beveridge Bay, you'll see Camp Merrywood, an Easter Seals camp (for children with physical disabilities) established in 1948.

Beveridges Locks/Tay Canal: (see Section 10).

Stonehouse Island: This island (private property) was once used as a staging point for the Tay Navigation Company (1834 - 1840s). Goods would be offloaded from barges plying the Rideau Canal and then loaded onto smaller barges that could ascend the first Tay Canal (which had smaller locks than the Rideau Canal) via Port Elmsley to Perth. Prior to the Rideau Canal being built, it represented the end of a point, the Tay River flowed into the Rideau River on the east side of that point.

Port Elmsley: The Weatherheads erected a dam and sawmill here in 1829. The first Tay Canal was opened in 1834, with Locks 1, 2 and 3 in the area of present day Port Elmsley. You can still see the remains of Lock 1 as you paddle into Port Elmsley (look for it on your left (south side) as you enter – a small island marks one wall of the original lock).

Lower part of Lower Rideau Lake: East of Stonehouse Island you'll see that the navigation channel takes a long loop. It is following the original channel of the Rideau River. If you have a copy of the navigation chart, you can clearly see the old river channel from the depth readings on the chart.

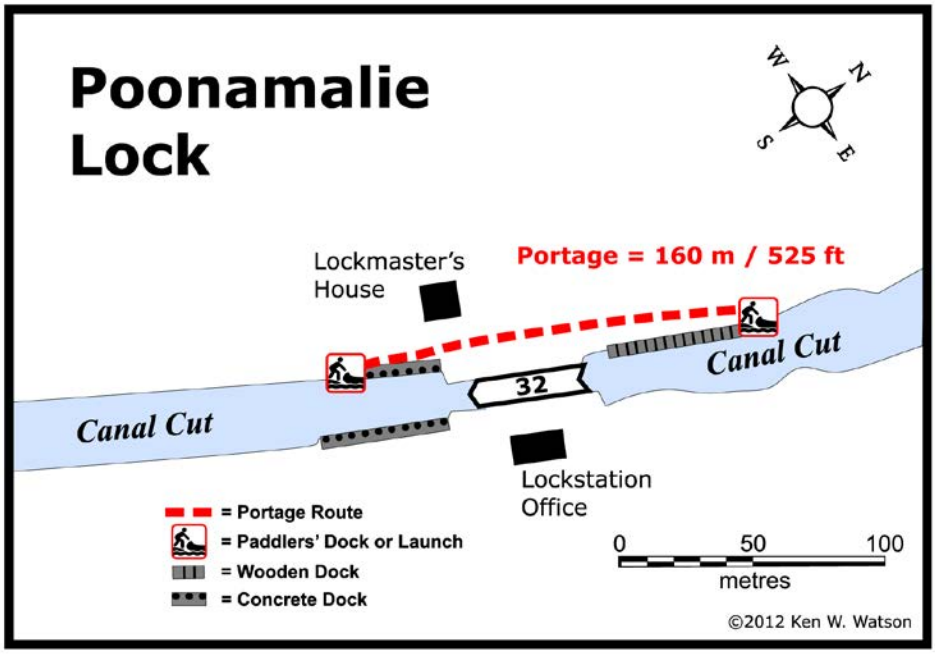
Mud Cut: This used to be a shortcut that avoided the long loop. Today it is no longer passable, even by paddlers (info as of 2018). This shortcut was originally dredged between 1909 and 1911. Early navigation maps (1920s) show the main route of the canal as being through this cut. That dredging stopped some time ago (~1970s) and the channel has now filled in to the point that it is non-navigable.

Bacchus Island: This is a glacial drumlin (an elongated gravel ridge) formed during the last ice-age. The long direction of the island shows the direction of the ice movement in this area (in this case, south-southwest). The island is named after William Bacchus who briefly owned part of the island in the 1870s. The development on the island that you see today started in the 1940s, with a permanent causeway to the island built in the 1950s.

Poonamalie Dam: As you approach Poonamalie, you'll see the dam to the north of the cut that leads to the locks. This dam is sitting at the head of First Rapids, the first set of rapids on the Rideau River, flowing over hard layers of flat lying limestone. The dam that you can see today (worth a visit) is the third dam in this location. The original dam was a timber overflow dam with stone abutments. A timber weir was later incorporated into that dam. It survived until 1904 when a massive sheet of ice tore a 75 foot (23 m) wide hole in the dam. A new concrete dam was then built just a bit downstream from the original timber dam. In 1971, a new concrete dam was built, a bit downstream from the 2nd dam. It incorporated a large hydraulic water control gate.

Poonamalie Cut: The original plan for navigation was to place a lock to the north of the Rideau River in this location. But hard bedrock forced a re-design and the lock was placed in a long canal cut to the south of the river. As you paddle to the lock, you'll see both rubble stone and stone wall embankments lining the cut. In 2015-16 part of the southern embankment was re-done and new wall put in place. The Minnow Creek Weir (through the embankment, just south of the lock) was also replaced at that time.

Poonamalie Lock: This station has a single lock (lift of 2.2 m / 7.1 ft). The lock is sitting in the middle of a canal cut that bypasses a shallow meander of the Rideau River. The dam, as previously noted, is sitting at the head of First Rapids. The name Poonamalie was given to this lock during construction. The name comes from Poovirundavalli, a town near Chennai (Madras) in India, which served as a garrison town for the British Army. The name was anglicized as Poonamallee and this was the originally spelling for the name of the lockstation. Speculation is that the cedar-lined banks of the Rideau River reminded one of the military men of the Indian garrison town.



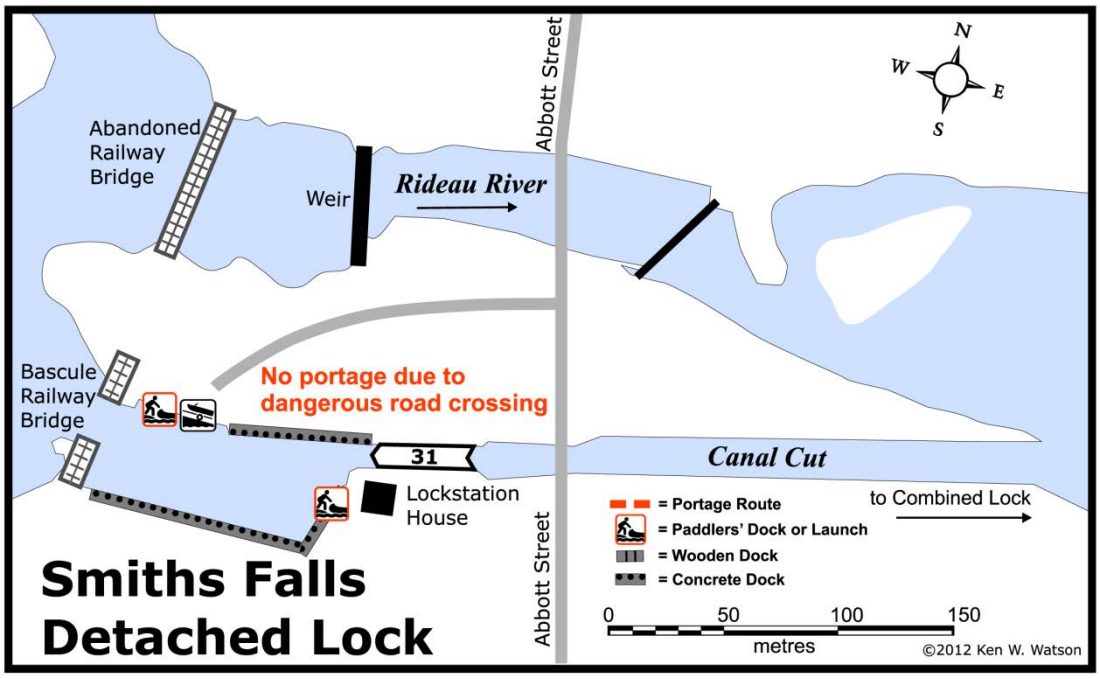
You'll find a beautiful 2-storey lockmaster's house at this location. A short hiking trail extends from the lockstation, along the northwest side of the canal cut, to the dam.

Rideau River – Original Channel: If you turn north at the northeast end of the Poonamalie Cut (rather than following the navigation channel east) you'll be paddling into the original course of the Rideau River (now flooded from the dam at Smiths Falls Detached). You can follow the channel up to the foot of the Poonamalie Dam.

The Swale: The Swale is 385 ha in size and is classified as a Class I wetland – a cattail marsh. It contains approximately 250 identified plant species. Similar to other marshes on the Rideau, this marsh is a haven for wildlife, particularly waterfowl. You'll also find lots of frogs and turtles.

Bascule Railway Bridge: Just west of Smiths Fall Detached Lock is a permanently raised railway bridge. This is a Scherzer rolling-lift railway bridge (a type of bascule bridge) built for the Canadian Northern Railway in 1912/13. The railway line was taken out of service in late 1978. In 1983 the bridge was designated as a National Historic Site of Canada – it is the oldest surviving bridge of this type in Canada.

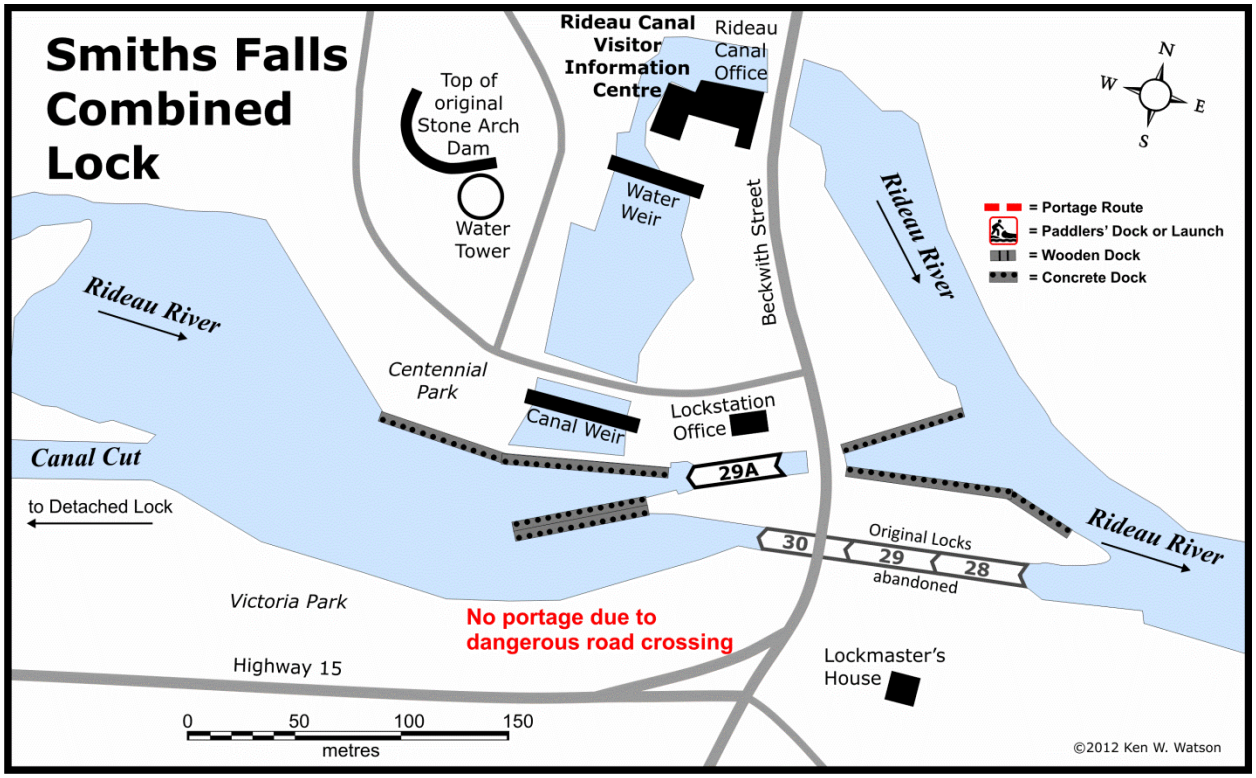
Smiths Falls Detached Lock: This is a single lock (lift of 2.6 m / 8.5 ft) in a canal cut. You'll find the dam and weir, to the north of the lock, in the original channel of the Rideau River. It's called a "detached" lock since originally four contiguous locks were proposed for Smiths Falls. But the topography and fractured nature of the bedrock necessitated a change in plans, and this lock was detached from the combined locks and built in this location. The lock was known for a time as Jones Lock after several early lockmasters by that name.



Abbott Street Swing Bridge: This is a through plate girder swing bridge constructed in 1959. It has a closed clearance of 1.9 m /6.2 ft. It replaced an earlier swing bridge that was constructed here in 1897.

Cataraqui Trail: This all-season trail, part of the Trans-Canada trail system, follows an old railway bed. You find the northern end of the trail located at the south end of Ferrara Drive, 0.8 km south of Highway 15. For more information about the trail see: www.cataraquitrail.ca

New Smiths Falls Combined Lock: This is a single lock (lift of 7.8 m / 25.7 ft) in a canal cut. It's the most recent lock on the Rideau Canal, built in 1973/74 to replace the original combined locks. The change was made because the swing bridge over the original locks restricted traffic flow (see Beckwith Street Bridge). The new combined is an electric lock with the highest single lift on the Rideau Canal. Water enters from the floor of the lock to reduce turbulence.



Beckwith Street Bridge: This is a fixed high level (26 ft / 7.9 m) bridge. It was built in 1973/74, at the same time as the new combined lock. The need for this bridge was the reason the original combined locks were abandoned and a new lock built. Since the opening of the canal in 1832, there had been two bridges near this location, a swing bridge over the original combined locks and a fixed bridge over the bypass channel. The first bridge at the locks was a rolling bridge over the centre lock, later replaced by a swing bridge. In 1889, a new swing bridge was installed over the upper lock. It was replaced in 1923 and it was that bridge, by the 1960s, that generated complaints (too old, too narrow, too slow). To run a fixed high level bridge with the required minimum clearance of 22 ft (6.7 m) over the original alignment of the canal and locks meant that a number of buildings would have had to have been torn down to make room. This wasn't acceptable to the Town of Smiths Falls. In the end, amid much controversy, the configuration that we see today, a fixed high level bridge going over a relocated lock, and the original locks left in place, was implemented.

Here There Be Whales: If you were paddling here about 11,500 years ago, you would have been doing it in the company of whales. The bones of a humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) were found in a gravel pit just north of Smiths Falls. This whale swam in the Champlain Sea that covered this area at that time (see the Geology of the Rideau Canal section).

Old Smiths Falls Combined Locks: These are the original set of 3 locks, left in place when the new single-lock combined lock was built. They are interesting to visit since they are empty of water, revealing many of the engineering details (such as sluice tunnel valves) that are underwater in an operating lock.

1 Jasper Avenue: Located adjacent to the old Smiths Falls Combined Locks, this is the original lockmaster's house. It was built as a single storey defensible lockmaster's house in 1838-41. The second storey framed addition was done in 1927. From 1985 to 2015 it was the office for non-profit organization Friends of the Rideau. It is now the Smith's Falls office of Le Boat.

Original Smiths Falls Dam: Another historical point of interest is the old dam (built in 1828-1831) that used to block the flow of the Rideau River (diverting it to the weir). Walk to the parking lot under the big water tower. The stone retaining wall is actually the top four feet of the 23 foot high stone dam. It has been backfilled on both sides. Standing in the middle of parking lot puts you right above the original channel of the Rideau River.

Rideau Canal Visitor Information Centre: Formerly the Rideau Canal Museum, it is located just north of Smiths Falls Combined Lock, housed in part of an old grist mill (the Woods Mills complex). The mill complex underwent an extensive restoration in 1989-91, including the creation of a museum in the old granary section of the building. The museum operated from 1991 until it closed in 2012. Parks Canada is now maintaining it as visitor information centre. It has many interesting displays related to the Rideau Canal. For more information: https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/rideau/activ/accueil_info.

Rideau Canal Office: When Parks Canada took over the Rideau Canal in the early 1970s, they made the very good decision to move their direct management of the canal from Ottawa to Smiths Falls, to place them right on the canal in a central location. That was originally in offices in downtown Smiths Falls. Part of the rehabilitation of the Woods Mills Complex included creating offices for canal staff in the eastern half of the restored building. Those offices were occupied in 1991.

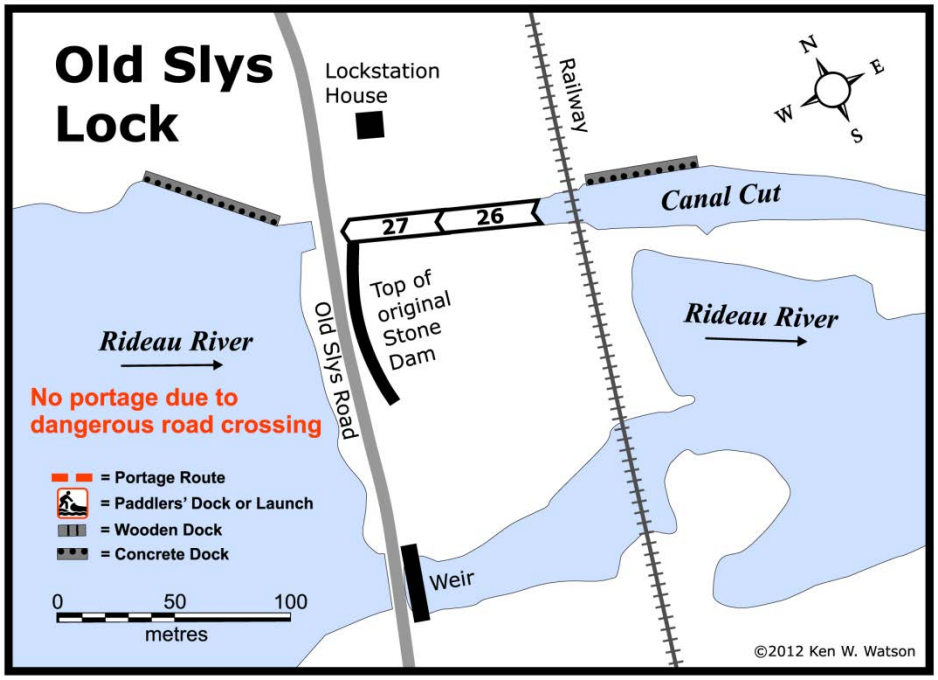
Smiths Falls: The largest community between Kingston and Ottawa, Smiths Falls offers a full range of stores and services. You'll also find some interesting museums. The **Smiths Falls Railway Museum**, located just up the road (north) from Smiths Falls Detached Lock and **Heritage House Museum**, located just down the road (south) from Old Slys Lockstation.

Rideau Trail: This walking trail, which extends from Kingston to Ottawa, passes through Port Elmsley and Smiths Falls. In this area it mostly follows roadways. You find more info about it, including downloadable maps, at: www.rideautrail.org.

Old Slys Lockstation: This is a double lock (two locks in flight – combined lift of 5.0 m / 16.3 ft). The locks are at the head of a canal cut that leads back to the Rideau River. The waste weir is located in the original channel of the Rideau River to the south of the locks. The area below the original stone dam at this location was backfilled in the 1960s so that only the top few feet of the original 21 foot high dam remain visible.

A defensible lockmaster's house was built here in 1838, but it was torn down in 1965 and replaced with the current lockstation office.

The first road across the dam and locks was built in 1857, with a wooden swing bridge across the lock. The present steel truss swing bridge was installed in 1962.



CPR Railway Bridge: The original railway bridge was built in 1858 by the Brockville and Ottawa Railroad. Ownership transferred to the CPR sometime around 1900 and the bridge appears to have been upgraded at about that time.

Rideau River: This section of the Rideau River between Old Slys and Edmunds is typical river travel, the water depths average 6 to 8 feet (1.8 to 2.4 m). There is moderate density home/cottage development in some sections, with quite a bit of shoreline still in its natural state (farm frontage).

Edmunds Lock: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Off the Beaten Path

Port Elmsley (8 km / 5 mi return from the navigation channel south of Stonehouse Island)

Leave the navigation channel south of Stonehouse Island and turn north to the island. Paddle past it (either side) and head north to the mouth of the Tay River. Paddle up the Tay River to Port Elmsley. There is lots of undeveloped shoreline and marshlands in this area (wildlife viewing opportunities). As you come into Port Elmsley, you'll see a small island on your left (south side) – this is the location (44° 53.440'N - 76° 07.070'W) of Lock 1 of the first Tay Canal (opened in 1834, closed in the 1860s).

There are rapids at Port Elmsley with shallow areas and small rapids in the Tay River upstream of Port Elmsley. This area is generally non-navigable.

Poonamalie/The Swale (16km / 9.9 mi circumference)

This trip can be done from either the lock at Poonamalie or Smiths Falls Detached. It can be a short day trip or an off the beaten path exploration as a part of a larger trip. The two features here are the original channel of the Rideau River and The Swale.

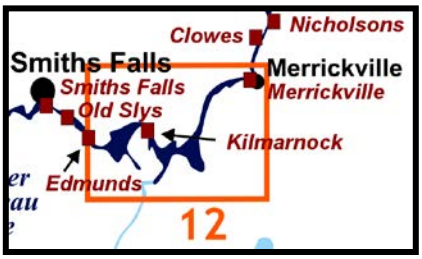
At the northeast entrance to the canal cut into Poonamalie, head northwest to follow the original channel of the Rideau River. This can be paddled all the way up the base of the big dam at Poonamalie. The shorelines in this section are mostly undeveloped.

While The Swale is specifically the Class 1 wetland to the north of Smiths Falls Detached Lock, the whole section from Smiths Falls Detached to the canal cut entrance to Poonamalie features lots of marshland with its associated wildlife. This area is mostly undeveloped, with lots of natural shoreline.

Paddling through Kilmarnock Lock

SECTION 12: Edmunds Lock to Merrickville Locks

This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River, with lots of marshland bordering the river in this area. It includes Edmunds and Kilmarnock lockstations.



Water Access

Water access is available at Edmunds Lock, Kilmarnock Lock and at Merrickville. For the paddler the easiest is either **Edmunds** (ramp: 44° 52.600'N - 75° 59.020'W), **Kilmarnock** (shoreline: 44° 53.060'N - 75° 55.820'W) or the canoe launch in **Merrickville** (44° 55.980'N - 75° 50.690'W – on the rec centre grounds, just past the public library). There is plenty of parking at all these locations. In Merrickville, another option is the ramp in the Lions Park Campground (44° 55.020'N - 75° 50.580'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There is also the Lions Park Campground in Merrickville, a host of B&Bs and several hotels (Merrickville and Smiths Falls). For information about local accommodations see: www.smithsfalls.ca, www.realmerrickville.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: Local sources for supplies are the town of Smiths Falls which has which full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores) and Merrickville (groceries).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Edmunds Lock to Kilmarnock Lock along the navigation channel = 6.0 km (3.7 mi)
- Kilmarnock Lock to Merrickville Locks along the navigation channel = 12.5 km (7.8 mi)

- Edmunds Lock to Merrickville Locks along the navigation channel = 18.5 km (11.5 mi)
- Edmunds to Kilmanock – shoreline circumference = 14 km (8.7 mi)
- Kilmarnock to Merrickville – shoreline circumference = 36 km (22.5 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river, the only appreciable currents will be from the outflow of the canal weirs during times of high water. The main hazard are these same weirs, some of which have overflow dams. These are well marked on the upstream side and paddlers should avoid getting too close to these. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

Edmunds Lock to Kilmarnock Lock

In the pre-canal era, the river was about 2 ft (0.6 m) lower than it is today at the foot of Edmunds, and about 6 ft (1.8 m) lower at the head of Kilmarnock. The completion of the lock and weir at Maitland's Rapids (today's Kilmarnock) in the fall of 1831 raised the water in the river to the level it is today.

The river channel has a maximum depth of 10 ft (3 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstations. There is little cottage/home development in this section, just a few spots where there is road access to non-marshland shorelines.

Kilmarnock Lock to Merrickville

In the pre-canal era, the river was about 3.5 ft (1.1 m) lower than it is today at the foot of Kilmarnock, and about 6 to 8 ft (2 to 2.5 m) lower at the head of Merrickville. The completion of the lock and weir at Merrickville in 1831 raised the water in the river to the level it is today.

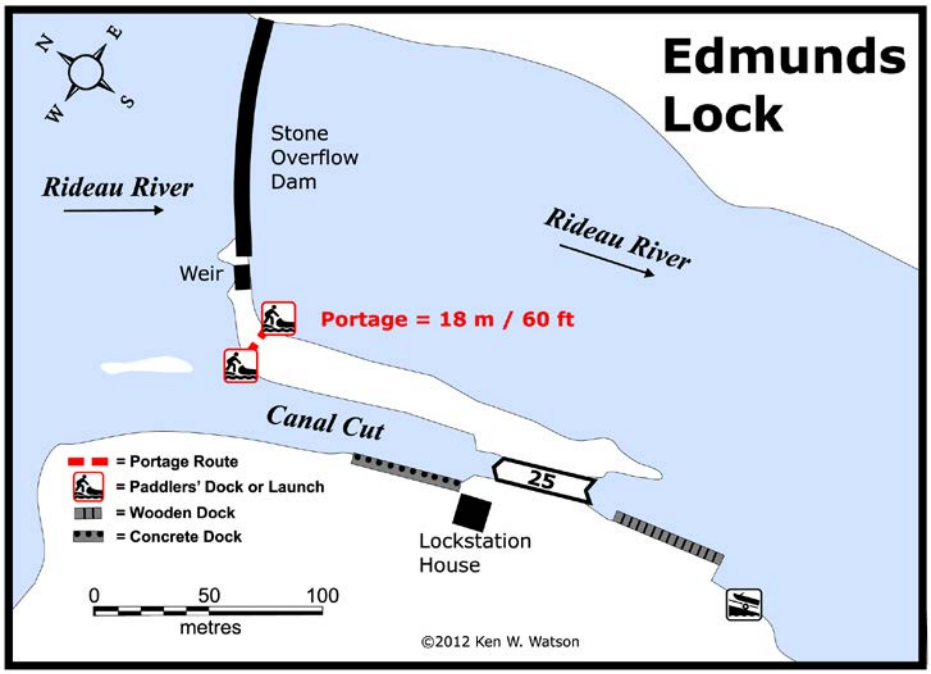
The river channel has a maximum depth of 15 ft (4.6 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstations. There is only a few spots with cottage/home development in this section, locations where there is road access to non-marshland shorelines.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 12 for locations)

Edmunds Lock: This lockstation has a single lock, a weir and an overflow dam. The lock has a lift of 9.2 ft (2.8 m). A two-storey lockmaster's house is located on site (the lockstation office today). It was built in 1905, replacing an earlier stone defensible lockmaster's house that had been built here in the 1840s. Edmunds, accessed by road from County Road 17 (south side of the Rideau River) features extensive grounds (verdant lawns with large shade trees), lots of parking, and a boat launch.

This lockstation features a stone arch overflow dam. Originally, all of the dams designed by Colonel By and the other Royal Engineers were to be overflow dams (including the largest, the huge dam at Jones Falls). But, after seeing the effect of spring flooding, By quickly changed his plans, making many into non-overflow dams and adding waste-water weirs to all of them. In the case of Edmunds we have a combination of both – an overflow dam with a waste-water weir. He explained the weir in an 1830 report noting "the addition of a Waste Weir to preserve the Dam from the effects of Spring Floods." The dam has been doing a great job, it's only required normal maintenance. The weir was rebuilt in 1906-07.

Edmunds or Edmonds? The lock is named after James Edmunds, the first settler in this area. Over the years his name has been spelled Edmunds, Edmonds and even Edmons. Currently Parks Canada used Edmonds and the Canadian Hydrographic Service (charts) uses Edmunds. Either is fine. At one point this lock was known as Mills Lock (after the name of the first two lockmasters), removing the issue of how to spell Edmunds.



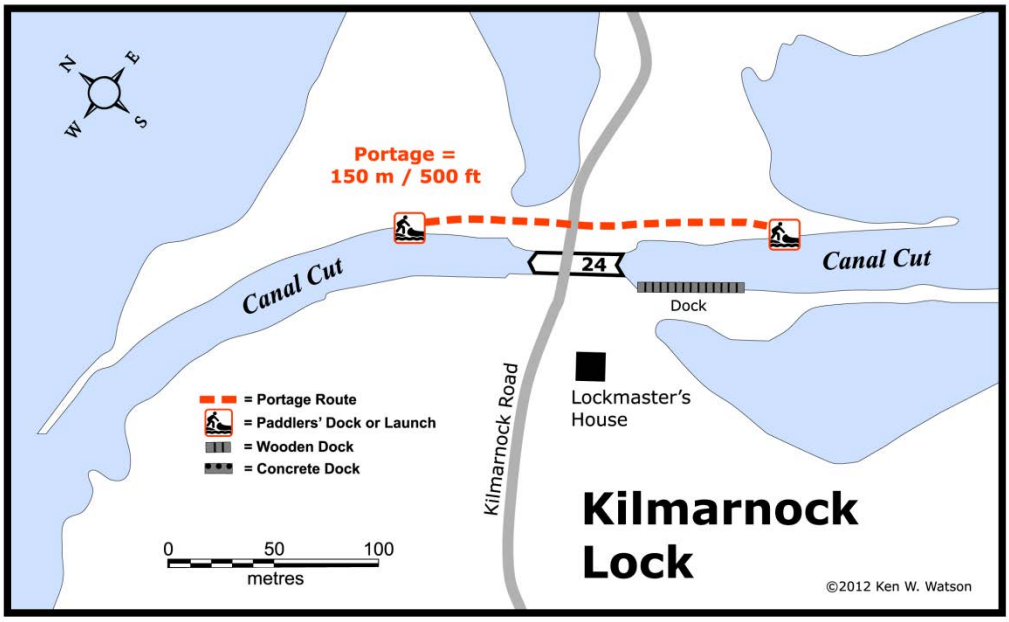
Rideau River – Edmunds to Kilmarnock: This peaceful section of the Rideau River provides lots of wildlife viewing opportunities along the marshy borders of the river.

Kilmarnock Lock: This lockstation has a single lock and a weir. It has the lowest lift of any lockstation on the Rideau at only 0.7 m (2.2 ft). It also has one of only four remaining unequal arm, center-bearing timber swing bridges on the Rideau. It has a two storey lockmaster's house, used today as the lockstation office.

The low lift is due to many difficulties encountered during construction. A significant problem was the boulder filled mud in the original location for the lock. The boulders were very difficult to remove with the technology of the day, as Colonel By noted "more difficult from their hard Nature to remove than Solid Rock." So, he knocked two feet off the original height of the dam and lock, moved the location of the lock to where bedrock had been found and excavated a channel into the head of the lock (this channel was deepened in 1900).

The lockmaster's house started off as a defensible one-storey house, built in the 1840s. In the early 20th century, a second storey was added and the loopholes in the original building were filled in.

The original name for this lock was Maitland's Lock (named after the location, Maitland's Rapids). The name Maitland comes from an early settler in the area, James Maitland, who operated a ferry across the river in this location. Maitland also became the first lockmaster (from 1832 to 1846). Over time, the local name, Kilmarnock, came into general use.



Rideau River – Kilmarnock to Merrickville: Extensive marshlands, including the Big Marsh, affords marshland wildlife viewing opportunities. The river also passes by the outlet of Irish Creek, once considered as a route for the Rideau Canal (see below).

Irish Creek: This creek has its origins in Irish Lake. The building of the canal flooded the creek up to Jasper. In his 1816 survey of the Rideau Route, Lt. Joshua Jebb of the Royal Engineers recommended that the route be taken by way of Irish Creek rather than through the Rideau lakes. The canal would have gone up the creek to Irish Lake where a five mile long railroad was proposed to link the route to Upper Beverley Lake and from there to Lower Beverley Lake and up Morton Creek to re-join the present-day route of the Rideau Canal. The Irish Creek route was discounted by the next survey, that of Samuel Clowes in 1823/24. Clowes pointed out two flaws with the route, it wasn't any lower than a route by the Rideau lakes (and so would require the same number of locks) and the top of the route had no water (unlike the Rideau lakes route, where the top of the route is a lake). For a paddle description, see Irish Creek in the Off the Beaten Path section.

Big Marsh: This marshy area offers some very good bird viewing opportunities. It actually provides a larger marshy area for wildlife viewing than the Rideau Bird Sanctuary.

Rideau Bird Sanctuary: This is a designated Canadian Migratory Bird Sanctuary, some 800 ha in size. The designation primarily means no hunting within the sanctuary (there are no restrictions on development). This area is used as a staging area in spring and summer for migratory waterfowl. The wetlands bordering the Rideau River in this area provide a good food source for these migrating birds. A

total of 20 different species of geese and ducks have been observed using the sanctuary. You may also see wetland mammals such as muskrats, beavers and otters in the sanctuary. A word of caution is that there are submerged stumps in parts of this area (the children of a local paddler refer to parts of the RBS as "stumpland").

Merrickville Locks: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Off the Beaten Path

Irish Creek

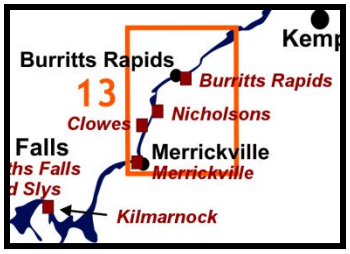
Once considered as a potential route for the Rideau Canal, this is a slow moving meandering creek. The total distance from Roses Bridge (at the outlet of the creek into the Rideau River) to Irish Lake is 16.4 km (10.2 mi). The distance from that bridge (44° 51.490'N - 75° 54.860'W) to Jasper is 4.4 km (2.7 mi). This is a section flooded from the canal dam at Merrickville and features large areas of marsh and lily pads. If you want to launch right into Irish Creek, you can use the small gravel launch at Roses Creek Bridge (44° 51.490'N - 75° 54.890'W).

At Jasper, you'll find a very low concrete bridge. Depending on water levels, you should be able to slip a canoe or kayak under the bridge (remember to duck). The distance from Jasper (44° 50.015'N - 75° 55.900'W) to Irish Lake is 12.0 km (7.5 mi). The creek may be dammed in places by beavers, a few years ago I encountered the first beaver dam 2.5 km (1.5 mi) upstream from Jasper.

Paddling out of Upper Nicholsons Lock

SECTION 13: Merrickville Locks to The Catchall

This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River, with several interesting locks and lots of marshland bordering the river in this area. This section includes the Merrickville, Clowes and Nicholsons lockstations.



Water Access

Water access is available at all the locks; Merrickville, Clowes, Nicholsons and Burritts Rapids. At **Merrickville Locks**, the entrance to the lockstation is at 111A Main St. E., opposite the Royal Bank, between St. Lawrence St. and Elgin St. Parking is limited, so once you've offloaded your canoes/kayaks (from the parking lot – do not drive on the grass), you should park back on the street, or in the parking lot by the Blockhouse. Let the lockstaff know what you're doing. At **Clowes Lock** and at **Lower Nicholsons Lock**, parking is on the top of the hill. Ask the lockstaff for permission to drive down to the lock and offload your boats and gear. At **Upper Nicholsons Lock** there is parking right at the lockstation. At **Burritts Rapids Lock**, you can park fairly close to the lockstation. There is also a spot where canoes/kayaks can be launched beside the south bridge at Burritts Rapids (44° 58.800'N - 75° 47.750'W). There is also a small ramp at the foot of Muldoon Road on the south side of the Rideau River, about 2.5 km NE of The Catchall (45° 01.400'N - 75° 42.400'W) shown on the map in Guide 14.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There is also the Lions Park Campground in Merrickville, a host of B&Bs and hotel (Merrickville). For information about local accommodations see: www.realmerrickville.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is Merrickville (groceries).

Distances:

Circumference distances are approximate, following the main shorelines. The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Merrickville Locks to The Catchall along the navigation channel = 15.4 km (9.6 mi)
- Merrickville Locks to Clowes Lock along the navigation channel = 3.3 km (2.0 mi)
- Clowes Lock to Upper Nicholsons Lock along the navigation channel = 0.8 km (0.5 mi)
- Upper Nicholsons to Lower Nicholsons Lock along the navigation channel = 0.3 km (0.2mi)
- Lower Nicholsons Lock to Burritts Rapids Lock along the navigation channel = 5.4 km (3.4 mi)
- Burritts Rapids Lock to The Catchall along the navigation channel = 5.6 km (3.5 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river where the only appreciable currents will be from the outflow of the canal weirs during times of high water. The main hazard are these same weirs, some of which have associated overflow dams. These are well marked on the upstream side and paddlers should avoid getting too close to these. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

Merrickville Locks to Burritts Rapids Locks

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today. Water levels have been raised by the canal dams at Clowes, Nicholsons and Burritts Rapids.

The river channel has a maximum depth of 14 ft (4.3 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The original channel of the Rideau River is bypassed by the canal cut at Nicholsons and by the canal channel (a flooded ravine) at Burritts Rapids. The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstations. There is moderate cottage/home development between Merrickville and Nicholsons, and less development (more farm frontage) between Nicholsons and Burritts Rapids.

Burritts Rapids to The Catchall

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today. Water levels have been raised by the canal dam at Long Island.

This section marks the head of the Long Reach, the longest stretch of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks. It extends 40 km / 25 mi from the Burritts Rapids Lock to the Long Island Locks. The river channel has a maximum depth of 12 ft (3.6 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The Catchall is a meander of the Rideau River that is now bypassed by a dredged canal cut. The

land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstations. There is modest cottage/home development near Burritts Rapids changing to more farm frontage.

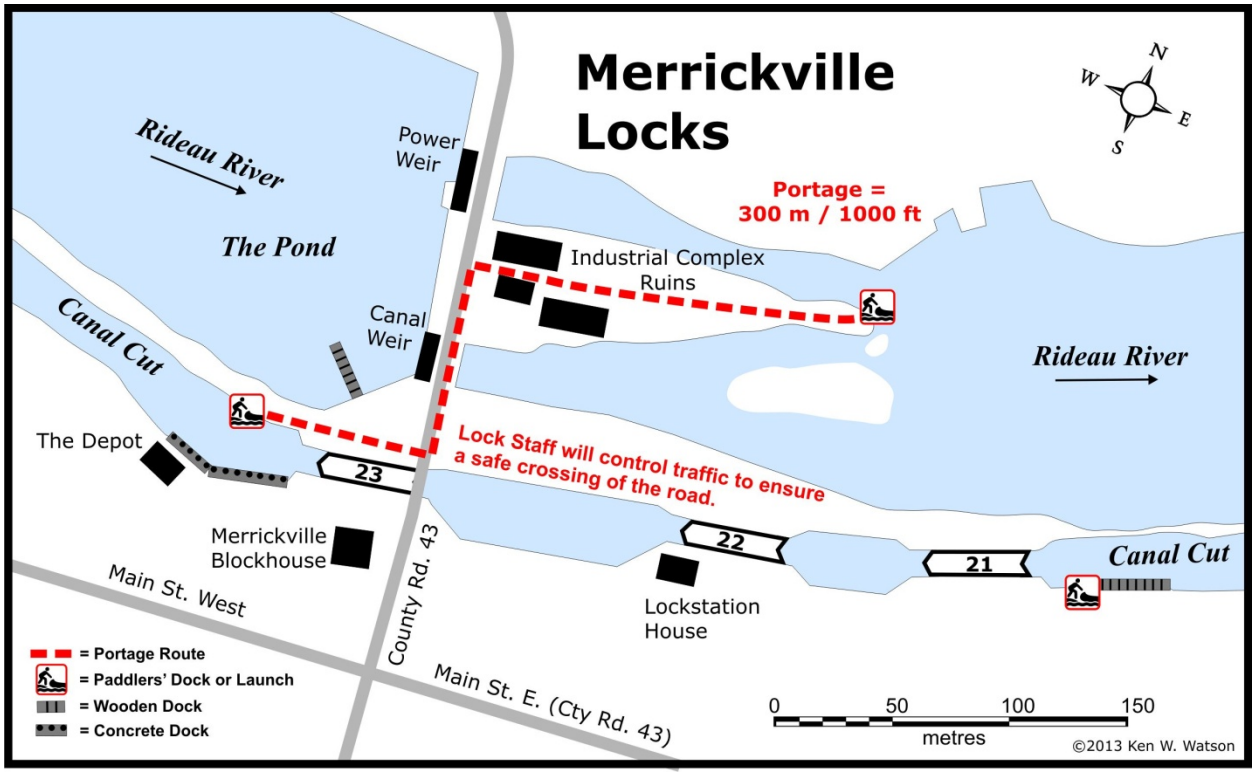
A short "scenic route" suggestion has been made to follow the original channel through The Catchall.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 13 for locations)

Merrickville Locks: There are three detached locks at this location (total lift of 7.6 m / 25.0 ft). The lockstation office is located adjacent to the middle lock. The largest blockhouse on the Rideau Canal is located beside the upper lock. The locks are spread out as three separate locks in order to take advantage of the topography, if they had been built as three locks "in-flight" (combined) it would have required much more excavation and/or embanking.

The original water control dam was at the head of the canal cut (see Depot to Dam Trail below). A stone dam extended partway across the river with a timber/gravel dam and waste water weir placed in the main channel. It was placed in this location to avoid interfering with the mills, which had their own dam (at or near the location of the present day dam and roadway). With the canal dam upstream in this location, the water level of the Rideau River going into the canal cut could be controlled, with most of the flow of the river going unhindered to the mills.

However, the timber construction of the weir led to all sorts of trouble and it wasn't strong enough to withstand high water flows. It was swept away in 1841 and rebuilt somewhat stronger. However, that threatened to give away in 1847 and only with the help of many residents of the town were the dam and weir saved. It was damaged again in 1862 but survived. In 1912, the position of the weir was relocated to where it is today, in alignment with the upper lock. The original weir was removed, leaving just the stone portion of the dam.



The first bridge was a rolling bridge positioned across the upper lock. It was replaced by a timber swing bridge, also across the lock, in 1843. In 1892 a steel bridge was installed on a new alignment, just below the upper lock (so that small boats could pass in and out of the lock without having to swing the bridge). The current electric swing bridge was installed in 1990.

Merrickville Blockhouse: This is the largest blockhouse on the Rideau Canal. It is open to the public during the summer season, operated by the Merrickville and District Historical Society. The grassy picnic area beside the upper lock is known as Blockhouse Park. The blockhouse was built in 1832 to help defend this critical spot (near the road to the St. Lawrence River, a likely route for American invasion forces). The building served as a home to the early lockmasters, although by the 1870s it was starting to deteriorate. The resident at the time, Lockmaster Matthew Johnson noted that "The building generally is minus of its original evenness." The foundations were sinking and the roof had separated from its support posts. In 1909, the second floor, which at the time was made of masonry, had to be removed. The government was ready to tear the building down in the early 1960s, but fortunately heritage prevailed and the building was rehabilitated in 1962-65. For more info see: www.merrickvillehistory.org.

The Depot: This is the summer home of Friends of the Rideau who operate it as a visitor centre and retail outlet (including the sale of many books about the heritage of the Rideau). The building dates to about 1857, originally built as a storehouse with a wharf in front of it. For more info see: www.rideaufriends.com.

Merrickville: This very pretty village is filled with various artisan shops and stores that cater to visitors. It is located at the site of the "Great Falls" – a waterfall (4.2 m / 14 ft) in the Rideau River. In about 1790, this water power attracted a miller, Roger Stevens, to set up a sawmill here (he had settled in a spot a bit downstream from this location in 1789). By 1793, the year that he died of drowning, he had apparently sold it to William Mirick. William continued to develop the site and by the early 1800s, a small community, known as Mirickville was developing. The coming of the Rideau Canal allowed Merrickville to become a full-fledged village. Incorporated as Mirickville in 1860, it formally changed its name to Merrickville in May 1862. The Rideau River continued to power a series of mills, foundries and factories through the 19th century. A heritage walking tour brochure of the town can be found at several locations and on-line.

Industrial Heritage Complex: Located on what was an island between the original channel of the Rideau River and a flood channel of the river, this area housed several stone buildings, which included at various times a grist mill, a woollen mill, an oatmeal mill, a sawmill and a foundry. Today, only ruins remain of these buildings. In the old foundry you'll find many interpretive displays created and maintained by Parks Canada.

Depot to Dam Trail: This is a trail that leads from The Depot, across the upper lock and then south, to the entrance of the canal cut. The path then goes along the top of the stone dam (the original canal dam) that extends from the canal cut to the original channel of the Rideau River. An interpretive brochure for the trail is available at The Depot (also available on-line at www.rideaufriends.com).

Merrickville Railway Bridge: A high level railway bridge was first built here in 1887 by the Ontario and Quebec Railway. The current bridge dates to 1906-1907 when it was rebuilt by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

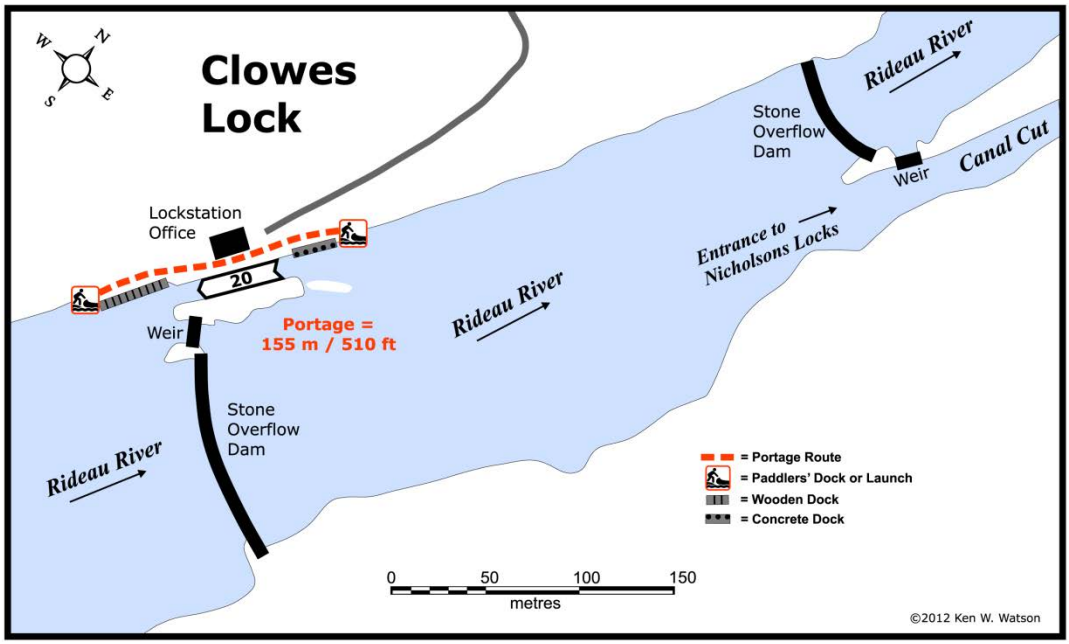
First Rideau Bridge: Now long gone, the area near marker buoy N286 was the location for one of the earliest (likely the first) bridge across the Rideau River. This bridge is shown on an 1816 map as crossing the river (then a few feet lower and much narrower) at this location to a spot called "Chesters" located on

the west side of the river. The bridge provided a link to roads on both sides of the Rideau River. The road on the east side had connecting roads to Kingston, Brockville and to near where Kemptville is today. The road on the west side was cut through the forest in 1815. It led back to Rideau Falls (Ottawa). It crossed to the east side of the Rideau River with a ford at Black Rapids and then led to the portage at Rideau Falls (on the east side of the falls).

McGuigan Cemetery: This cemetery, open to the public, is the oldest burial ground on the Rideau Canal. The first burial was that of Samuel McCrea who died in 1806. The cemetery saw continued use to the 1890s. The most poignant (and uniquely designed) grave marker is that for Margaret Davidson, the one year old daughter of Clowes Lock contractor, P. Davidson. She died from "a contusion to the head" in November 1829. You'll find the entrance to the cemetery at 448 County Rd. 23 (Burritts Rapids Rd.). It's about a 1 km walk from Upper Nicholson's lockstation.

Clowes Lock: This is a single lock with a lift of 7.5 ft / 2.3 m. This site was originally known as Clowes' Quarry due to a quarry opened up at the beginning of canal construction by James Clowes (the quarry is on the west side of the river, just a bit downstream from the Upper Nicholsons dam). The river here dropped 11.5 ft (3.5 m) in a set of rapids about 1,015 m (1,115 yd) long. The lock was originally intended to be on the east side of the river, in line with the locks at Nicholsons, but hard bedrock in that location forced Colonel By to re-locate the lock to the west side of the river. You'll also notice that this lock has no breastwork (upper foundation). This was simply a cost saving measure since By found that the flat bedrock could serve as an upper foundation and he had a wooden sill anchored to it.

Clowes features an arch stone overflow dam and a weir. The old lockmaster's house sits on the hill, just a bit downstream from the lock.



Channel Crossing: You'll have to cross the Rideau River in going to/from Clowes Lock to the Nicholsons Cut. The river current is usually very modest so this isn't a problem, but you should be aware of the Nicholson's overflow dam. In the 1800s, the tow line to a barge being towed by a steam tug broke and the barge went over the Nicholson's dam. A woman and a little girl on board the barge luckily

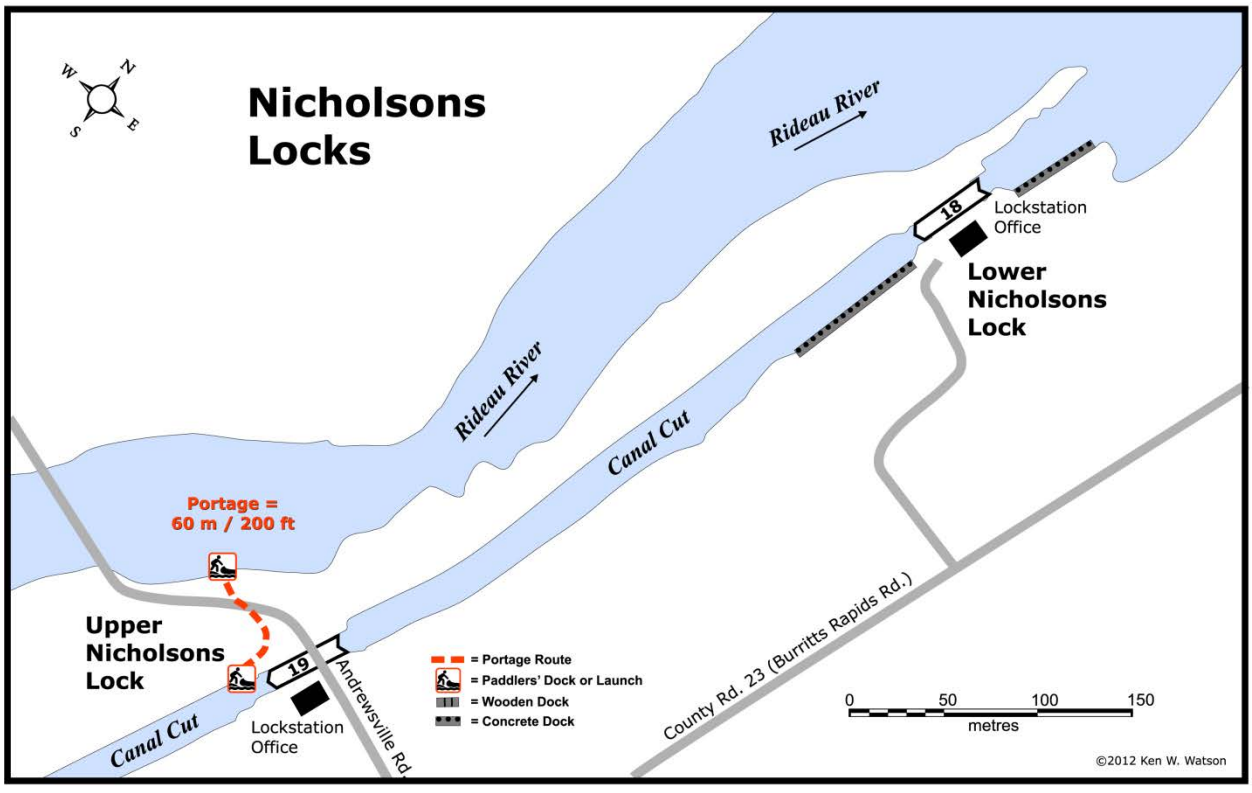
survived with only a soaking (the barge was left where it was, it eventually deteriorated and was washed away).

Nicholsons Locks: There are two detached locks at this station with a combined lift of 14.1 ft / 4.3 m. Upper Nicholsons features an unequal arm, center-bearing timber swing bridge, one of only four remaining on the Rideau. You'll also find an osprey nest between the lock and the Andrewsville bridge. The old lockmaster's house is on the hill above the canal cut between the two locks.

The original plan for this spot called for a dam lower down on the rapids with a combined set of two locks. But it was found that the original surveys were in error and if the dam had been placed lower down, much more agricultural land would have been flooded (requiring compensation to the landowners). So, the dam was moved to the head of the rapids and a cut was excavated on the east side of the locks and two detached locks were placed in the cut.

The lockstation features an arch stone overflow dam. The weir is incorporated into the canal cut, not the dam. The weir was an afterthought, the dam was already being constructed, so it may have been a case of that it was simpler to excavate the weir into the canal cut than to incorporate it into the dam.

The canal cut had leakage problems, with water in the cut leaking back into the Rideau River. To stop the leakage, a cement wall, lining the cut, was constructed between 1910 and 1913, replacing the original dry stone wall.



Andrewsville: This village got its start when Silas and Rufus Andrews built a sawmill and a shingle mill at this site prior to 1860. In 1861 they added a grist mill. The concrete piers of the dam used to create a head of water for those mills are all that remains today. The mills had stopped operating by 1930.

Andrewsville Bridge: The first bridge in this location was a fixed timber bridge, built in 1864, the same year a timber swing bridge was built across the lock at Upper Nicholsons. The present steel through truss bridge was erected in about 1900. When the dam at Poonamalie was breached by ice in 1904, the resulting flood waters washed out the east abutment of the Andrewsville bridge (the bridge itself survived intact, with its east end plunged into the Rideau River). The bridge has been repaired many times over the years, most recently in 2008. In 2012 recommendations were put forward to close the bridge to vehicular traffic and maintain it for pedestrian and cyclist use. Those were reversed in late 2012 with the recommendation that the bridge be repaired and maintained for light vehicular traffic. Its future status remains in limbo.

Roger Steven's Homestead: In 1789, the first settler in this part of the country arrived. Roger Stevens, his wife Polly and their three young children started to homestead on the shores of the Rideau River, near the border of Montague and Marlborough townships. At some point after this, he decided to go into the milling business, erecting a sawmill at the Great Falls (Merrickville). By 1793 he had plans in the works to add a grist mill, but that fall he drowned (in a tributary to the Rideau River, assumed to be today's Stevens Creek). Later that fall, his house and all its belongings were lost in a fire, leaving his widow Polly and their three children destitute. She petitioned to have land in the area granted to her and her children, but she was turned down. Steven's sawmill had apparently be sold to William Merrick shortly before Steven's death.

Stephen Burritt's Arrival: The southeast side of the river, just a bit downstream from Roger Steven's homestead, is the likely location where Stephen Burritt arrived at the Rideau River in 1793. History records that he arrived at the Rideau River at Cox's Bay. Today's Rideau Creek used to be called Cox's Creek and there was a small set of rapids here. This would place the location just a bit downstream from Roger Steven's homestead. Burritt built a raft and floated downstream to the location of Burritt's Rapids where he found a location suitable for settlement.

Burritts Rapids Canal Channel: At the southwest end of Burritts Island, the original channel of the Rideau River continues to the west (to an overflow dam) and the navigation channel goes east to the lock (at the northeast end of the island). This channel was created by the flooding of an existing ravine (the Oxford Snie, a relict flood channel of the Rideau River) and extensive berming. As a by-product, it also created the island on which the main village sits today.

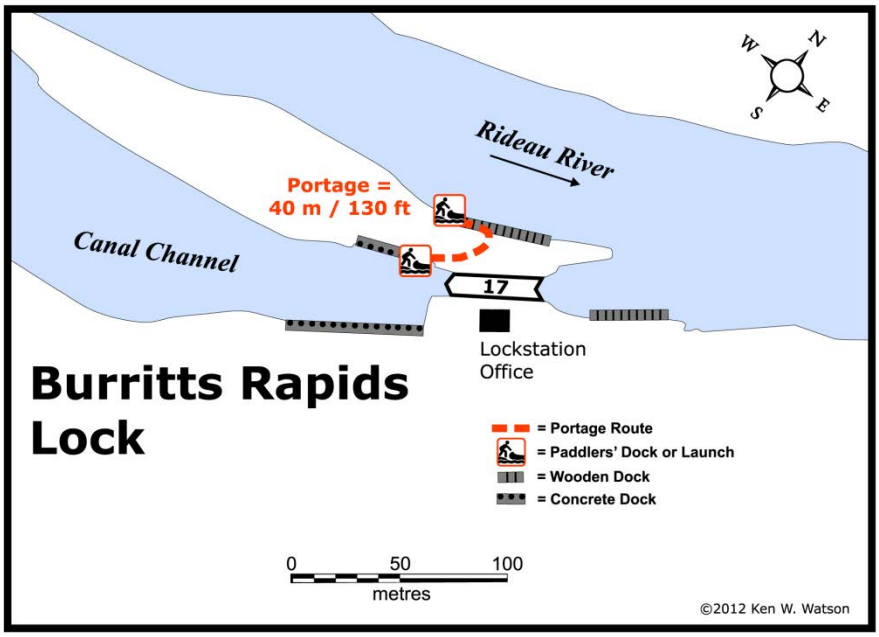
Burritts Rapids: The community was founded by Stephen and Daniel Burritt, who arrived here in 1793. In 1824, a bridge (one of the earliest on the Rideau) was built across the Rideau River (near the location of today's north bridge, over the original channel of the Rideau River). By the time of the building of the Rideau Canal, Burritts Rapids was a small village. At the north end of town (adjacent to County Road 2) is the historic Anglican Christ Church, built in 1832.

Burritts Rapids Swing Bridge: When the navigation channel was created, a bridge was needed to get from the island to the east shore. In about 1831, a high level timber bridge was built (elevated 28 feet (8.5 m) above the channel), located a bit upstream from the present day swing bridge. That high level bridge was abandoned when a new timber swing bridge was built in 1850, at the location of today's swing bridge. The current steel truss swing bridge dates to 1897. It was extensively renovated in 2017/18.

Old Methodist Church: Just downstream of the swing bridge, you'll see a lovely white coloured wooden church, the old Methodist Church. The church was opened as a Methodist Church in 1855, later becoming a United Church. The bell and tower date to 1899. It was turned into a private home in 1974.

Tip to Tip Trail: This is 2 km long trail extending along the southern side of the island. A brochure, with a map and guide to the trail, can be found at the Burritts Rapids Lockstation (and on-line).

Burritts Rapids Lock: This is single lock with a lift of 3.2 m / 10.6 ft. It is located at the foot of "Oxford Snie," the relict flood channel of the Rideau River that was used to make a navigable channel, bypassing the rapids in the Rideau River (you can still see some of those rapids today in the north channel of the river).



Rideau River: You can paddle the original channel of the Rideau River from the foot of Burritts Lockstation to the Burritts Rapids Dam. See Route Suggestions below.

The Long Reach: Leaving the lock at Burritts Rapids, you're entering the Long Reach, the longest section of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks (40 km / 25 mi). The canal dam at Long Island, the next set of locks, raised the Rideau River in that location by about 26 ft (8 m), flooding it all the way up to the foot of Burritts Rapids and making the entire section navigable (the main rapids that were flooded were those at Long Island itself).

Early Bridge Location: Near buoy N222 is the location of a pre-canal bridge crossing the Rideau River. The bridge shows up on an 1827 survey of the river. This may have been the bridge built by Eli Hurd (who lived nearby) in 1826. On the northwest side of the river near this location, Richard Olmstead operated a tavern in his log house.

The Catchall: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Off the Beaten Path

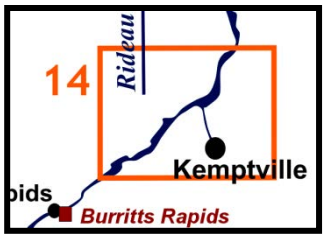
Burritts Rapids

If you wish to see the original Burritt's Rapids, paddle from the foot of the Burritts Rapids lockstation into the north channel and head west to Burritts Rapids. You can easily pass under the fixed bridge and paddle up to the Parks Canada dam (take care not to approach too close – there can be dangerous undertows). The shallows you cross are some of the original rapids.

The area just west of the fixed bridge is also where the Rideau River was dammed to provide power for mills. The remains here date back to milling activity that started in about 1845. You can still see some of the concrete-capped, stone-filled wooden cribbing of the dam. Just upstream are the remains of a triangular ice breaking crib (used to protect the dam). The dam provided power for a sawmill, a grist mill and a woolen mill. On the south bank, the partial remains of a sluice can still be seen.

A family paddle

SECTION 14: The Catchall to Baxter Conservation Area



This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River, part of The Long Reach, a section of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks.

Water Access

Water access in this section is available at several points. At the south end is the small ramp at the foot of **Muldoon Road** at 45° 01.400'N - 75° 42.400'W (on the south side of the Rideau River near Barnes Island). Near the middle are the ramps at **Becketts Landing** (45° 02.470'N - 75° 41.690'W), located on the north side of the river at the foot of Malakoff Road and in **Rideau River Provincial Park** (45° 03.440'N - 75° 40.310'W) which has a dock plus lots of parking. Further north, also on the north (more west at this point) side of the river is **Reeve Craig ramp** (45° 04.400'N - 75° 38.580'W) located at the foot of Greenline Road. In **Kemptville** (on Kemptville Creek) there is a public ramp in **Curry Park** (45° 01.200'N - 75° 38.475'W) located at the foot of Parliament Street. There is also Pirates Cove Marina located on the east side of the Rideau River.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). In this section (no locks) a good option is the Rideau River Provincial Park. There are a few B&Bs in the general area, plus a hotel (Merrickville), motel (Kemptville) and a host of accommodations in Ottawa. For information about local accommodations see: www.ottawatourism.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the town of Kemptville which has which full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores).

Distances:

The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- The Catchall to Baxter Conservation Area along the navigation channel = 14.0 km (8.7 mi)
- Rideau River to Kemptville along Kemptville Creek = 5.4 km (3.4mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river. There are no weirs or dams in this section. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

The Catchall to Baxter Conservation Area

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today, water levels have been raised by the canal dam at Long Island.

This section is part of the Long Reach, the longest stretch of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks. It extends 40 km / 25 mi from the Burritts Rapids Lock to the Long Island Locks. The river channel has a maximum depth of 12 ft (3.6 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The Catchall is a meander of the Rideau River that is now bypassed by a dredged canal cut. The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the Rideau River Provincial Park, the Baxter Conservation Area and the Crown Land between County Rd. 44 and Kemptville Creek (formerly the G. Howard Ferguson Forest Station). There is modest cottage/home development, mostly along the south shore plus a fair bit of natural (farm) frontage.

A short, off the beaten path, route suggestion has been made to paddle up Kemptville Creek (see Route Suggestions below).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 14 for locations)

The Catchall: This is an original meander of the Rideau River. One interpretation of the name is that this spot would catch all the debris being carried down the river by spring flooding. The river, both pre and post canal, carried uprooted trees and other debris, depositing them where currents slowed or the river took a meander. Surveyor John Burrows, during his May 1827 survey, noted in the area between here and Burritts Rapids, that "the river here much diminished in size by quantities of flood wood on both sides."

A dredged cut was made to straighten the channel and bypass The Catchall in the mid-1900s.

Becketts Landing: This was the site of a post-canal ferry service and then later, a bridge. The ferry traversed the river at the location of marker buoy N171. The original landing was located about 200 metres west of the present day Becketts Landing Bridge.

In 1864/65, a swing bridge was built at a narrow part of the river (Fisherman's Point), some 500 metres upstream of the original landing. It had five spans, the southernmost was the swing bridge. In about 1902, the wooden spans were replaced with steel spans (the swing bridge remained wood). The bridge

fell out of use when the fixed highway bridge (today's Becketts Landing Bridge) was built in 1936-37. The timber swing bridge was removed for use at Fort Henry in Kingston. The concrete bridge abutment for the original bridge can be seen on the south side of the river. On a calm day, you can look down, about 25 ft/ 8 m out from the abutment, and see the remains of a former bridge support about 10 ft / 3 m, underwater.

Becketts Landing Bridge: This fixed bridge, which carried the former Highway 16 (now Cty. Rd. 44 in this area) across the river, was built in 1936-37. It was rebuilt in 1991/92.

Rideau River Provincial Park: This 170 ha Provincial Park is located on the north shore of the Rideau River (across from the mouth of Kemptville Creek). It offers camping sites, a fitness trail, sandy beach and a boat launch. For more info see: www.ontarioparks.com/english/ride.html.

Kemptville Creek: Once known as the South Branch of the Rideau River, the name was changed to Kemptville Creek in 1908. The creek itself is 63 km long, but less than 5.5 km of paddling will take you up the creek from the Rideau River to Kemptville. Although the creek between the Rideau River and Kemptville is in a 10 kph "watch your wake" zone, be aware that the might be some speeding boats (usually fishing boats).

The creek is, in theory, navigable by canoe/kayak south to Bishops Mills (portages needed in Kemptville and in Oxford Mills) – but I've never done this section so I cannot advise on the details.

Kemptville: This area was first settled by Lyman Clothier and family. Clothier built a sawmill here in about 1815 and then added a grist mill in about 1821. Originally known as The Branch, the small community became known as Clothier's Mills. In 1828 the town was renamed Kemptville in honour of Sir James Kempt, the Governor General of British North America. Today Kemptville is a service town for the region. Much of the commercial development these days is on a strip along County Road 43.

Constable Hiram C. O'Callaghan Bridge: This is the high level bridge that carries Highway 416 across the Rideau River. Highway 416, the Veterans Memorial Highway, is a north-south highway linking Highways 401 and 417. It was built in the 1990s.

Baxter Conservation Area: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

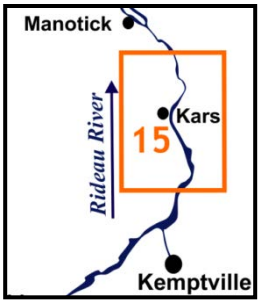
Off the Beaten Path

Kemptville Creek (11 km / 6.8 mi return)

You can paddle all the way to Kemptville by following Kemptville Creek. The west bank of the creek for the first few kilometres is crown land, formerly the G. Howard Ferguson Forest Station. It contains several hiking trails. You can get out and stretch your legs at the public dock and ramp in Curry Park.

Family paddling on the Rideau River

SECTION 15: Baxter Conservation Area to Kars North



This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River, part of The Long Reach, a section of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks.

Water Access

Water access in this section is available in Kars and at the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area. **Kars** offers two launch points, a dock and ramp on the Rideau River (45° 09.010'N - 75° 38.650'W) and a ramp in the municipal recreation area (45° 08.890'N - 75° 39.070'W). The latter is the easiest for the paddler, a generally quiet gravel ramp with lots of parking. The **W.A. Taylor Conservation Area** has a paved ramp (45° 08.000'N - 75° 38.070'W) plus all the normal conservation area amenities. You can also launch (fee) at Long Island Marine, just north of Kars.

Facilities

Lodging: In this section the only camping option (since there are no locks or campgrounds) is Long Island Marine which allows tent camping (fee) for paddlers. There are a few B&Bs in the general area, plus a hotel (Merrickville), motel (Kemptville) and a host of accommodations in Ottawa. For information about local accommodations see: www.ottawatourism.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies are the towns of Kemptville or Manotick which have full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores).

Distances:

The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Map bottom to map top along the navigation channel = 14.0 km (8.7 mi)
- Baxter C.A. to W.A. Taylor C.A. = 4.5 km (2.8 mi)

- Baxter C.A. to Kars = 6.5 km (4.0 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river. There are no weirs or dams in this section. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m).

Baxter Conservation Area to Kars North

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today, water levels have been raised by the canal dam at Long Island.

This section is part of the Long Reach, the longest stretch of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks. It extends 40 km / 25 mi from the Burritts Rapids Lock to the Long Island Locks. The river channel has a maximum depth of 12 ft (3.6 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The land bordering the river is all privately owned except for the Baxter Conservation Area and the W.A. Taylor Conservation Area. This section marks a transition from rural to urban development along the Rideau. The southern part offers a combination of summer home/cottage and natural (farm) frontage, while north of Kars you'll start to see suburban development.

I haven't included any off the beaten path suggestions, but those out for a day paddle or just taking time on the Rideau will wish to poke into the various inlets and creeks (usually the best areas for wildlife viewing).

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 15 for locations)

Baxter Conservation Area: This 68 ha Conservation Area features over 5 km of trails plus a sandy beach and picnic area. It is run by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (www.rvca.ca).

W.A. Taylor Conservation Area: This small Conservation Area features a launch ramp, picnic area and trails. It is run by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (www.rvca.ca).

James Island: Named after John James who farmed the island in the 1800s. The island was created by the flooding of the canal, the navigation channel follows the original Rideau River on the west side of the island.

Former Garlick's Wharves: Just north of James Island, in the area of marker buoy N125, were the wharves of Richard Garlick. Richard and his family settled in this area in about 1823. Richard was primarily involved in the timber business. After the canal opened, he built wharves in this area to service steamers plying the Rideau (including his own, the *Bytown*), primarily to supply them with cordwood for their wood-fired boilers.

Former Lindsay's Wharf: On the west shore, in the area of marker buoy N118, was Lindsay's Wharf. James Lindsay and his family settled here in 1830. By 1832 he had built a large wharf that would serve

steamers plying the Rideau for the next century. It was a busy place. By the late 1800s it would see local items such as potash, cheese, potatoes, eggs, salt pork, cattle, horses, and produce being loaded on steamers while goods such as tea, molasses, sugar and salt were unloaded.

Richardson Ferry: Just north of Lindsay's Wharf was the landing for a ferry service that operated from the 1860s until 1878 when a bridge was built (see Lorne Bridge below). It was set up mostly in response to a railroad being built on the east side of the river. People wishing to take the train at Osgoode Station had to cross the river – the ferry service met this demand.

Kars: Narrow tree lined streets, 19th century homes, and a tranquil rural atmosphere characterize Kars. The area was first settled in about 1820. In 1830, James Lindsay settled just south of here and by 1832 he had built a large wharf (see Former Lindsay's Wharf above). The building of the Rideau Canal provided a commercial boon, and a six street village was laid out and named Wellington. The early industry was lumbering and with vast forests extending to the west, Wellington became a busy shipping point. In 1856 the name of the community was changed to Kars. There was already a Wellington in Prince Edward County and so Kars was chosen to commemorate the British defence of Kars in Turkey in 1855 against a Russian siege. In 2001 Kars was amalgamated into the City of Ottawa.

Those wishing to stop in Kars can either use the public dock on the Rideau River, or, for a more sheltered spot, paddle a short distance up Stevens Creek to the gravel ramp in the Kars Recreation Area.

Lorne Bridge Crossing: The public dock on the Rideau River is part of the foundation of the former Lorne Bridge which crossed the river at this spot. The original bridge was built in 1878 and operated until 1961. It was similar in design to the current Brass Point Bridge, several spans leading to a timber swing bridge (located on the Kars side of the bridge). The bridge suffered two collapses, once in 1956 and again in 1957, both a result of trucks carry loads that were too heavy for the bridge. The bridge was removed after the fixed bridge downstream was built in 1961.

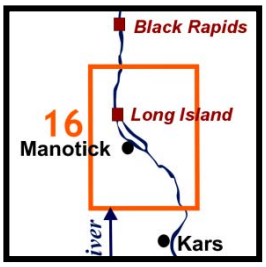
Kars Bridge: This fixed high level (22 ft / 6.7 m above the water) concrete bridge was built in 1961.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

none

On the Rideau River near Manotick

SECTION 16: Kars North to Jock River



This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River which includes the northern part of The Long Reach, a section of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks. It also includes the Long Island Locks.

Water Access

There are several points of water access. To the south are the ramps in **Kars** (see Guide 14). In **Manotick**, there is the public ramp on the Rideau River at the bridge (45° 13.880'N - 75° 40.790'W). There is the **Long Island Lockstation** which offers lots of parking – paddlers can launch from the top (to paddle south) or at the bottom of the lock (with a bit of a portage) to paddle north. Those wishing to paddle north might find it easier to launch from **Jock River Landing** (45° 15.625'N - 75° 42.480'W), at the mouth of the Jock River, just off Lodge Rd. near the intersection with County Rd. 73 (Prince of Wales Drive).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). There are a few B&Bs in the general area, plus a host of accommodations in Ottawa. For information about local accommodations see: www.ottawatourism.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the town of Manotick which has full facilities (grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores).

Distances:

The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Map bottom to map top along the navigation channel = 15.0 km (9.3 mi)
- Kars (ramp) to Manotick (ramp) = 11.7 km (7.3 mi)
- Manotick (ramp) to Long Island Locks = 2.8 km (1.7 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river, the only appreciable currents will be from the outflow of the canal weirs during times of high water. The main hazard are these same weirs. These are well marked on the upstream side and paddlers should avoid getting too close. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant – see Wildlife of the Rideau Canal section.

Kars N. to Jock River

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today, water levels have been raised by the canal dams at Long Island.

The southern part of the map is the northern part of the Long Reach, the longest stretch of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks. It extends 40 km / 25 mi from the Burritts Rapids Lock to the Long Island Locks. The river channel has a maximum depth of 12 ft (3.6 m). The water depth outside of the marked channel averages about 4 ft (1.2 m). The land bordering the river in this section is all privately owned except for the federal lands at the lockstation. Much of this section, particularly around Manotick, has urban (suburban) development. You will find a few community parks bordering the Rideau (i.e. at the head of Long Island). North of the locks at Long Island you'll find more natural shorelines (the suburban development here is a bit back from the water).

I've only included one off the beaten path suggestion (Mahogany Harbour), but those out for a day paddle or just taking time on the Rideau will wish to poke into the various inlets and creeks (usually the best areas for wildlife viewing).

One cautionary note, the lower Jock River is not recommended for the paddler – it can have rough water in the spring and the weir a little ways up has dangerous undertows.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 16 for locations)

The Long Reach: Most of this section of the canal is part of the Long Reach, the longest section of the Rideau Canal uninterrupted by locks (40 km / 25 mi). The canal dam at Long Island, the next set of locks, raised the Rideau River in that location by about 8 m (26 ft), flooding it all the way up to the foot of Burritts Rapids and making the entire section navigable (the main rapids that were flooded were those at Long Island itself).

Long Island: This was a pre-existing island in the pre-canal era with two sets of rapids in the west branch and one set (near where the locks are today) in the east channel. Originally the northern tip of the island ended a bit south of where it is today with the two branches of the river meeting just upstream from the present day locks. There were many problems with the original weir and so, in 1858, a total re-think of the water control was done and the tip of the island was extended to the weir and a new water control dam was built in the west branch (still there today beside Watson's Mill). This allowed the west branch of the river to be used for water control, with excess water being passed through this (now bypass) channel, to return to the Rideau River at the foot of Nicolls Island.

Manotick: This village is evolving into a bedroom community of Ottawa. It was founded by Moss Kent Dickinson with the building of Watson's Mill in 1860. There isn't easy public access, the public dock and ramp are located in the east channel by the bridge. You can get out there and walk into town.

West Branch/Mahogany Harbour: You can follow the west branch to the dam beside Watson's Mill. The area you enter into is known as Mahogany Harbour, a name coined for the classic boats (with gleaming varnished mahogany) that can be found there. You can paddle as far as the dam to get a water view of Watson's Mill. There is a new (2019) public dock partway down the bay, but it's not paddling friendly (particularly for kayakers, too high at normal water levels). There is easier access (ramp and floating dock) in the main channel by the Manotick Bridge (see below).

West Branch Dam: The first dam in this location was built in 1858 as part of the restructuring of the water control system for the dam and weir near the Long Island locks. The dam raised a head of water and soon after, Moss Kent Dickinson applied for the water rights to this location (see Watson's Mill). The dam has been rebuilt several times – in 1947-48 the present day concrete structure was built.

Watson's Mill/Dickinson Square Conservation Area: The construction of the west branch dam in 1858 provided a head of water in this area. Moss Kent Dickinson applied for the water rights to this area and in 1860, together with his partner, Joseph Currier, he built the mill that you can see and visit today. It operated as a flour mill until the 1930s. In 1972, the last owner of the mill, Harry Watson, sold it to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA). The RVCA restored the building to its 1860 condition and installed one run of millstones, powered by the original water turbines. The mill is the featured highlight of the Dickinson Square Conservation Area.

The mill is operated by a volunteer non-profit group and is open to the public during the summer. There is even a ghost story involving the mill (based on a true story, recounted in *Tales of the Rideau*). For more information about the mill see: www.watsonsmill.com

East Channel: This is the navigation channel around Long Island. There was originally one sets of rapids in the channel which was made navigable by the flooding from the dam at the Long Island Locks.

Manotick Bridge: This is a fixed high level (6.7 m / 22 ft) concrete bridge built in 1956. The original crossing in this spot was a ferry service, established in 1860 by Moss Kent Dickinson. In 1868 a bridge, consisting of five wooden truss spans and swing bridge (on the west side), was built here. The fixed wooden spans were replaced by three steel spans in 1901-02. The present day concrete bridge was built on a slightly different alignment (you can see the concrete abutment of the previous bridge on the east shore just north of the present bridge). There is a ramp and small floating dock in this location.

Whitehorse Safety Dam: A bit north of the bridge you'll see four concrete piers in the water. This is the Whitehorse Safety Dam, a structure that allows the reach below this dam to be dewatered. There is a concrete base extending across the channel (below navigation level), and the piers allow stop logs to be added to dam the canal. The first dam in this spot was a timber crib structure erected in 1861. It was repaired many times over the years and then finally rebuilt using concrete in 1926.

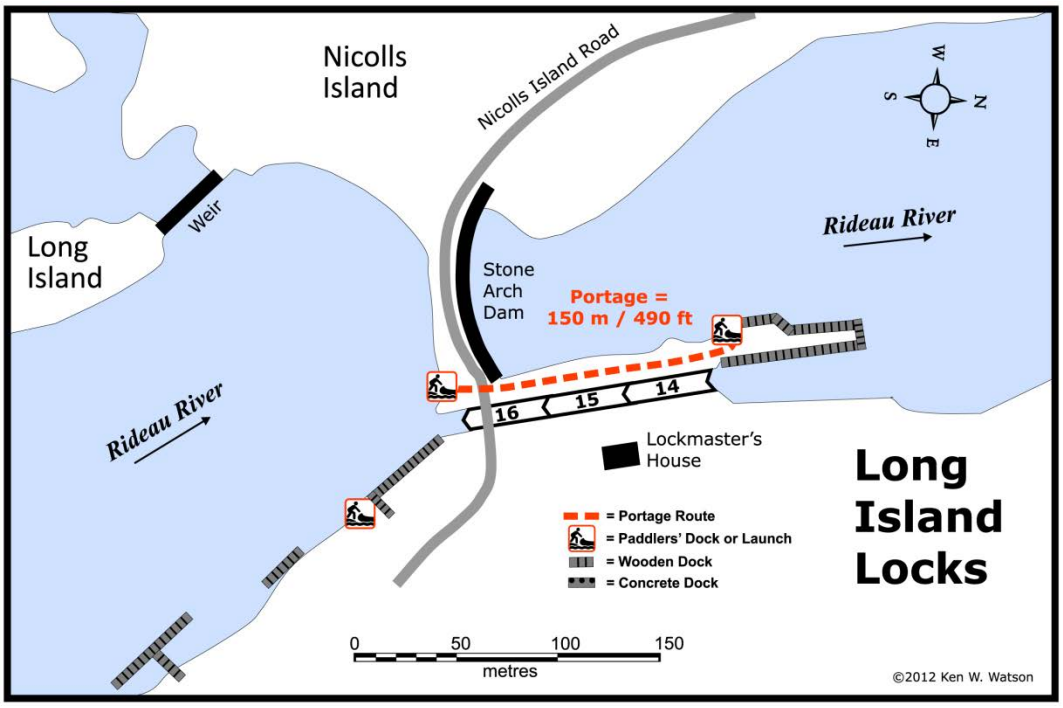
Long Island Village: Prior to the canal being built, there was no settlement other than a miller (Hurlburt) who had built a sawmill at this location. During the building of the Rideau Canal, a small village consisting of log cabins the workers built for themselves and their families grew up on the east side of the channel, just south of the lockstation. By 1834 there was a post office, general store and hotel. In 1846 a church (Methodist) was erected (Anglicans & Presbyterians shared a log cabin). The construction of Watson's Mill in 1860 signalled the demise of Long Island Village, with the community

moving to the area around the new mill, now downtown Manotick. Today little remains of the original village, just the manse of Methodist church, now a private residence, and the cemeteries.

Long Island Locks: This is a set of 3 locks in flight with a lift 25.2 feet (7.7 m). It also has an interesting 31 foot high (9.4 m) stone arch dam. If you've seen the stone arch dam at Jones Falls, contrast the construction of it (large cut stones) with the stones used in the dam here at Long Island. The original stone lockmaster's house was torn down in 1914 and replaced with the two storey frame house seen at the locks today.

The first bridge across the locks was a timber swing bridge built in 1874, using the same design as all the other timber bridges of that era (an unequal arm, center-bearing timber swing bridge). The steel pony truss swing bridge that you can see today was originally built in 1903 and used at Hogs Back. It was removed from there in 1930 and re-erected here at Long Island in 1935.

As noted in the Long Island writeup, the southern tip of Long Island has seen many changes, a result of problems with the original weir. Originally, both the east and west channels flowed to the dam at Long Island. The only escape for the water was by a weir, positioned in a channel cut through Nicolls Island. This weir had many problems due to the volume of water it had to deal with in the spring. So, in 1858, a major change was made, extending the tip of Long Island to meet a new weir, and flowing the west branch into Mud Creek. The west branch dam (at Watson's Mill) allowed this bypass flow of the river to be regulated.



Jock River: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

Off the Beaten Path

Mahogany Harbour (2.8 km / 1.7 mi return)

A short side-trip well worth doing is to paddle into Mahogany Harbour and have a look at Watson's Mill (keeping a safe distance back from the dam). This area is so named for the number of classic boats kept here, which feature lots of gleaming varnished mahogany. The Manotick Classic Boat Club hosts a boat show each year at the Long Island Locks featuring these classic and antique boats.

According to the mill you can use a small wooden dock just upstream from the mill (just past the blue house) which has a stairway leading up to the road.

Racing kayaks line up in Mooney Bay in front of the Hogs Back Locks

SECTION 17: Jock River to Hogs Back

This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau River from the Jock River (just north of the Long Island Locks) to the Hogs Back Locks.

Water Access

There are several points of water access. At the south end is **Jock River Landing** (45° 15.625'N - 75° 42.480'W), a small park at the mouth of the Jock River, just off Lodge Rd. near the intersection with County Rd. 73 (Prince of Wales Drive). In the middle, there is the ramp in **Eccolands Park** (45° 18.890'N - 75° 41.830'W) on the east side of the river and the **Black Rapids Lock** on the west side of the river. At the north end there is the ramp in **Mooneys Bay Park** (45° 22.190'N - 75° 41.740'W).

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). Camping is allowed at all lockstations except for Ottawa and Smiths Falls Combined. There are a few B&Bs in the general area, plus a host of accommodations in Ottawa. For information about local accommodations see: www.ottawatourism.ca, www.rideau-info.com/canal/ and general lodging sites (i.e. Airbnb, bbcanada, TripAdvisor).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the city of Ottawa (and the many suburbs).

Distances:

The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Long Island Locks to Hogs Back Locks = 14.9 km (9.3 mi)
- Jock River Landing to Black Rapids Lock = 7.3 km (4.5 mi)
- Black Rapids Lock to Hogs Back Lock = 6.6 km (4.1 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau River

The Rideau River is generally a slow moving river, the only appreciable currents will be from the outflow of the canal weirs during times of high water. The main hazard are these same weirs, some with overflow dams. These are well marked on the upstream side and paddlers should avoid getting too close to these. Zebra mussels are present. Aquatic vegetation growth is present in most sheltered areas with a depth of less than 10 ft (3 m). Wildlife is abundant – see the Wildlife of the Rideau Canal section.

Jock River to Hogs Back

In the pre-canal era, the river was a few feet lower than it is today, water levels have been raised by the canal dam at Hogs Back (which raised the water by 41 feet / 12.5 m at that location).

Although you're now paddling through an area of high urban development, you'll find a surprising amount of natural shoreline. For instance, the section for 2 km south of Black Rapids is where Ottawa's Greenbelt (an area theoretically to remain undeveloped) crosses the Rideau River. You will also find several community parks bordering the Rideau. I've only marked a few of these on the map, ones that appear to offer a landing (and leg stretching) opportunity for the paddler.

One cautionary note, the lower Jock River is not recommended for the paddler – it can have rough water in the spring and the weir a little ways up has dangerous undertows.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 17 for locations)

Jock River: This 72 km long river was originally known as "River Jacques" (1816). It took on the name "Goodwood River" for a time (1823) and then in the 1830s settled on the present name as the Jock River. John Mactaggart speculated in 1827 of making it navigable to Richmond, but no action was ever taken on this idea. The lower Jock River is not recommended for paddlers.

Jock River Landing: This is a small municipal park with road access off of Lodge Road. It's also an easy to use put in / pull out spot for canoes and kayaks.

Vimy Memorial Bridge: (formerly the Strandherd-Armstrong Bridge): This is a new bridge crossing of the Rideau Canal, opened in 2014. It is a fixed high level bridge with a clearance of 6.7 m / 22 ft.

Chapman Mills Conservation Area: This conservation area features 1.5 km of walking trails, washrooms and picnic areas.

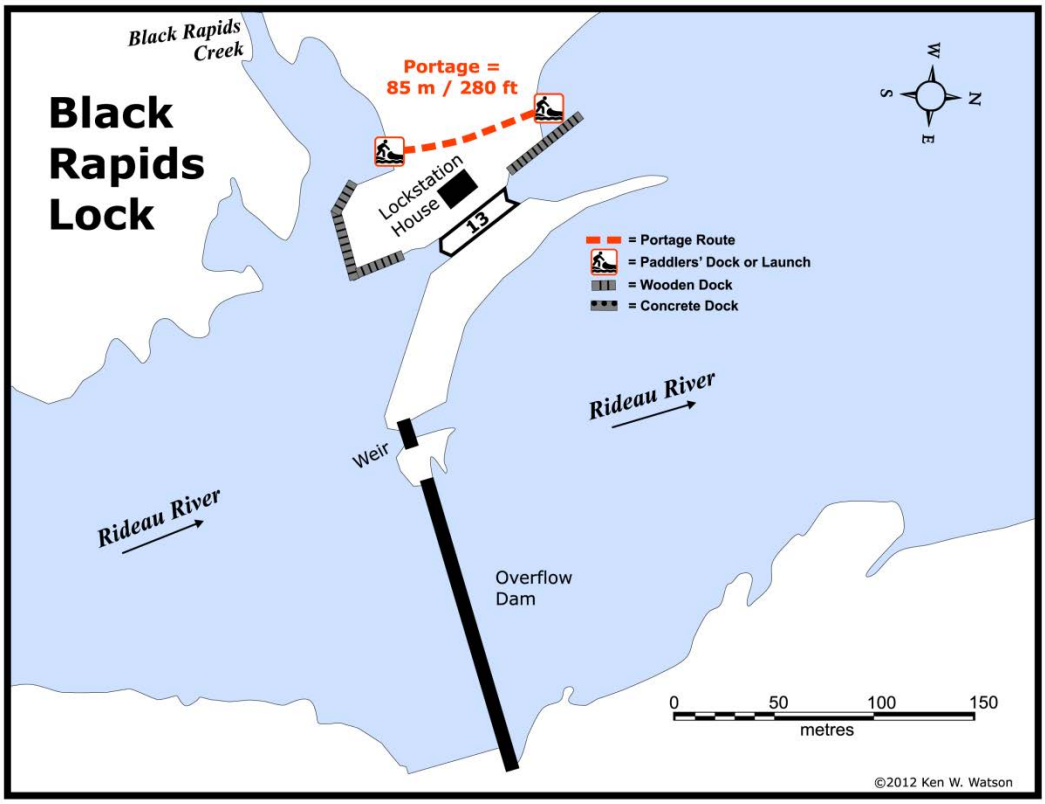
Eccolands Park: This public park is an easy spot to get out and stretch your legs. Part of it is located on the site of the quarry used for the stones to build the lock and dam at Black Rapids (the quarry is not visible today).

Black Rapids Lock: This is a single lock with a lift of 9.4 feet (2.8 m). It's one of the most "modernized" locks on the Rideau Canal with almost every feature, including the lock itself, having been

rebuilt over the years. The dam was fully rebuilt in 1949-50. The weir was rebuilt in 1925. The lock was rebuilt with concrete blocks in 1928. The original stone lockmaster's house was replaced by a frame house in 1914. The most significant change was the electrification of the lock in 1969.

The original dam in this location was a stone arch dam (an example of this is the dam that presently exists at Nicholsons). However, it was subject to ice and spring flooding damage. Repairs included adding (1841) a timber apron below the dam (to prevent erosion) and then capping (1862) it with a timber flat dam (essentially using the stone dam as a foundation). That was replaced in 1906 and 1909. In 1949-50, the straight concrete dam that you can see today was built just downstream of the original arch dam. Parts of the original arch dam still exist underwater.

The lockstation property is very pretty with nice lawns and large shade trees – it's a good spot to take a break or to camp.



Ottawa MacDonald-Cartier International Airport: In the area of Black Rapids you'll likely hear or see airplanes. To the east is the Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport. It started as a civilian flying field as early as 1919 (Hunt Club Field) and then a more formalized flying club airport (Uplands – named due to the upland plateau it was built on), then was used by the military during WWII (training facility), then became a joint civilian/military facility and finally a full civilian facility.

Michael J.E. Sheflin (Hunt Club) Bridge: This is a fixed high level (>16 m / >50 ft) concrete bridge built in 1985. It carries Hunt Club Road across the canal. It was rehabilitated/expanded in 2006.

Whale Bones: Just a bit north of the airport (a bit north of Hunt Club Bridge), the 10,420 year old (+/- 150 yrs) bone of a Beluga/White whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*) was found. At that time, this area was

under the Champlain Sea, a brackish water sea created by the retreating glaciers (see Geology of the Rideau Canal section).

CNOR Railway Bridge: This is a fixed high level (9.5 m / 30.8 ft) railway bridge. The bridge was originally built for the Canadian Northern Ontario Railway in 1913.

Mooneys Bay: As you come to the curve of the river at the head of Mooneys Bay, you'll be paddling over the drowned Three Island Rapids, one of two sets of rapids in this area that gave raftsmen (floating timber down the Rideau River) trouble before the canal was built (the second set of rapids was Three Rock Rapids – see Hogs Back).

Mooneys Bay Park: A public park with a large public beach, a good spot to stop and have a picnic and/or a swim.

Rideau Canoe Club: Just above the locks on the west shore you'll find the Rideau Canoe Club. You may find many other paddlers in this area, generally paddling racing canoes and kayaks. The club was founded in 1902 (as the Rideau Aquatic Club) with an impressive building located on the canal in downtown Ottawa (at the foot of Fifth Avenue, just south of today's Flora Footbridge). It was renamed the Rideau Canoe Club in 1947 and moved to this location in 1948. The current clubhouse was built in 2010.

Rideau River to Ottawa River: The Hogs Back Dam marks the end of the Rideau Canal portion of the Rideau River. Water flowing through the weir continues along the original channel of the Rideau River to the twin Rideau Falls, where the river plunges 30 feet (9 m) to the Ottawa River. Passing through the locks at Hogs Back drops you into the artificial cut that leads to the Ottawa Locks.

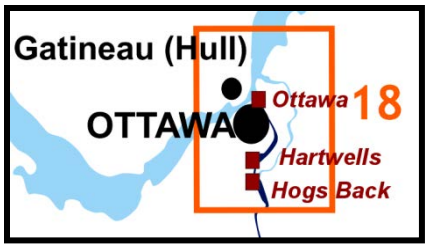
Hogs Back Locks: See next section.

ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

none

Racing kayaks line up in Mooney Bay in front of the Hogs Back Locks

SECTION 18: Hogs Back to Ottawa



This is an easy paddling section of the Rideau Canal that takes you right into downtown Ottawa. It includes Hogs Back Locks, Hartwells Locks, and Ottawa Locks.

Water Access

There are several points of water access. At the south end are the locks at **Hogs Back** and at **Hartwells** and the launch ramp in **Mooneys Bay Park** (fees apply). In the middle is the **Dows Lake Pavilion** (45° 23.760'N - 75° 42.360' W) – there are parking and launch fees. There are three paddling access/egress points in the downtown area. Two are on the east side of the canal, one at the **end of Waverley Street** (45° 25.125'N - 75° 40.860' W) and one at the **end of Clegg Street** (45° 24.280'N - 75° 40.825' W). The other is on the west side of the canal, on **Patterson Creek** (45° 24.480'N - 75° 40.950' W) – access from the canal is under the small stone arch bridge.

Facilities

Lodging: If you're paddling and camping, the lockstations are a good choice for camp spots (a camping fee applies). Camping is allowed at all lockstations except for Ottawa and Smiths Falls Combined. There are a host of accommodations in Ottawa. For information about local accommodations see: www.ottawatourism.ca. Of note, camping at Hogs Back is not recommended and camping at Hartwells can be problematic (noisy) during frosh week (early September).

Supplies: A local source for supplies is the city of Ottawa (and the many suburbs).

Distances:

The navigation channel is shown on the map.

- Hogs Back Locks to the Ottawa Locks = 8.4 km (5.2 mi)
- Hogs Back to Hartwells Locks = 1.7 km (1.0 mi)
- Hartwells Locks to Ottawa Locks = 6.7 km (4.2 mi))

- Dows Lake (ramp) to the Ottawa Locks = 6.0 km (3.7 mi)

GENERAL ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The Rideau Canal (in Ottawa)

This is a fully managed section of the Rideau not subject to natural water fluctuations. The main issue here for the paddler is that it can get choppy from waves generated by passing boats in the restricted channel sections. These waves bounce off the concrete retaining walls, sometimes creating tricky paddling conditions. So, please pay attention.

A paddler reported that during a heavy rainfall, storm water directed into the Rideau Canal can both produce an appreciable current at the outlet area and also fills the canal with street debris (cigarette butts and the like). If you're caught in a rainstorm, make sure you're not near one of these storm water outlets.

Hogs Back to Ottawa

In the pre-canal era, there was no waterway in this section. It was the area of land between Entrance Valley (adjacent to the Ottawa River) and Hogs Back (Three Rock Rapids on the Rideau River) consisting of meadows, forest and a large swamp (Dow's Great Swamp – a relict flood overflow drain from the Rideau River to the Ottawa River).

Today this 8.4 km (5.2 mi) section of canal is usually referred to as being all artificial (excavated), but that's not true, over forty percent (3.5 km /2.2 mi) of this distance was not excavated, it instead took advantage of natural topographic features, a gully that was flooded by a dam and a swamp that was also flooded by dams. These were both aspects of Colonel By's slackwater technique.

To explain the geography and construction of this section of the Rideau Canal, I'll go backwards from our normal routing (south to north) and start at the Ottawa Locks (so go north to south) since this is how this section was built (Ottawa Locks first). I've marked some of the historic geography on the map so that you can visually see the locations.

The Ottawa locks are in a valley which had a bedrock ridge at the top (in fact bedrock on either side of the valley was quarried to get the stones used for the locks and buildings). A few hundred metres south was the Beaver Meadow – this easy digging area was used as a lay-by (the Canal Basin, a docking area) in the early days of the canal. Today this is the area of Confederation Park, the Mackenzie King Bridge and the Ottawa Convention Centre.

The canal then proceeds along The Deep Cut, a man-made canal cut which took the canal to the Natural Gully. The nice bit of topography provided by the Natural Gully was taken advantage of by erecting an embankment where the Deep Cut intersected the gully, in order to impound water. This is why the canal takes a 90 degree turn at that point, you're now in a natural topographic feature. The canal follows this gully for over 3 km (1.9 mi) to the Notch of the Mountain – a low point in a ridge that cut across the route. A cut (locally known as Mutchmor's Cut due to the proximity of a settler by that name) was excavated through the notch to Dow's Great Swamp.

At Dow's Great Swamp, Colonel By used his slackwater technique to achieve navigation, having one embankment built where the canal passed through (the "Great Embankment" at the southeast end) and a smaller embankment (the "St. Louis Embankment") built to the northwest, at a constriction in the swamp. These two embankments created Dows Lake.

The rest of the canal from Dows Lake to Hogs Back was excavated in gravel and clay (bedrock was never encountered in this area until the canal arrived at Hogs Back).

A little bit of historic trivia is that the exact route you will be travelling, plus the dam at Hogs Back, were in fact Colonel By's second choice for the route of the canal in this section. His original plan was to simply run a canal cut from the Ottawa locks straight to the Notch of the Mountain. From there it would follow the present course but intersect the Rideau River at the foot of Three Rock Rapids (at the foot of Peter's Gully – about 270 metres north (downstream) of the present Hogs Back dam). He then planned to run a canal cut around Three Rock Rapids (Hogs Back), put three detached locks into Gloucester Snie (a flood channel that ran around the east side of Three Island Rapids) – bypassing Three Island Rapids (at the head of today's Mooneys Bay) and returning to the Rideau River in the still water above Three Island Rapids (so a few hundred metres south (upstream) of today's Mooneys Bay). The route we travel today is actually his Plan B – which included a dam at Hogs Back and putting locks into the canal cut (he originally planned to have 3 lift locks at Hogs Back but later moved two of those to Hartwells). By early 1827, this second plan (dam and locks) had been adopted. His first plan would have involved much rock excavation (very hard to do in those days) and his second plan (creating slackwater with the use of a dam) avoided this.

You'll be paddling though an area of high urban development. For much of this section, the canal is bounded by bicycle/walking paths. You'll be able to get out and stretch at a few places along the route such as at Hartwells Locks, Dows Lake and the Ottawa Locks. There are also a couple of spots along the bicycle/walking paths where water access has been added (normally you'll be faced with a concrete wall and fence). However these are few and far between.

POINTS OF INTEREST (listed south to north – see Map 18 for locations)

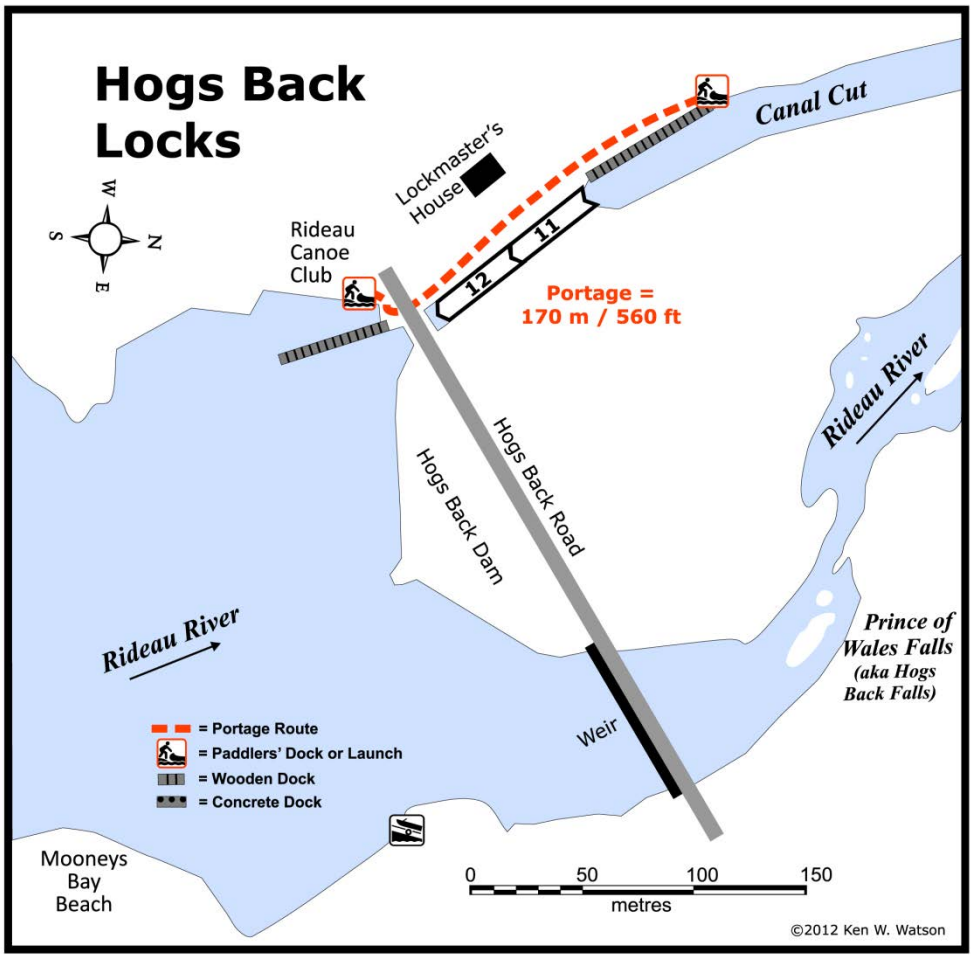
Hogs Back Locks: This is a set of two locks, a lift lock and a guard lock. The guard lock was built as a flood prevention mechanism and normally only the lift lock (northern lock) is used. It has a lift of 13.8 feet (4.2 m).

This area is the most spectacular example of landscape change brought about by the building of the Rideau Canal. This was the spot chosen to have the canal leave the Rideau River, the location known originally as Three Rock Rapids. These rapids had a drop of 6 feet (1.8 m) over a length of 2,000 feet (600 m). According to John Mactaggart (1829) it is "called the Hog's Back, from the circumstance of raftsmen with their wares [timber] sticking on it in coming down the stream" (the rocks sticking up looked like the bony back of a hog).

Lt. Colonel John By decided to build a large dam here in order to flood the river all the way up to the foot of the lock he planned to build at Black Rapids. This big dam would also put a head of water into the canal cut leading to the Ottawa locks. But he had lots of trouble – the dam fell down (washed away) three times during construction and in the end a new engineering technique had to be employed to create the dam that stands to this day (this story is recounted in *Tales of the Rideau*). The dam raised the water by 41 ft (12.5 m) in this location.

The dam itself is difficult to see, it is the section of land between the locks and the weir. Hogs Back Road runs along the top of it. Although it started off as a stone dam which would have been similar to the large dams seen at places such as Long Island Lockstation and Jones Falls Lockstation, it is the stone dam that fell down three times. In the end, timber cribbing filled with broken stone was used to dam the Rideau

River. Earthen material forms the apron (front) of the dam and rubble stone the back. You can see a large amount of that rubble stone backing near the weir.



Hogs Back Falls: Take a short walk to view the present day falls (technically the "Prince of Wales Falls" but known locally as the "Hogs Back Falls"), located just downstream from the waste water weir. What you're seeing is not a natural waterfall, it's the 12.5 m / 41 ft of dam-raised water going through a man-made (excavated) channel, heading back to the original level of the Rideau River. If you want to get a sense of what the original Three Rock Rapids looked like, the lower half of those rapids still exist below the dam and present day falls.

The rapids here were formed by several small faults, tilting and fracturing the rock units. The fault disruption of those rock units can be clearly seen today. The rocks are mostly made up of Ottawa Limestone (a quarry in the limestone on the east side of the river was used to obtain the stones used in the locks). You can also see some darker shaly and sandy rocks, part of the older Rockcliffe Formation.

The original rapids didn't require a portage – natives, surveyors and voyageurs would line their canoes (pull them) up or down the rapids. It does appear that when civilized folk arrived, a portage was developed to allow them to bypass the rapids. There is a tale told of the Billings family (early settlers) accidently shooting the rapids (c.1814). The problem with the tale is that it has the Billings going over the

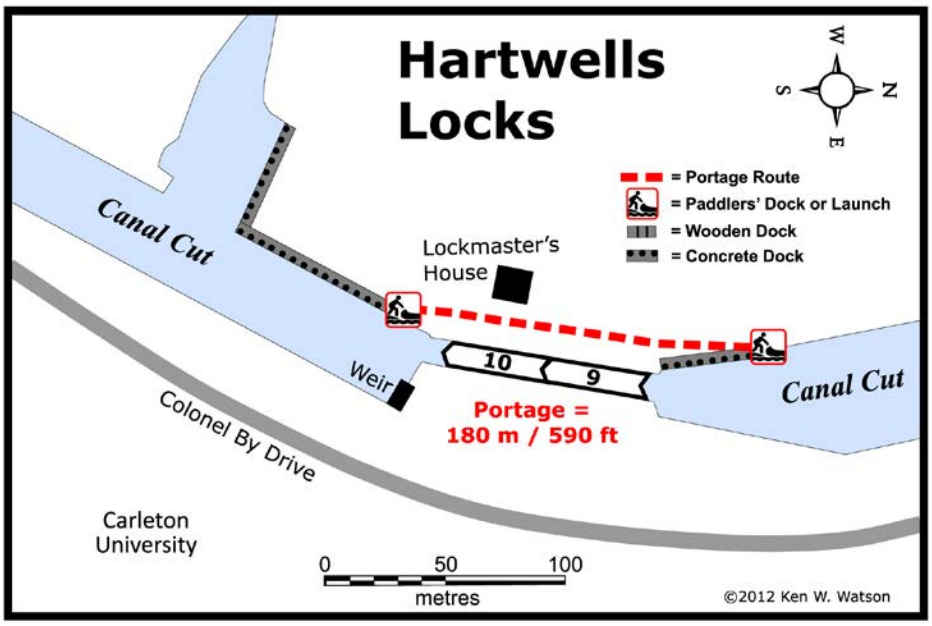
falls, which didn't exist until the dam was built. Nonetheless, if you look at the rapids below the falls, you can imagine the poor Billings family shooting through that in a canoe.

City of Ottawa: There are too many points of interest in Ottawa to list in this guide – the Parliament Buildings, Byward Market, Rideau Hall, a host of museums (Bytown Museum, Billings Estate Museum, Canadian Museum of Nature, Canadian War Museum) and much more. Visit the many websites dedicated to Ottawa to get details on all that Ottawa has to offer.

Heron Road Bridge: This is a fixed high level (8.5 m / 27.6 ft) bridge. It was built in 1966.

Hartwells Locks: This is set of two locks with a lift of 21.8 feet (6.6 m). No locks were originally planned for this area, three lift locks were planned to be at Hogs Back. But Colonel By moved two of those locks to this lock location in order to take advantage of topography (to lessen the amount of canal cut excavation).

Carleton University sits adjacent to these locks and bicycle paths run on both sides of the canal at this point, so there tends to be a fair bit of pedestrian (and cyclist) traffic.



Central Experimental Farm: Founded in 1886 as the central research station for the federal Department of Agriculture, this 400 hectare area is a National Historic Site of Canada. It remains an active research centre and is home to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada headquarters. The farm is open to the public and features many displays (including the Canada Agriculture Museum) and walking trails.

Railway Tunnel: You can't see this, but as you paddle the canal, immediately south of Dows Lake, you'll be paddling over a railway tunnel. This tunnel was built in 1963 to carry both CPR and CNR trains under the canal. A railway swing bridge was originally built in this location by the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Railway Company in 1871. CPR replaced that bridge with another swing bridge in 1916. That bridge was removed in 1968.

Dows Lake: A manmade lake created by building embankments in Dow's Great Swamp (see below), it has a maximum depth of 19 ft / 5.8 m. It is home to the Dows Lake Pavilion (restaurant and marina). If

you have a copy of the hydrographic chart, you can see the trace of the old Dow's Lake Causeway, now under water, running diagonally across the lake. It was built in 1900-1904 to carry a road (the Driveway) across Dow's Lake. It was removed sometime prior to 1929.

Embankments: Not really visible today, but the lake was formed by the construction of two embankments, the Great Embankment at the south end (built by Philemon Wright and Sons) and the St. Louis Embankment (named after the contractor who built it, Jean-Baptiste St. Louis). The original plan was to carry the canal through the swamp using an aqueduct created by embanking. However, detailed surveys revealed that the second embankment could be made smaller (less costly) if it was moved north, to a constriction in the swamp (the "Ridge of the Swamp") – this is the St. Louis Embankment. Together they flooded the area, creating Dows Lake. As one of the Royal Engineers, Lt. Frome, succinctly put it: *"Dow's Great Swamp, which, by means of two massive earthen embankments, is converted into a pool 20 feet deep."*

Bronson Bridge: This is a fixed high level (6.7 m / 22.0 ft) bridge. It carries Bronson Avenue over the Rideau Canal. The current bridge dates to 1960. The first bridge in this location was a swing bridge, built in 1904 and upgraded in 1938.

Notch of the Mountain/Mutchmor's Cut: A low ridge crossed the intended path of the canal. The Notch of the Mountain represents a low point in this ridge and the excavation through the notch is known as Mutchmor's Cut, named after an early settler in the area.

Bank St. Bridge: This is a fixed high level (8.8 m / 28.5 ft) bridge. The present bridge was built in 1913-14. The first bridge in this location was a timber swing bridge, built in 1866. That was replaced by a similar bridge in 1882 and then by a steel through truss swing bridge in 1898. One reason for the present day bridge was the need to carry trolley cars in addition to vehicle traffic. When first built, the high level bridge had two lines of trolley car tracks.

Lansdowne Park: A landmark for many years, the use of this area as an exhibition ground dates to about 1875 when an agricultural and arts exhibition was held on the site. It's use become more formalized when the City of Ottawa acquired it in 1898. The historic exhibition hall, the Aberdeen Pavilion, was built in 1898. The stadium (former Frank Clair Stadium – now TD Place) got its start as a grandstand in 1909 with additions made in the 1960s. The entire site, including the stadium, was re-developed between 2008 and 2015.

Natural Gully: In the area of Lansdowne Park, the canal enters the Natural Gully, a pre-canal gully that contained a creek that flowed to the Rideau River. This is why the canal follows a bit of a meandering course and is wider than the man-made canal cuts. Most of the work to make this area navigable was to clear the gully of vegetation. The gully originally continued northeast to the Rideau River, the location where it left the present day canal is the sharp northwest turn of the canal (into the Deep Cut) to the Ottawa Locks. An embankment (4.6 m /15 ft. high by 96 m / 315 ft long) was erected at this spot to block the gully and provide a navigation depth of water all the way to Hartwells. In an 1831 progress report, Colonel By wrote: *From the Beaver Meadow to the Natural Gully a distance of 1053 yards, the Excavation was through clay and from its great depth is termed the Deep Cut; at the North Entrance of Natural Gully, a Mound of Earth or Dam of 15 feet in height and 315 feet in length was to be constructed to prevent the water escaping down a Ravine; the Gully in question is 3300 yards in length, an average breadth 83 yards, from its south* [north] *entrance to the Notch of the Mountain."*

Hog Island (aka Pig Island): This little island represents a section of high land in the Natural Gully that stayed above water when the gully was flooded. The story (not verified) of the name is that hogs

were stranded on this island during the building of the canal. This could have occurred if hogs had been left to forage in the gully and then sought high ground when the gully was flooded (likely in early 1831).

Flora Footbridge: This is a fixed high level (6.7 m /22.0 ft) footbridge. It opened in 2019.

Patterson Creek: This creek flows into the canal from the west. It is named for George Patterson, an early settler in the region. Originally a small creek that flowed into the Natural Gully, it expanded into an inlet when the Natural Gully was flooded for the Rideau Canal. Urban development has obscured its original form. Today you'll find a paddling dock and restrooms just past the Queen Elizabeth Drive bridge over the creek (access from the canal is to paddle under this small stone/concrete arch bridge).

Pretoria Bridge: This bridge, with its distinctive stone faced towers, is a vertical lift bridge (3 m / 10 ft when closed, 7 m / 22.7 ft when raised). It is a Strauss direct lift bridge, built in 1915-17, the only one of its kind in Canada. It was reconstructed in the late 1970s. It replaced an earlier bridge (a steel truss swing bridge), built in 1889-90, located about 180 m / 600 ft to the north of the present bridge.

Queensway Bridge: This is a fixed high level (7.1 m / 23 ft) bridge that carries Highway 417 over the Rideau Canal. It was built in about 1966.

Deep Cut: This is the excavated canal cut from the Ottawa Locks to the Natural Gully. In an 1831 progress report Colonel By stated: "*From the Beaver Meadow to the Natural Gully a distance of 1053 yards, the Excavation was through clay and from its great depth is termed the Deep Cut ...*"

Corktown Footbridge: This is a fixed high level (8.2 m /26.6 ft) footbridge. It was built in 2006.

Laurier Bridge: This is a fixed high level (8.2 m / 26.6 ft) bridge. The first bridge on the site of the present Laurier Avenue bridge was a high level timber truss bridge built in 1872. That bridge was completely reconstructed in 1891. The present day bridge had its start in 1900-01 with the construction of a steel girder span bridge supported on steel trestle bents. The bridge has seen many modifications over the years, including reconstruction and widening in 2001. Today, the most obvious feature left from the original 1900 bridge is the riveted arch span over the Rideau Canal.

Mackenzie King Bridge: This is a fixed high level (8.2 m / 26.6 ft) bridge. It was built in 1951 and reconstructed in 1996-1998.

Beaver Meadow/Canal Basin: This was a meadow in the pre-canal era that lay above the bedrock ridge of the ravine (Entrance Valley) that now hosts the locks. It was an easy digging area and when the canal was first built, a lay-by (the Canal Basin, a docking area) was created here. It included a small wooden lock at the outlet into Lowertown. Starting in the 1870s, the east side of the basin was filled in to make a foundation for railway tracks. In the 1920s, the west end was being filled in and by 1927, the basin was gone. Today the area of the former basin is marked by Confederation Park, the Mackenzie King Bridge and the Ottawa Convention Centre.

In the pre-canal era a stream ran around the base of today's Parliament Hill, through this spot and on to the Rideau River. Beavers dammed that stream creating a pond and meadow in this area. Thomas Burrowes, writing in 1826 about the proposal to use this area for a canal basin stated: *"The Swamp, generally called the Beaver Meadow, at the head of the Entrance Valley, afforded much facility for forming the proposed works, and was selected as a proper site for a Basin, or Reservoir, at the head of the projected Eight Locks"*

Plaza Bridge: This high fixed high level (7.9 m / 25.6 ft) bridge was built in 1912. It replaced two previous bridges, the Sappers Bridge, built in 1828 (by the Royal Sappers and Miners) and the Dufferin Bridge, built in 1872. The Sappers Bridge was a magnificent stone structure consisting of a single arch

span. The Dufferin bridge, built adjacent to the Sappers Bridge on the downstream (locks) side had three arched spans made of wrought iron and stone. Both these bridges were demolished to create the single Plaza Bridge. The Plaza Bridge was widened in about 1938.

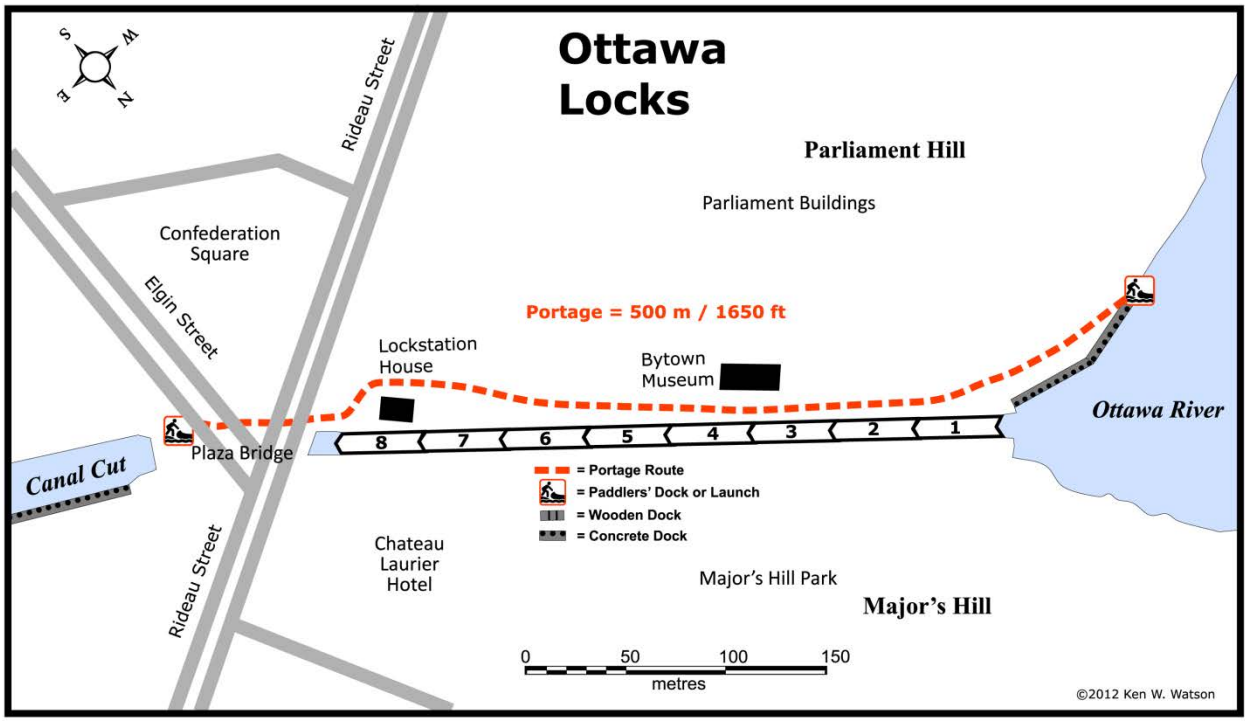
Chateau Laurier Hotel: this impressive looking building, commissioned by the Grand Trunk Railway, opened in 1912. The French Gothic Revival Château style of the building was designed to complement the adjacent Parliament buildings. In 1923, it became a Canadian National Railway hotel after they took over the Grand Trunk Railroad. It was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1981. In 1988 it became a Canadian Pacific Railway hotel after they bought out CN's hotels. In 1999 it became known as the Fairmont Château Laurier, after CP Hotels bought out Fairmont and changed their name to Fairmont Hotels and Resorts. In 2013 ownership changed to Capital Hotel Limited Partnership. In 2016 a proposed heritage inappropriate addition created controversy, its later iterations becoming known as the "boxcar" expansion (for the look of the design). It would/will have a highly negative impact of the visual character of the Ottawa Lockstations, something that is very troubling to those who care about Canadian heritage as well as UNESCO. That "battle" is on-going (stopped in September 2019, but presumably the parent company, Larko Investments, will try again – hopefully with a heritage appropriate design).

Major's Hill Park: Overlooking the Ottawa locks to the east is this park. It is the former location of the house that Lt. Colonel John By, Superintending Engineer for the Rideau Canal and his family lived in during the construction of the canal. The house burned down in October 1848, today you can see the excavated foundations and interpretive panels. You'll also find a magnificent statue of Colonel By, created by Joseph-Émile Brunet, overlooking the locks. This hill, originally known as Colonel's Hill, became known as Major's Hill after the Major Daniel Bolton. He (as Captain Bolton, promoted Major in 1838) took over as Superintending Engineer of the Rideau Canal after Lt. Colonel By returned to England in 1832. He lived on the hill, in the same house that Colonel By used during the building of the canal. This area was formally established as a park in 1875.

Parliament Hill: Originally known as Barrack Hill, this was the location Lt. Colonel By chose to house the men and officers of the two companies of Sappers and Miners during the building of the Rideau Canal. With the decision in 1857 to make Ottawa Canada's capital, this dominant landscape was chosen as the site for the new Canadian parliament. The original Parliament Buildings were constructed between 1859 and 1866. The Centre Block burned down in 1916 and was rebuilt. The various buildings that make up Parliament were designated as a National Historic Site of Canada in 1987. Major renovations to the buildings were started in 2007 and are on-going.

Ottawa Locks: The end (or beginning) of your journey on the Rideau is the magnificent flight of 8 locks which connects the Rideau Canal with the Ottawa River. These locks have a combined lift of 76.2 feet (23.2 m) – this of course varies somewhat with the water level fluctuations of the Ottawa River. The locks are flanked by Canada's Parliament Buildings to the west and the Chateau Laurier Hotel to the east. At the locks you'll find the lockstation house (with washrooms) which was built here in 1884 (the original lockmaster's house was located where the Chateau Laurier is today). Halfway down the locks you'll find the oldest surviving building in Ottawa, the Bytown Museum, the former Commissariat (supplies and services) building (see separate write-up below). Across the locks from this building you'll see the foundations for the Royal Engineers building which was of similar design to the Commissariat building (a rail line, built in 1901, actually went through part of this building and train vibrations shook the building to pieces – the remains were torn down in 1911-12).

If you want a good photo of the locks, take a hike up the path on the east side from Lock 1 (lowest lock) towards the Alexandra Bridge (the big bridge crossing the Ottawa River). As you come onto the bridge, you'll find a couple of viewing platforms – these provide a view back to get some photos of both the Parliament Buildings and the locks.



Bytown Museum: Be sure to visit the Bytown Museum, located on the west side of the Ottawa Locks. It is in the oldest surviving building in Ottawa, the Commissariat (built in 1827), and now houses a museum that showcases the Rideau Canal. It is open to the public during the summer, for information see www.bytownmuseum.com

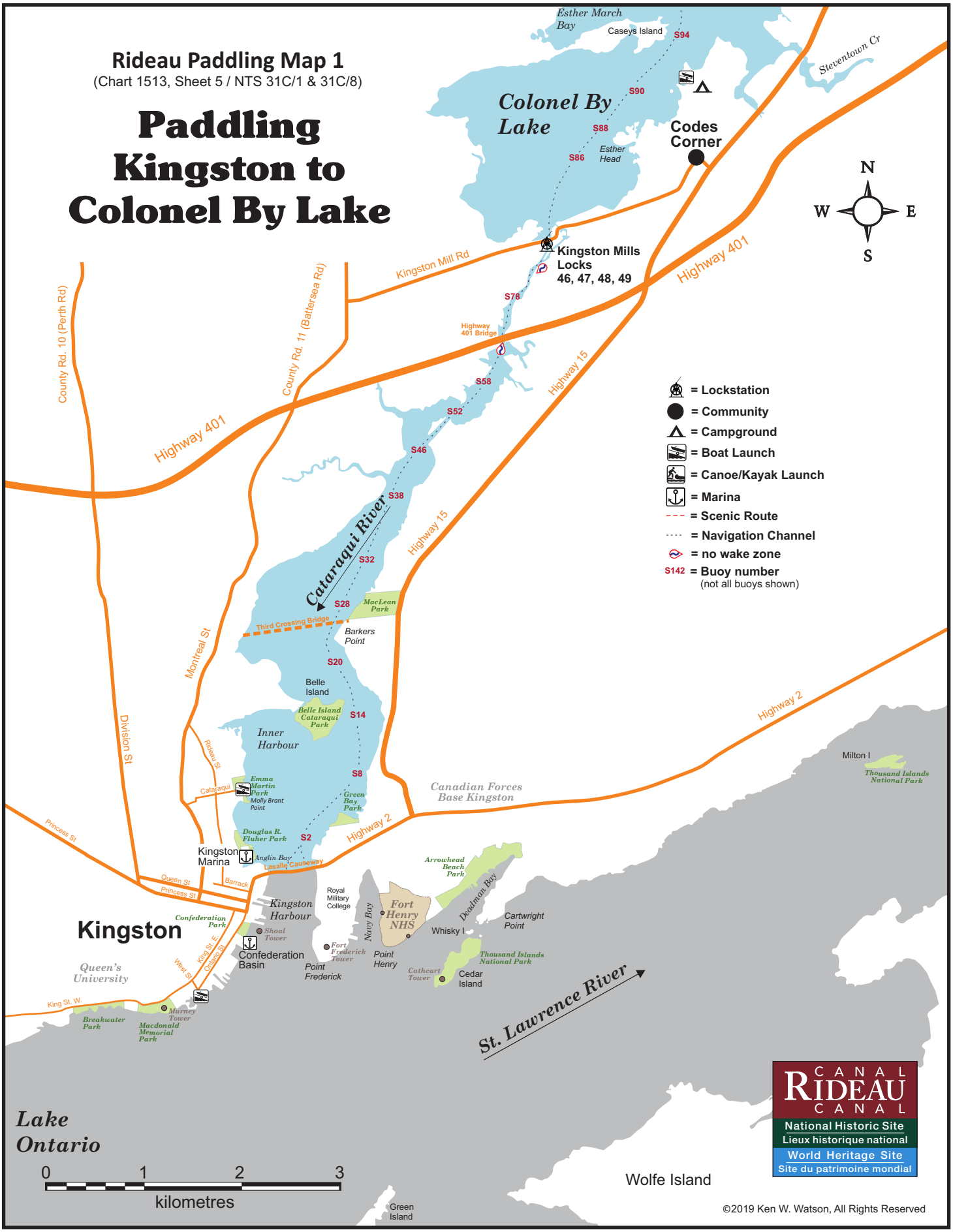
ROUTE SUGGESTIONS

none

PADDLING MAPS

The 18 paddling maps have been grouped together in the next section for ease of use while paddling. They are ordered south to north with Map 1 starting in Kingston and Map 18 ending in Ottawa.

If you're looking at this document as a digital PDF file, the maps may be enlarged (zoomed) to see fine detail. If the guide is printed out on 8.5" x 11" paper, each map will be 1:50,000 scale.


Rideau Paddling Map 1
(Chart 1513, Sheet 5 / NTS 31C/1 & 31C/8)
Paddling Kingston to Colonel By Lake
Esther March Bay
Caseys Island
S94
Steventown Cr
Colonel By Lake
S90
S88
Codes Corner
S86
Esther Head
N
W
E
S
Kingston Mills Locks 46, 47, 48, 49
Kingston Mill Rd
Highway 401
S78
Highway 401 Bridge
County Rd. 10 (Perth Rd)
County Rd. 11 (Battersea Rd)
Highway 15
S58
S52
S46
Highway 401
S38
Cataraqui River
S32
Highway 15
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
S142 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
S28
MacLean Park
Third Crossing Bridge
Barkers Point
Montreal St
S20
Belle Island
Belle Island Cataraqui Park
S14
Inner Harbour
Division St
Rideau St
Cataraqui
Emma Martin Park
Molly Brant Point
S8
Green Bay Park
Canadian Forces Base Kingston
Highway 2
Milton I
Thousand Islands National Park
Princess St
Douglas R. Fluhrer Park
S2
Kingston Marina
Anglin Bay
Lasalle Causeway
Highway 2
Arrowhead Beach Park
Queen St
Princess St
Barrack
Kingston Harbour
Royal Military College
Fort Henry NHS
Deadman Bay
Navy Bay
Cartwright Point
Whisky I
Confederation Park
Kingston
Shoal Tower
Confederation Basin
Fort Frederick Tower
Point Frederick
Point Henry
Cathcart Tower
Cedar Island
Thousand Islands National Park
King St. E.
Ontario St.
West St
Queen's University
King St. W.
Murney Tower
Breakwater Park
Macdonald Memorial Park
St. Lawrence River
Lake Ontario
0 1 2 3
kilometres
Green Island
Wolfe Island
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
National Historic Site
Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
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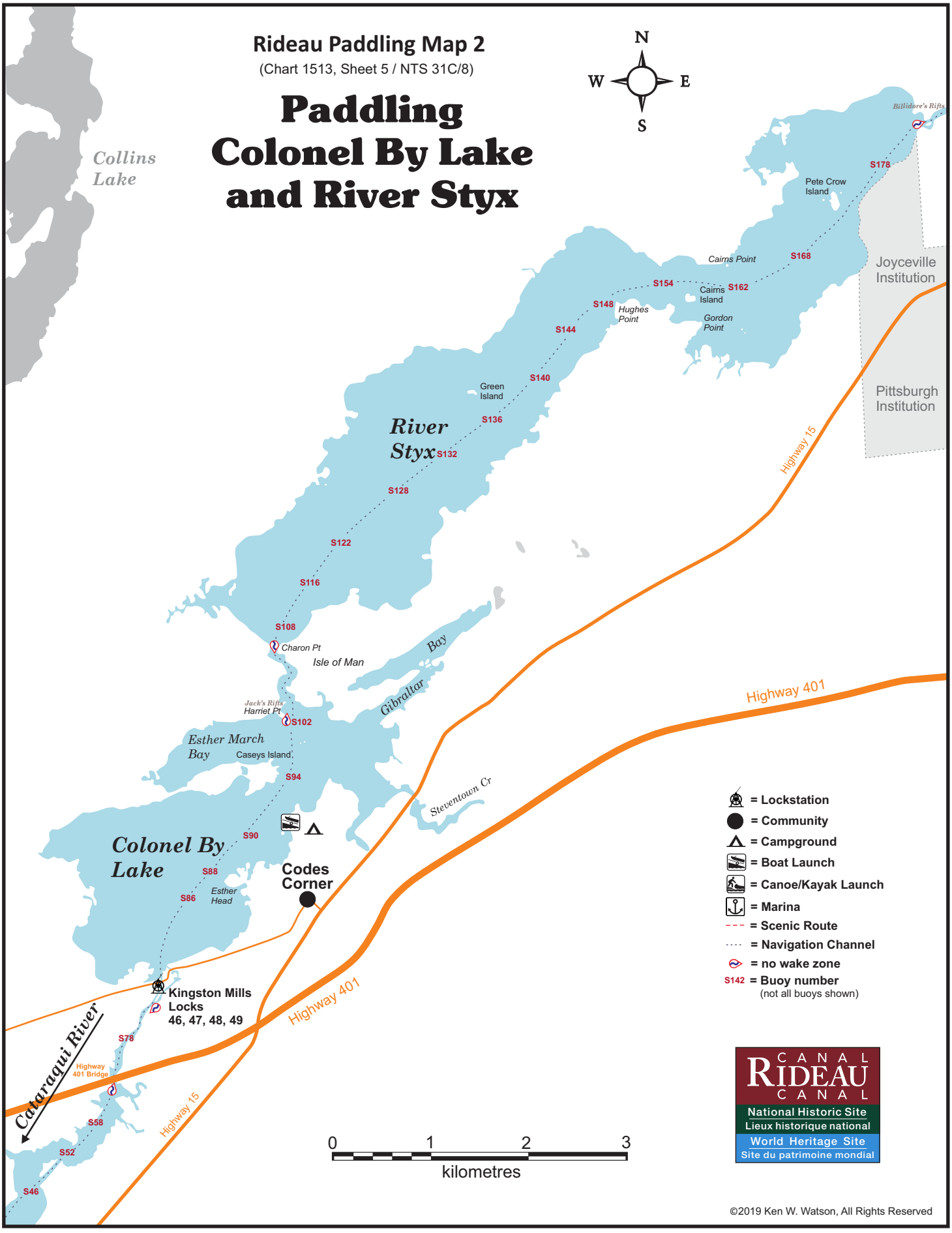

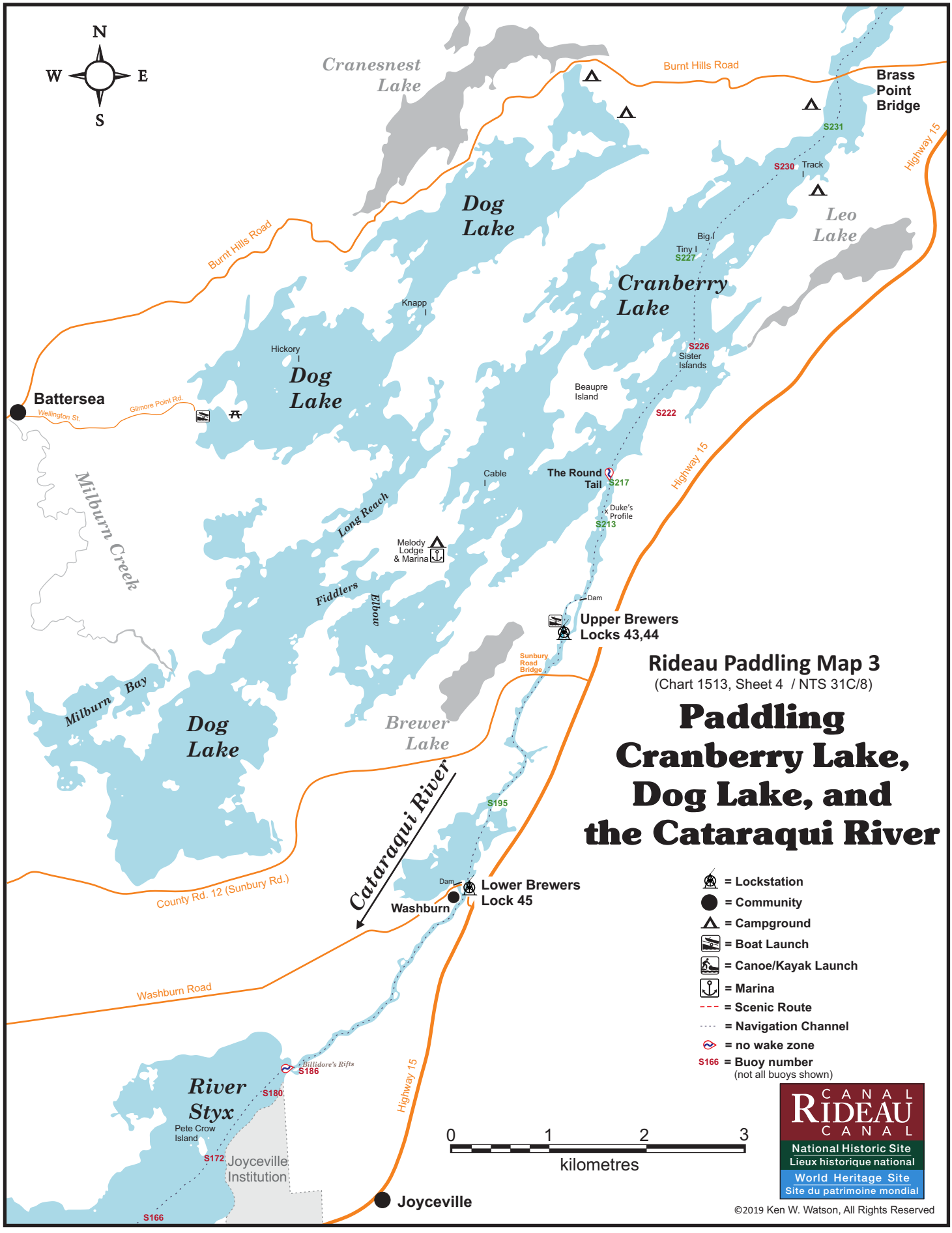

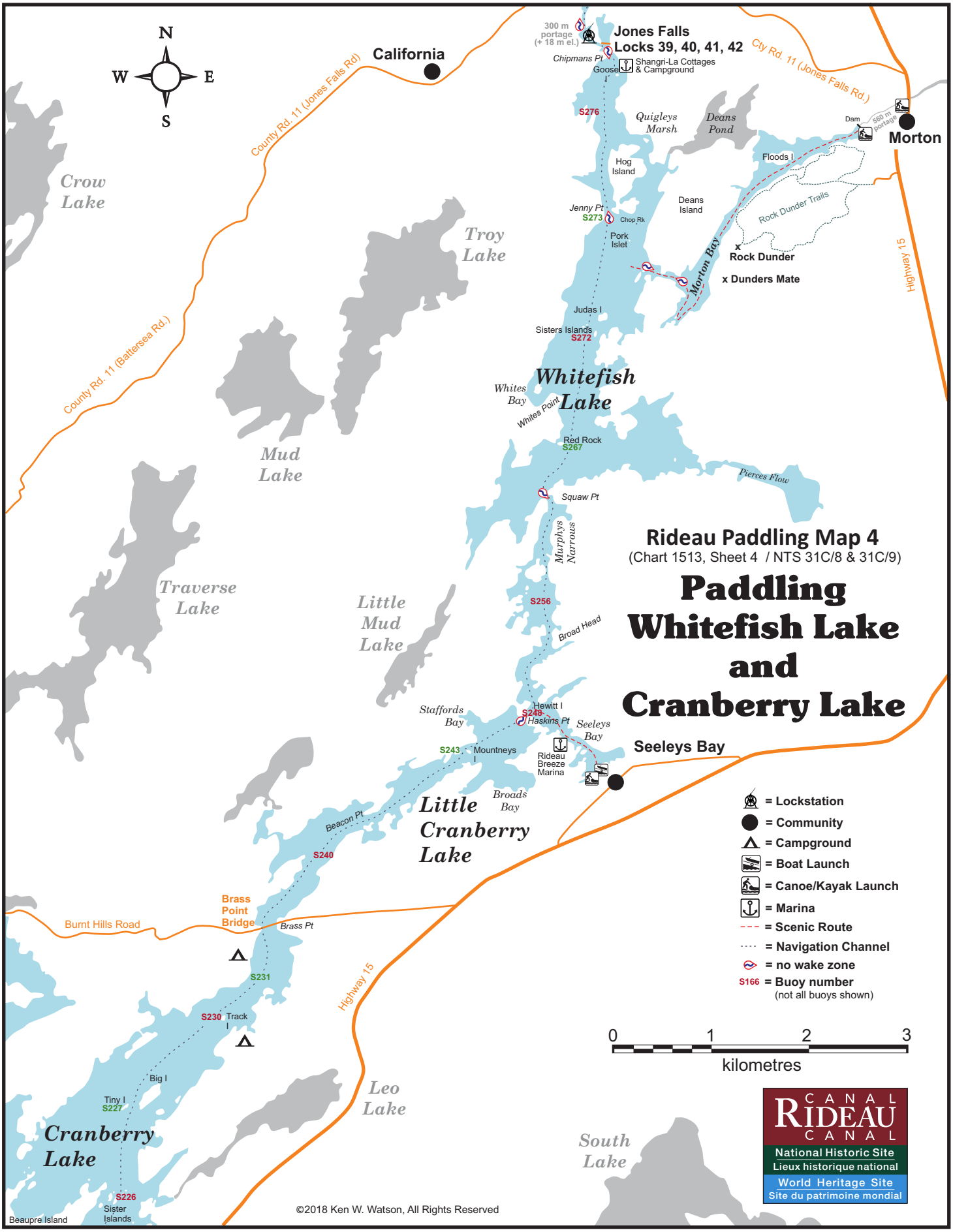
N
W
E
S
California
County Rd. 11 (Jones Falls Rd)
County Rd. 11 (Battersea Rd.)
Crow Lake
Troy Lake
Mud Lake
Traverse Lake
Little Mud Lake
Leo Lake
Cranberry Lake
South Lake
Whitefish Lake
Little Cranberry Lake
300 m portage (+ 18 m el.)
Jones Falls Locks 39, 40, 41, 42
Chipmans Pt
Shangri-La Cottages & Campground
Goose I
S276
Quigleys Marsh
Deans Pond
Hog Island
Jenny Pt
S273
Chop Rk
Pork Islet
Deans Island
Judas I
Sisters Islands
S272
Whites Bay
Whites Point
Red Rock
S267
Squaw Pt
Pierces Flow
Murphys Narrows
S256
Broad Head
Staffords Bay
Hewitt I
S249
Haskins Pt
Seeleys Bay
S243
Mountneys I
Rideau Breeze Marina
Broads Bay
Beacon Pt
S240
Brass Point Bridge
Burnt Hills Road
Brass Pt
S231
S230
Track I
Big I
Tiny I
S227
S226
Sister Islands
Beaupre Island
Highway 15
City Rd. 11 (Jones Falls Rd.)
Dam
660 m portage
Morton
Floods I
Rock Dunder Trails
Rock Dunder
x Dunders Mate
Morton Bay
Highway 15
Rideau Paddling Map 4
(Chart 1513, Sheet 4 / NTS 31C/8 & 31C/9)
Paddling Whitefish Lake and Cranberry Lake
Seeleys Bay
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
S166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
0 1 2 3
kilometres
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
National Historic Site
Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
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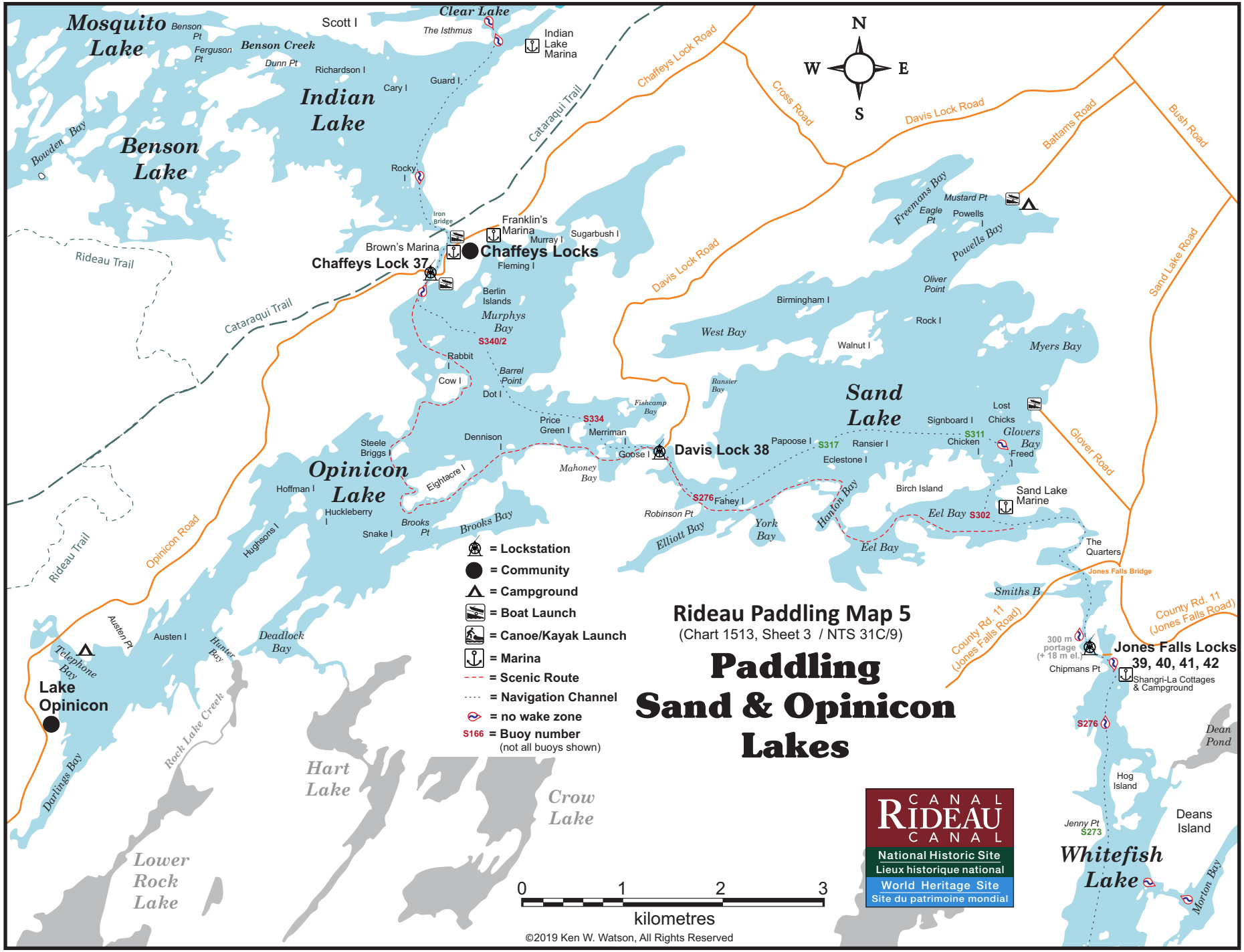
Mosquito Lake
Benson Pt
Ferguson Pt
Benson Creek
Dunn Pt
Scott I
Clear Lake
The Isthmus
Indian Lake Marina
Richardson I
Cary I
Guard I
Indian Lake
Benson Lake
Bowden Bay
Rocky I
Cataraqui Trail
Chaffeys Lock Road
Cross Road
Davis Lock Road
Battams Road
Bush Road
N
W
E
S
Iron Bridge
Franklin's Marina
Murray I
Sugarbush I
Brown's Marina
Chaffeys Locks
Chaffeys Lock 37
Fleming I
Rideau Trail
Cataraqui Trail
Berlin Islands
Murphys Bay
S340/2
Rabbit I
Cow I
Barrel Point
Dot I
Freemans Bay
Mustard Pt
Eagle Pt
Powells I
Powells Bay
Oliver Point
Birmingham I
Rock I
West Bay
Walnut I
Myers Bay
Sand Lake Road
Ransier Bay
Fishcamp Bay
Sand Lake
Lost Chicks
Signboard I
Glovers Bay
Freed I
Glover Road
Price Green I
S334
Merriman I
Dennison I
Steele Briggs I
Goose I
Davis Lock 38
Papoose I
S317
Ransier I
Eclestone I
S311
Chicken I
Mahoney Bay
Opinicon Lake
Eightacre I
Hoffman I
Huckleberry I
Snake I
Brooks Pt
Brooks Bay
Robinson Pt
S276
Fahey I
Birch Island
Sand Lake Marine
Eel Bay
S302
Hanton Bay
York Bay
Elliott Bay
Eel Bay
The Quarters
Jones Falls Bridge
Smiths B
Opinicon Road
Rideau Trail
Hughsons I
Austen Pt
Austen I
Hunter Bay
Deadlock Bay
Telephone Bay
Lake Opinicon
Darlings Bay
Rock Lake Creek
Hart Lake
Crow Lake
Lower Rock Lake
County Rd. 11 (Jones Falls Road)
300 m portage (+ 18 m el.)
Chipmans Pt
Jones Falls Locks 39, 40, 41, 42
Shangri-La Cottages & Campground
S276
Dean Pond
Hog Island
Jenny Pt
S273
Deans Island
Whitefish Lake
Morton Bay
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
S166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
Rideau Paddling Map 5
(Chart 1513, Sheet 3 / NTS 31C/9)
Paddling Sand & Opinicon Lakes
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
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Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
0 1 2 3
kilometres
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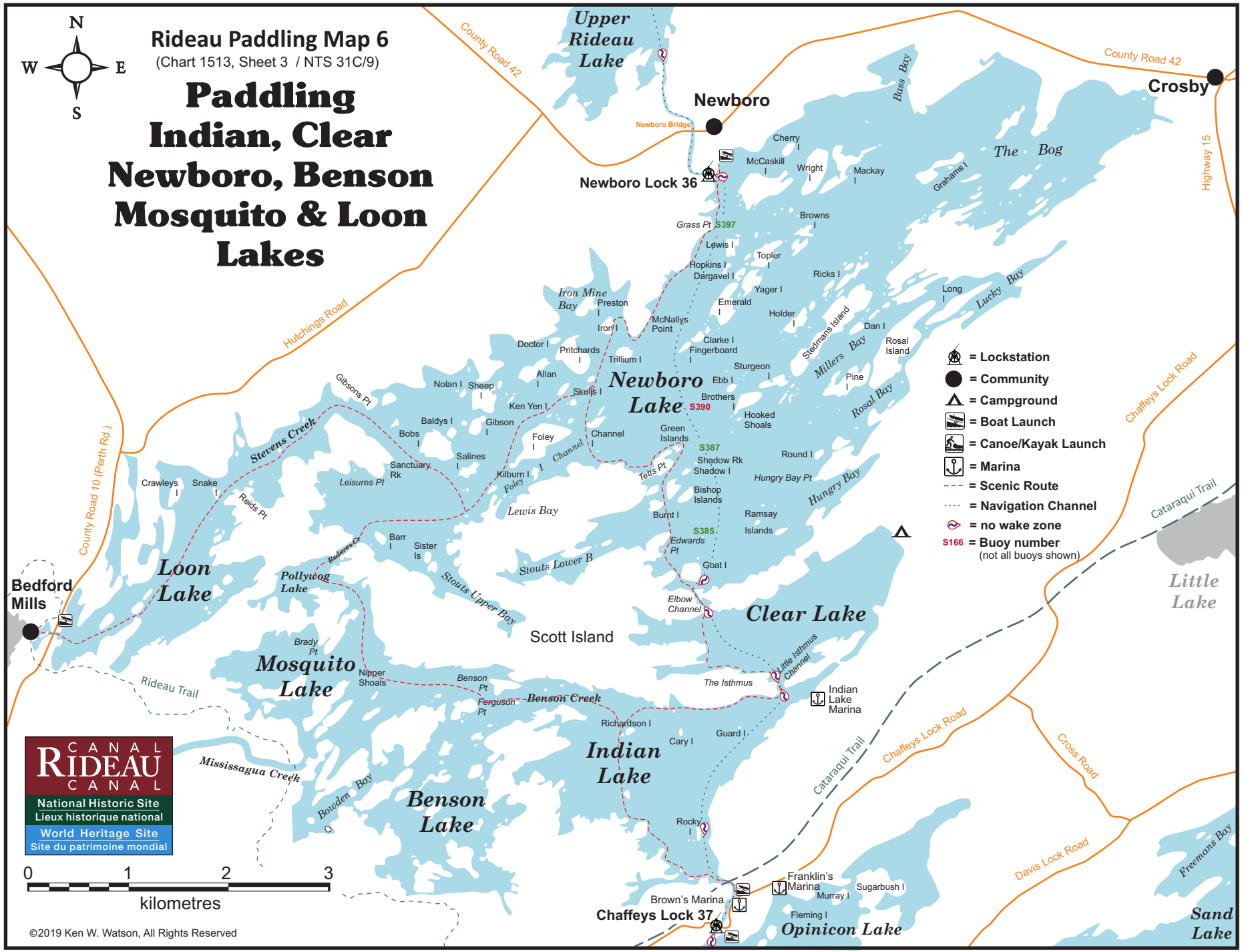
Rideau Paddling Map 6
(Chart 1513, Sheet 3 / NTS 31C/9)
Paddling Indian, Clear Newboro, Benson Mosquito & Loon Lakes
N
W
E
S
Upper Rideau Lake
County Road 42
Newboro
Newboro Bridge
Newboro Lock 36
Crosby
Bass Bay
The Bog
Highway 15
Cherry I
McCaskill I
Wright I
Mackay I
Grahams I
Grass Pt
S397
Browns I
Lewis I
Topler I
Hopkins I
Dargavel I
Ricks I
Yager I
Long I
Lucky Bay
Iron Mine Bay
Preston I
Iron I
McNallys Point
Emerald I
Holder I
Stedmans Island
Dan I
Rosal Island
Millers Bay
Doctor I
Pritchards I
Trillium I
Clarke I
Fingerboard I
Sturgeon I
Pine I
Ebb I
Brothers I
S390
Hooked Shoals
Rosal Bay
Newboro Lake
Allan I
Skulls I
Nolan I
Sheep I
Ken Yen I
Gibsons Pt
Baldys I
Bobs I
Gibson I
Foley I
Channel
Green Islands
S387
Shadow Rk
Shadow I
Round I
Hungry Bay Pt
Hungry Bay
Tetts Pt
Bishop Islands
Burnt I
Ramsay Islands
S385
Edwards Pt
Goat I
Elbow Channel
Clear Lake
Stevens Creek
Sanctuary Rk
Salines I
Kilburn I
Foley I
Channel
Leisures Pt
Crawleys I
Snake I
Reids Pt
Lewis Bay
Stouts Lower B
Stouts Upper Bay
Barr I
Sister Is
Bedores Cr
Pollywog Lake
Loon Lake
Bedford Mills
County Road 10 (Perth Rd.)
Hutchings Road
Chaffeys Lock Road
Cataraqui Trail
Little Lake
Scott Island
Brady Pt
Mosquito Lake
Nipper Shoals
Benson Pt
Ferguson Pt
Benson Creek
Little Isthmus Channel
The Isthmus
Indian Lake Marina
Rideau Trail
Richardson I
Cary I
Guard I
Indian Lake
Mississagua Creek
Bowden Bay
Benson Lake
Rocky I
Cross Road
Davis Lock Road
Franklin's Marina
Murray I
Sugarbush I
Brown's Marina
Chaffeys Lock 37
Fleming I
Opinicon Lake
Freemans Bay
Sand Lake
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
S166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
National Historic Site
Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
0 1 2 3
kilometres
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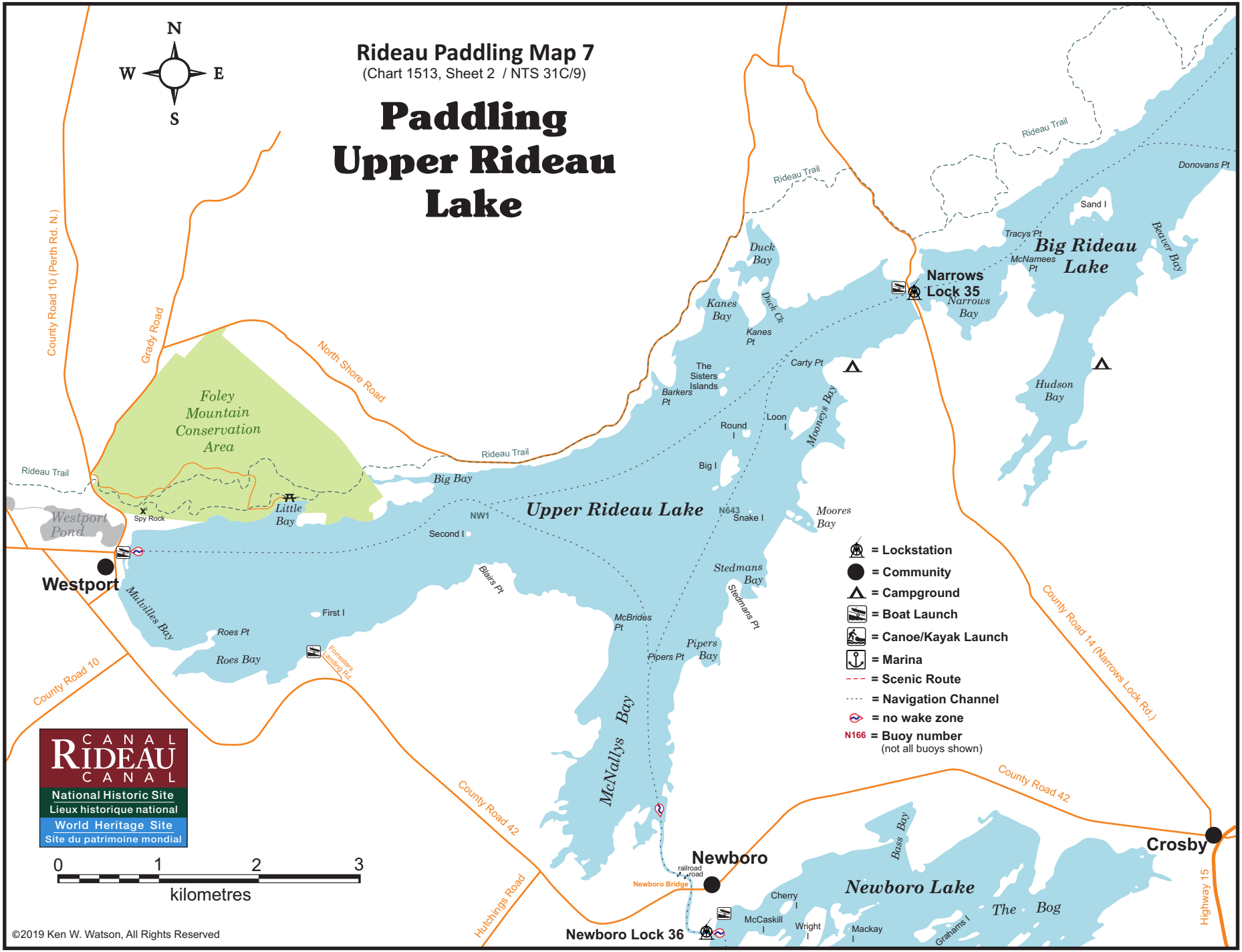

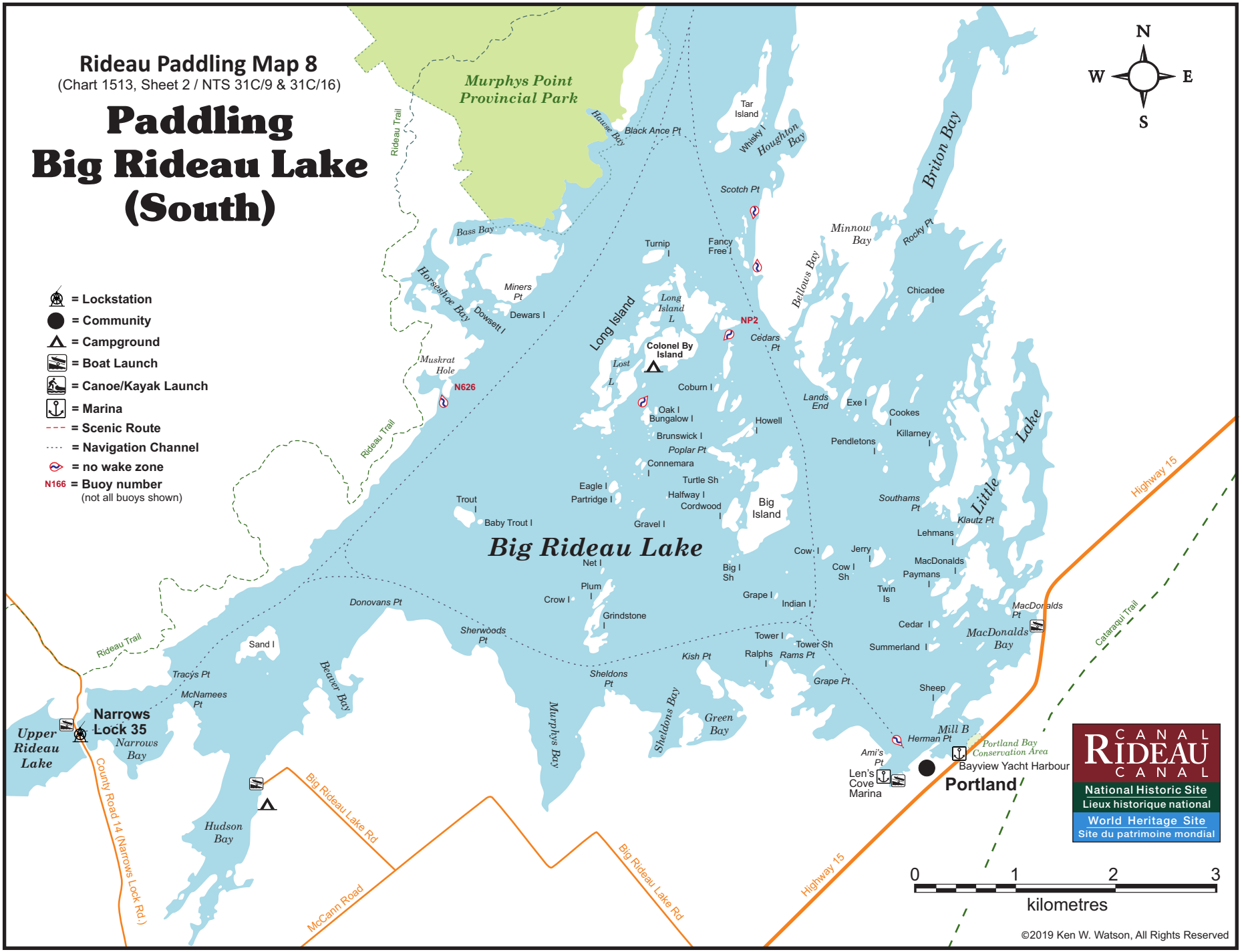
Rideau Paddling Map 8
(Chart 1513, Sheet 2 / NTS 31C/9 & 31C/16)
Paddling
Big Rideau Lake
(South)
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
N166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
Murphys Point
Provincial Park
Big Rideau Lake
Upper
Rideau
Lake
Narrows
Lock 35
Narrows
Bay
Hudson
Bay
Beaver Bay
Murphys Bay
Sheldons Bay
Green
Bay
Briton Bay
Minnow
Bay
Bellous Bay
Houghton
Bay
Bass Bay
Horseshoe Bay
House Bay
Long Island
Colonel By
Island
Big
Island
Little
Lake
MacDonalds
Bay
Portland
Portland Bay
Conservation Area
Bayview Yacht Harbour
Len's
Cove
Marina
Mill B
Herman Pt
Ami's
Pt
Rideau Trail
County Road 14 (Narrows Lock Rd.)
Big Rideau Lake Rd
McCann Road
Highway 15
Cataraqui Trail
Tar
Island
Whisky I
Black Ance Pt
Scotch Pt
Fancy
Free I
Turnip
I
Rocky Pt
Chicadee
I
Miners
Pt
Dewars I
Dowsett I
Muskrat
Hole
N626
NP2
Cedars
Pt
Long
Island
L
Lost
L
Coburn I
Lands
End
Exe I
Cookes
I
Killarney
I
Pendletons
I
Howell
I
Oak I
Bungalow I
Brunswick I
Poplar Pt
Connemara
I
Turtle Sh
Halfway I
Cordwood
I
Eagle I
Partridge I
Trout
I
Baby Trout I
Gravel I
Southams
Pt
Klautz Pt
Lehmans
I
Cow I
Jerry
I
Cow I
Sh
MacDonalds
I
Paymans
I
Twin
Is
Big I
Sh
Net I
Plum
I
Crow I
Grape I
Indian I
Grindstone
I
Donovans Pt
Sherwoods
Pt
Tracys Pt
McNamees
Pt
Sand I
Tower I
Tower Sh
Ralphs
I
Rams Pt
Kish Pt
Sheldons
Pt
Grape Pt
Summerland I
Cedar I
MacDonalds
Pt
Sheep
I
0
1
2
3
kilometres
CANAL
RIDEAU
CANAL
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Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
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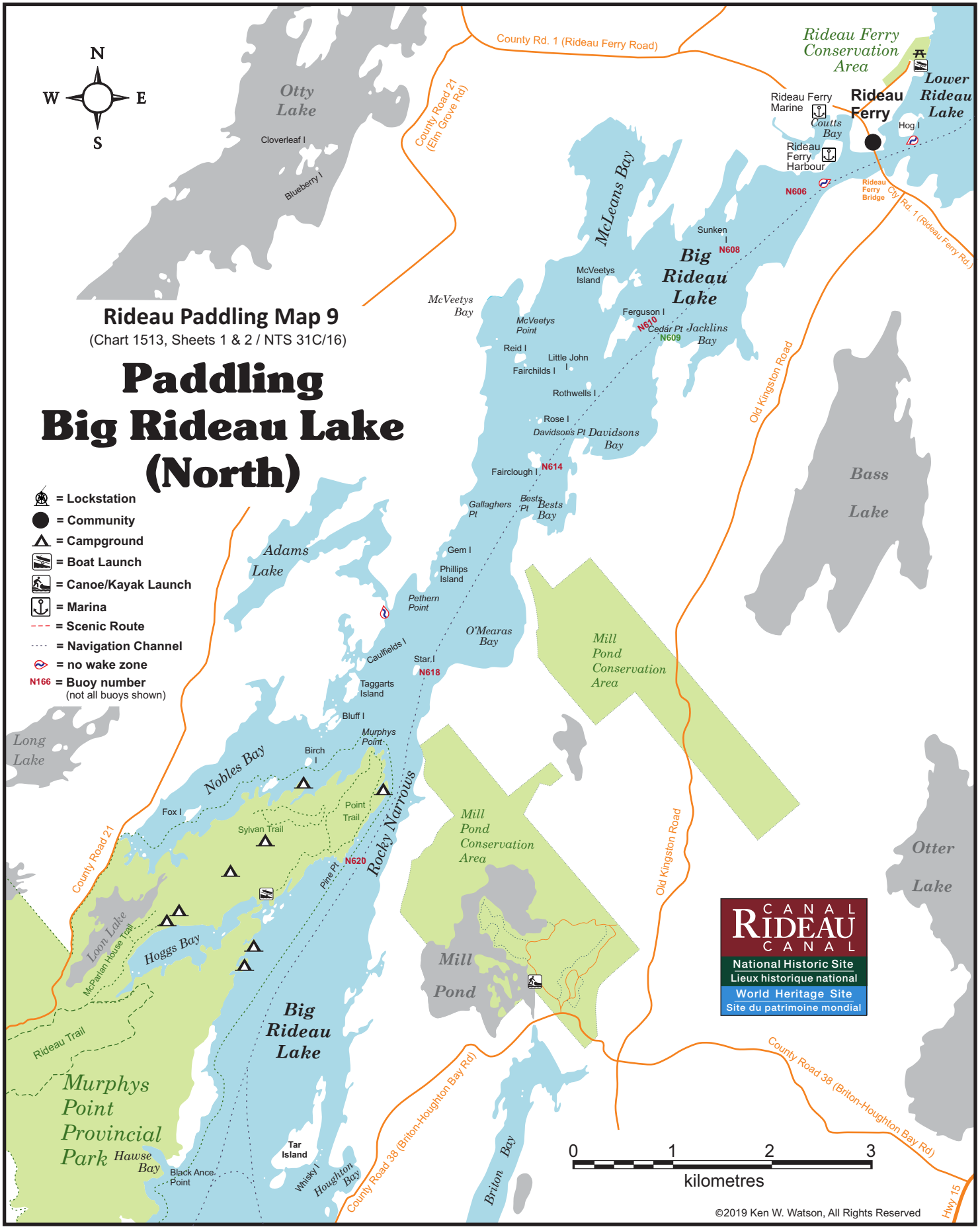
Rideau Paddling Map 9
(Chart 1513, Sheets 1 & 2 / NTS 31C/16)
Paddling
Big Rideau Lake
(North)
N
W
E
S
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
N166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
Otty Lake
Cloverleaf I
Blueberry I
County Rd. 1 (Rideau Ferry Road)
County Road 21 (Elm Grove Rd)
Rideau Ferry Conservation Area
Lower Rideau Lake
Rideau Ferry Marine
Rideau Ferry
Coutts Bay
Hog I
Rideau Ferry Harbour
N606
Rideau Ferry Bridge
Cty Rd. 1 (Rideau Ferry Rd.)
McLeans Bay
Sunken I
N608
Big Rideau Lake
McVeetys Island
McVeetys Bay
McVeetys Point
Ferguson I
N610
Cedar Pt
N609
Jacklins Bay
Reid I
Little John I
Fairchilds I
Rothwells I
Rose I
Davidsons Pt
Davidsons Bay
Fairclough I
N614
Gallaghers Pt
Bests Pt
Bests Bay
Old Kingston Road
Bass Lake
Adams Lake
Gem I
Phillips Island
Pethern Point
O'Mearas Bay
Caulfields I
Star.I
N618
Taggarts Island
Bluff I
Murphys Point
Mill Pond Conservation Area
Long Lake
Nobles Bay
Birch I
Fox I
Point Trail
Sylvan Trail
Rocky Narrows
N620
Pine Pt
County Road 21
Loon Lake
McPartlan House Trail
Hoggs Bay
Rideau Trail
Mill Pond
Otter Lake
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
National Historic Site
Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
Big Rideau Lake
Murphys Point Provincial Park
Hawse Bay
Black Ance Point
Tar Island
Whisky I
Houghton Bay
Briton Bay
County Road 38 (Briton-Houghton Bay Rd)
0 1 2 3
kilometres
Hwy 15
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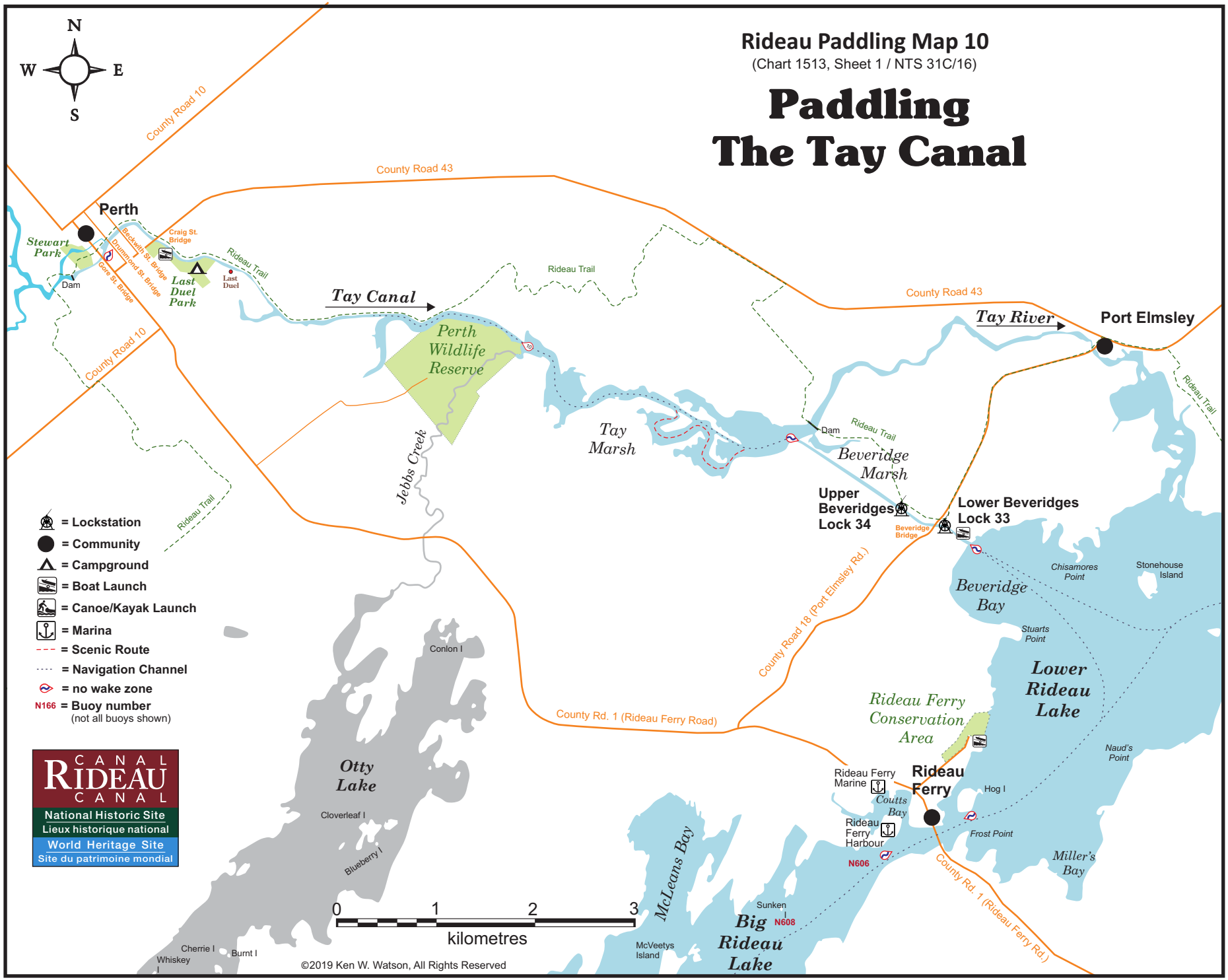
Rideau Paddling Map 10
(Chart 1513, Sheet 1 / NTS 31C/16)
Paddling
The Tay Canal
N
W
E
S
County Road 10
County Road 43
Perth
Stewart Park
Dam
Gore St. Bridge
Drummond St. Bridge
Beckwith St. Bridge
Craig St. Bridge
Last Duel Park
Last Duel
Rideau Trail
Tay Canal
Perth Wildlife Reserve
Jebbs Creek
Tay Marsh
Beveridge Marsh
Tay River
Port Elmsley
Upper Beveridges Lock 34
Lower Beveridges Lock 33
Beveridge Bridge
Chisamores Point
Stonehouse Island
Beveridge Bay
Stuarts Point
County Road 18 (Port Elmsley Rd.)
Lower Rideau Lake
Rideau Ferry Conservation Area
County Rd. 1 (Rideau Ferry Road)
Naud's Point
Rideau Ferry Marine
Rideau Ferry
Hog I
Coutts Bay
Rideau Ferry Harbour
Frost Point
Miller's Bay
N606
Otty Lake
Conlon I
Cloverleaf I
Blueberry I
McLeans Bay
Sunken
N608
Big Rideau Lake
McVeetys Island
Cherrie I
Whiskey
Burnt I
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
N166 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
National Historic Site
Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
0
1
2
3
kilometres
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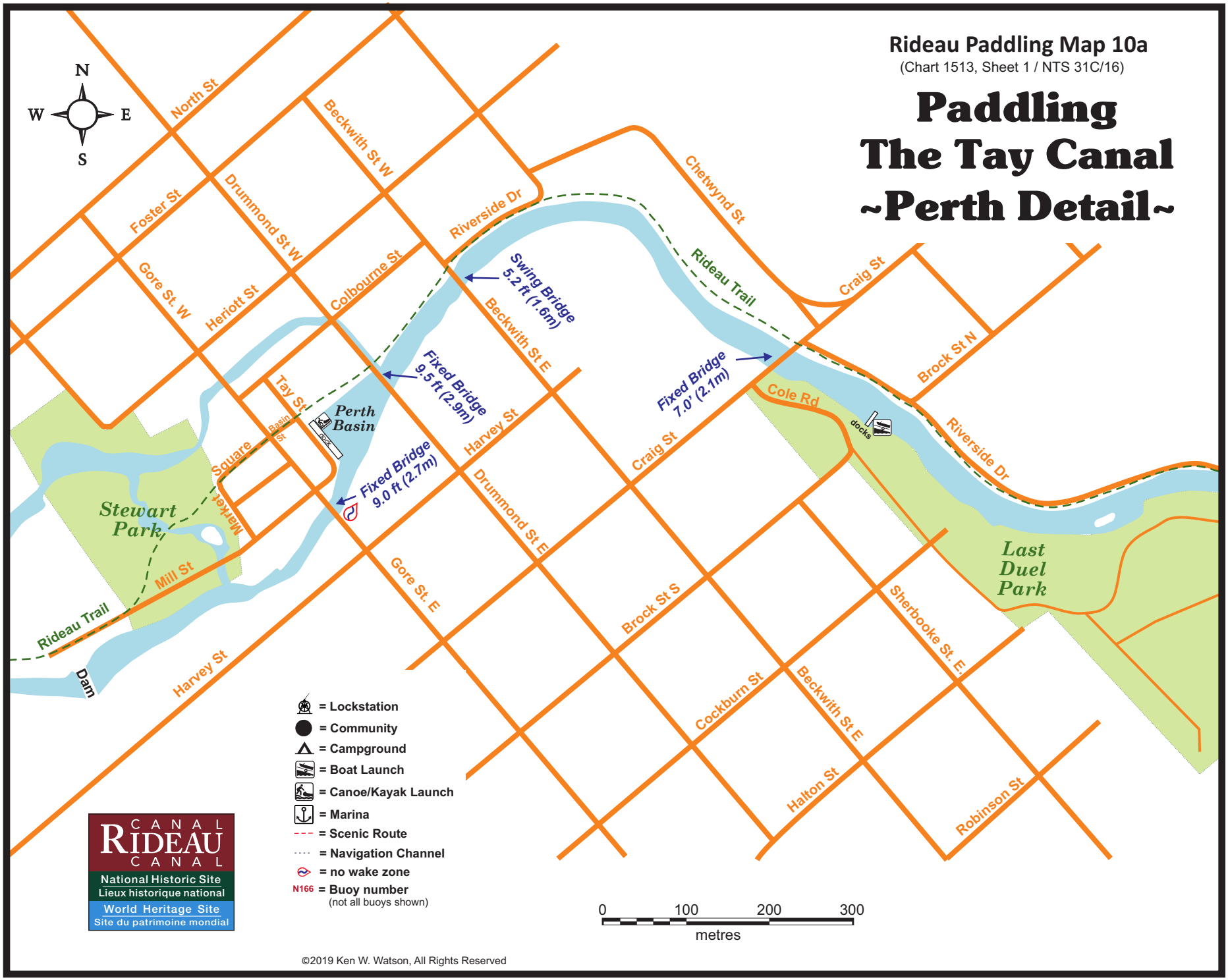
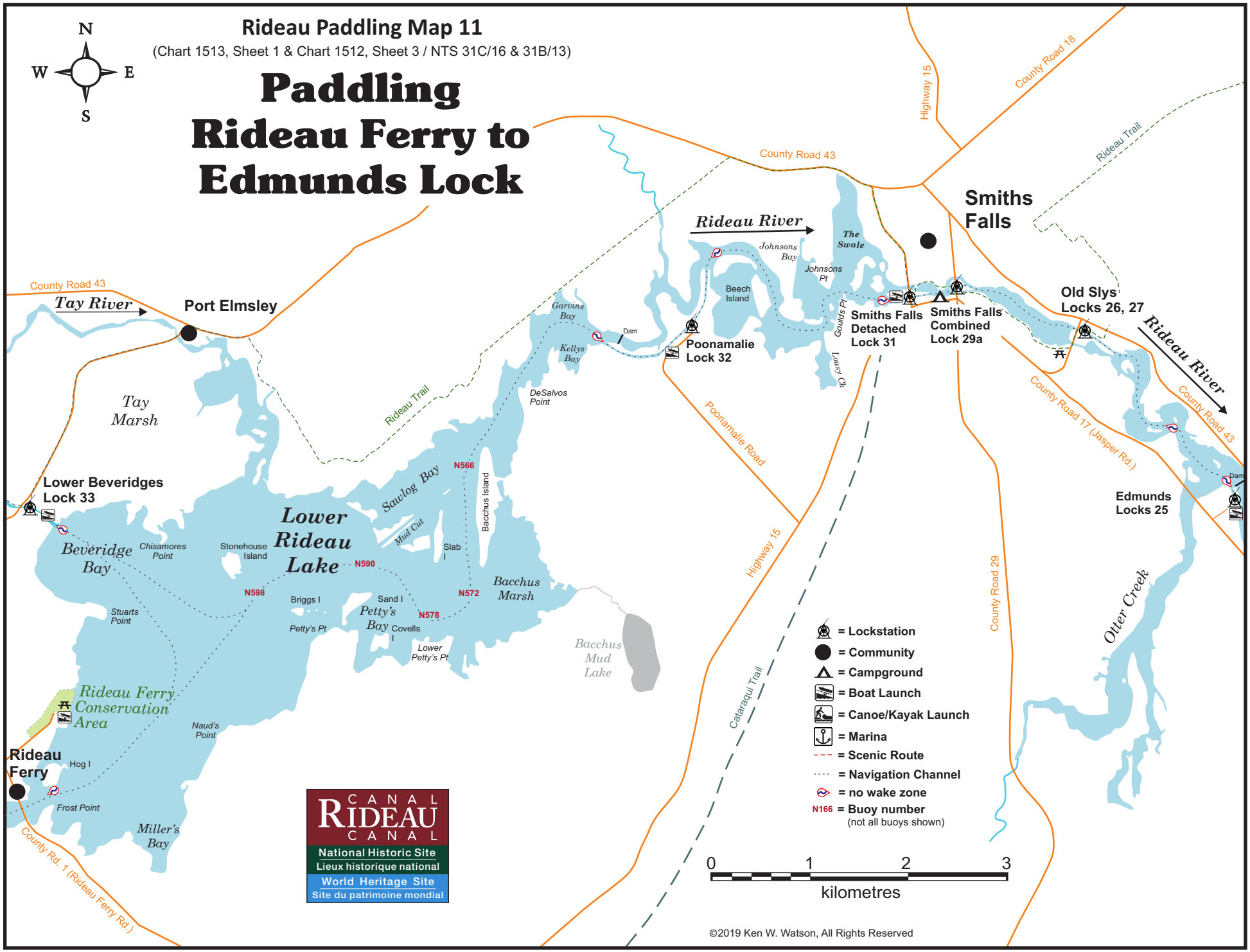
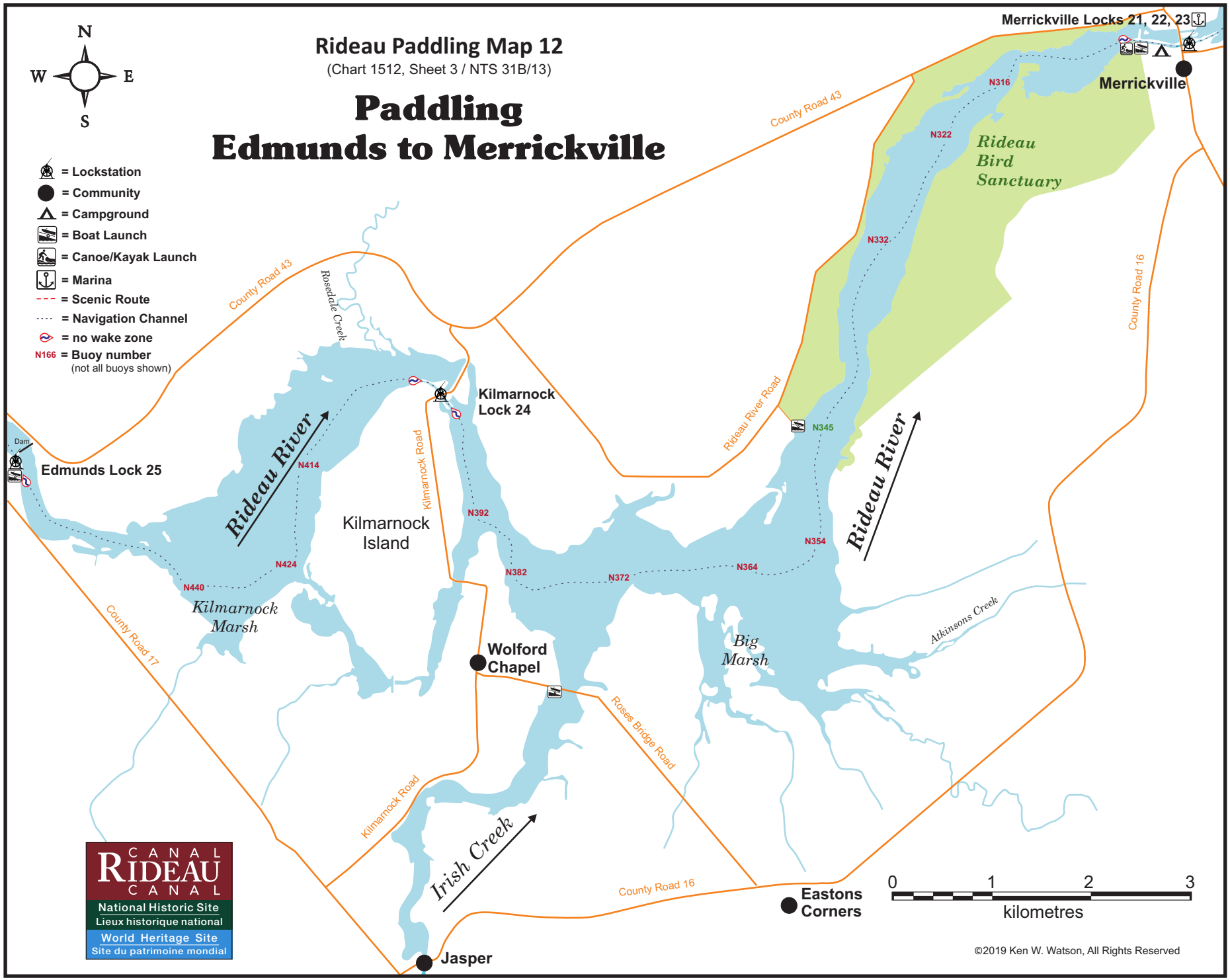


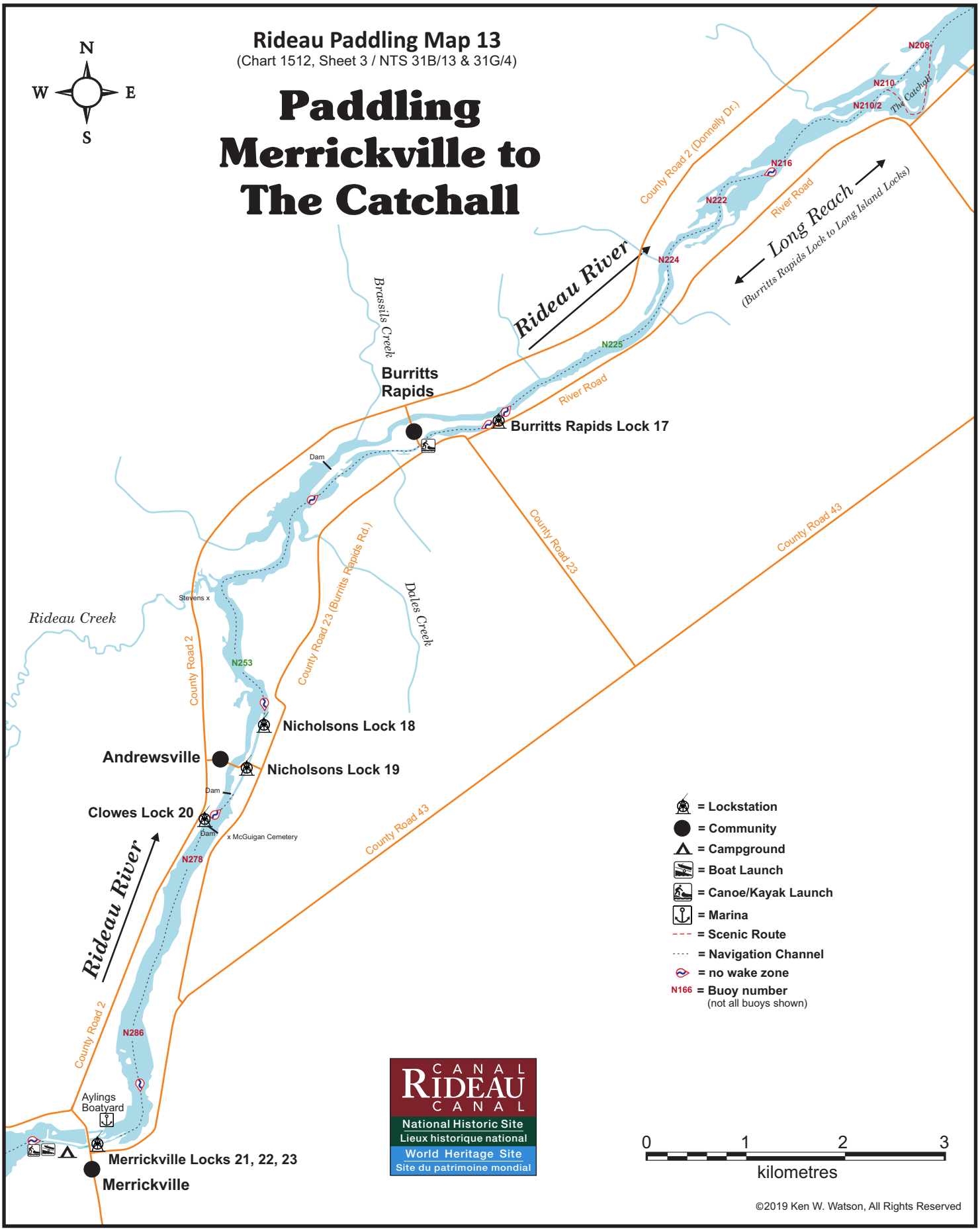
Rideau Paddling Map 11

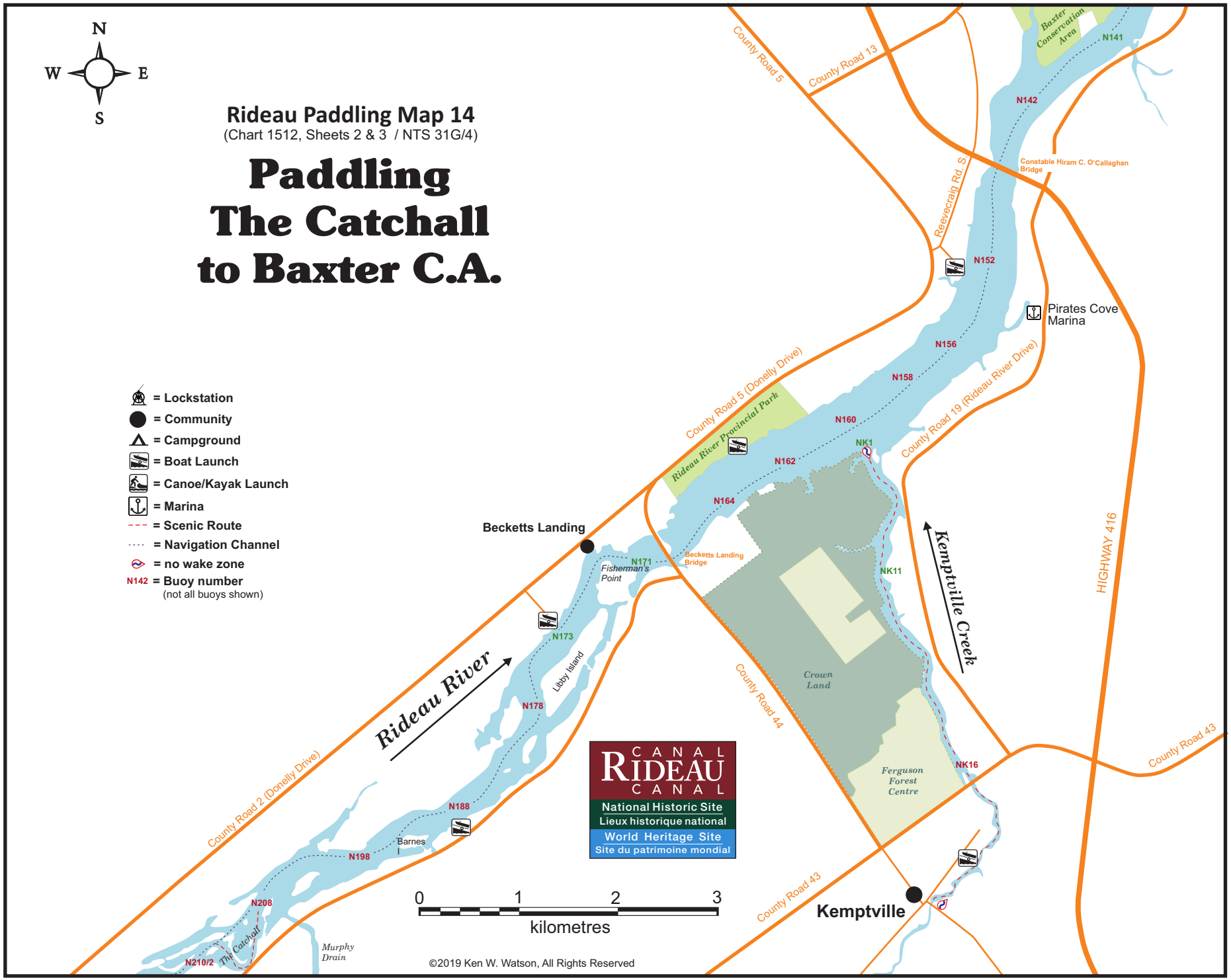
(Chart 1513, Sheet 1 & Chart 1512, Sheet 3 / NTS 31C/16 & 31B/13)

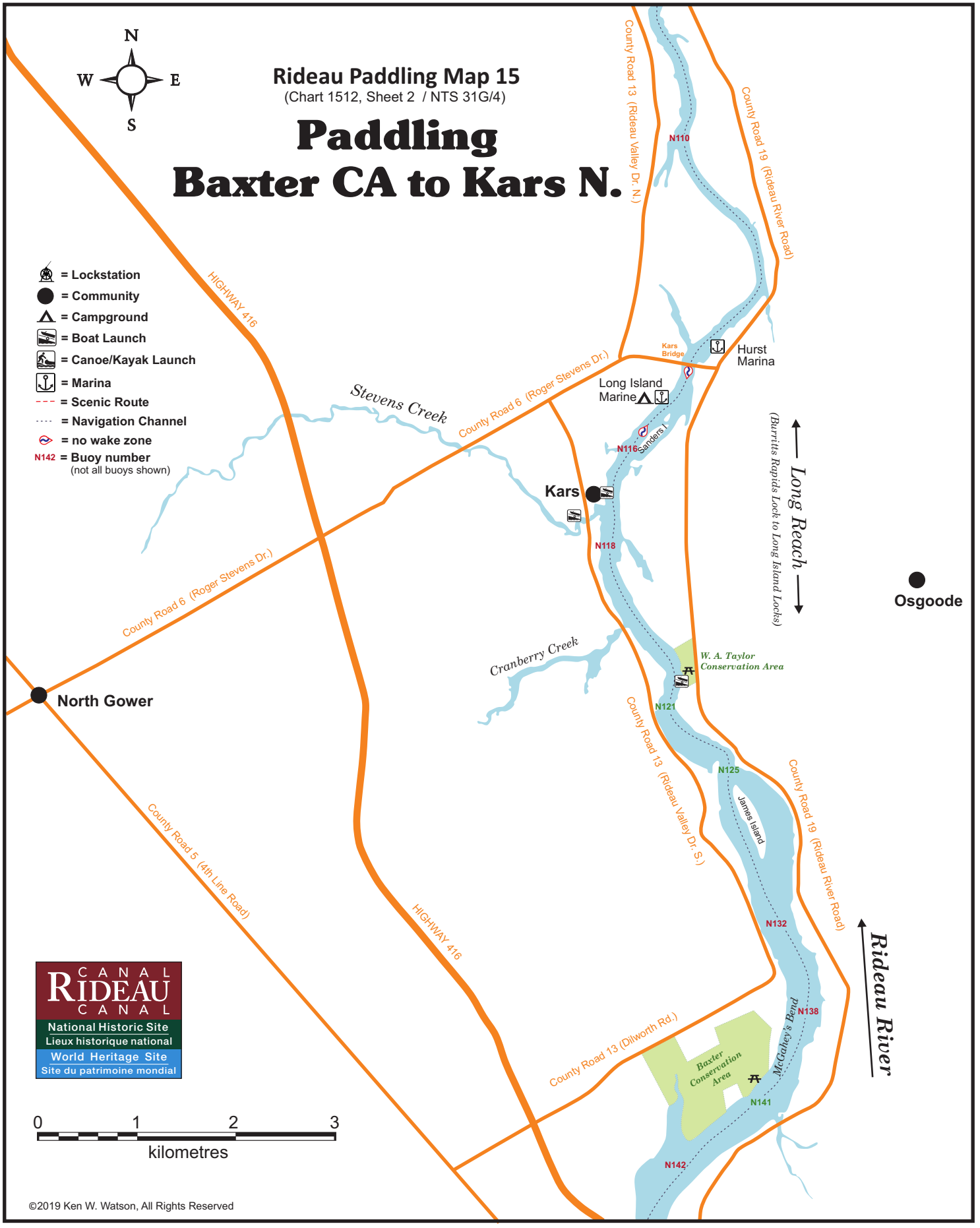
Paddling Rideau Ferry to Edmunds Lock

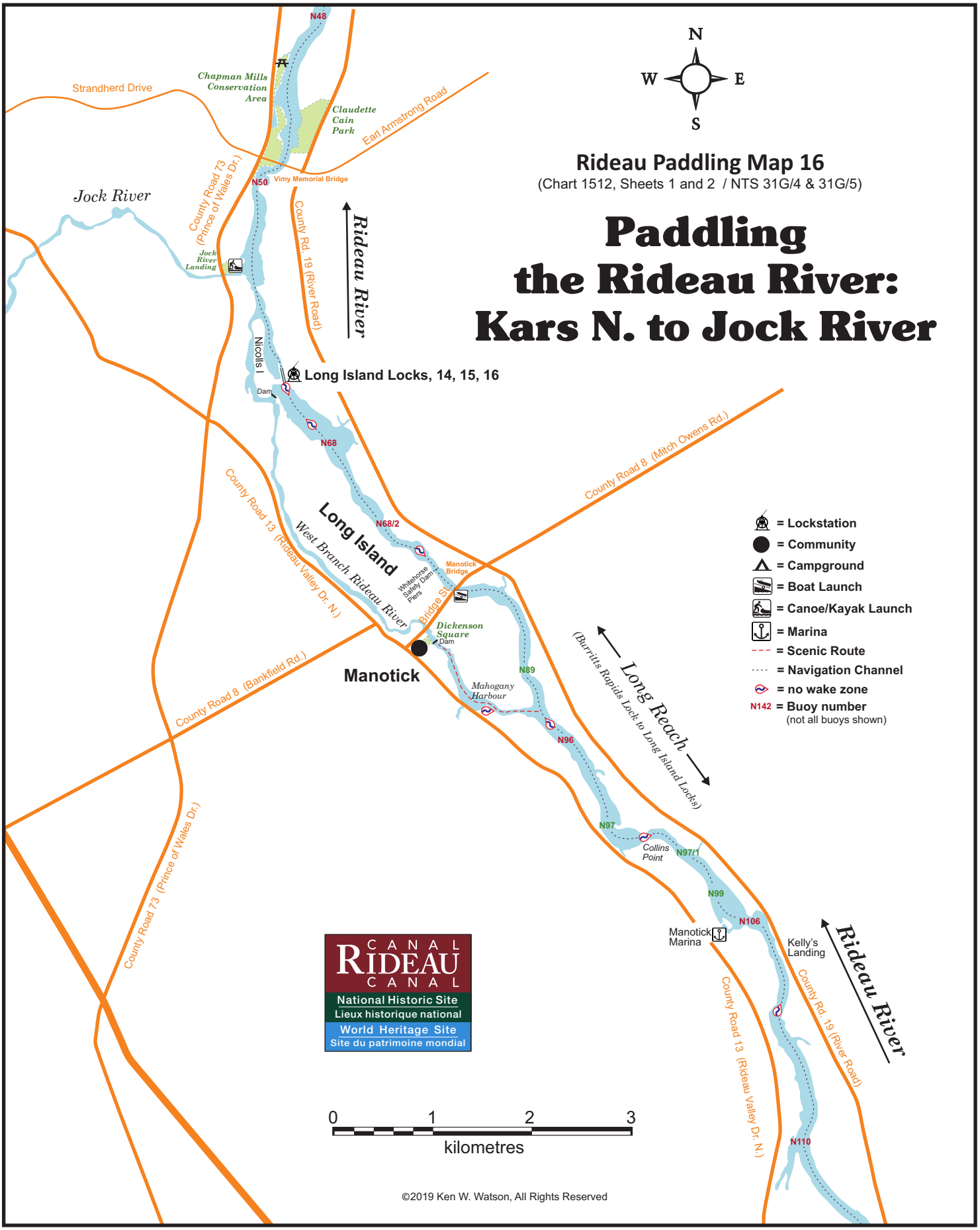











Rideau Paddling Map 16
(Chart 1512, Sheets 1 and 2 / NTS 31G/4 & 31G/5)
Paddling the Rideau River: Kars N. to Jock River
N
W
E
S
N48
Strandherd Drive
Chapman Mills Conservation Area
Claudette Cain Park
Earl Armstrong Road
Jock River
County Road 73 (Prince of Wales Dr.)
N50
Vimy Memorial Bridge
Jock River Landing
County Rd. 19 (River Road)
Rideau River
Nicolls I
Dam
Long Island Locks, 14, 15, 16
N68
County Road 8 (Mitch Owens Rd.)
County Road 13 (Rideau Valley Dr. N.)
N68/2
Long Island
West Branch Rideau River
Whitehorse Safety Dam
Piers
Manotick Bridge
Bridge St.
Dickenson Square
Dam
Manotick
Mahogany Harbour
N89
(Burritts Rapids Lock to Long Island Locks)
Long Reach
N96
County Road 8 (Bankfield Rd.)
N97
Collins Point
N97/1
N99
N106
Manotick Marina
Kelly's Landing
Rideau River
County Road 13 (Rideau Valley Dr. N.)
County Rd. 19 (River Road)
N110
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
N142 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
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Lieux historique national
World Heritage Site
Site du patrimoine mondial
0 1 2 3
kilometres
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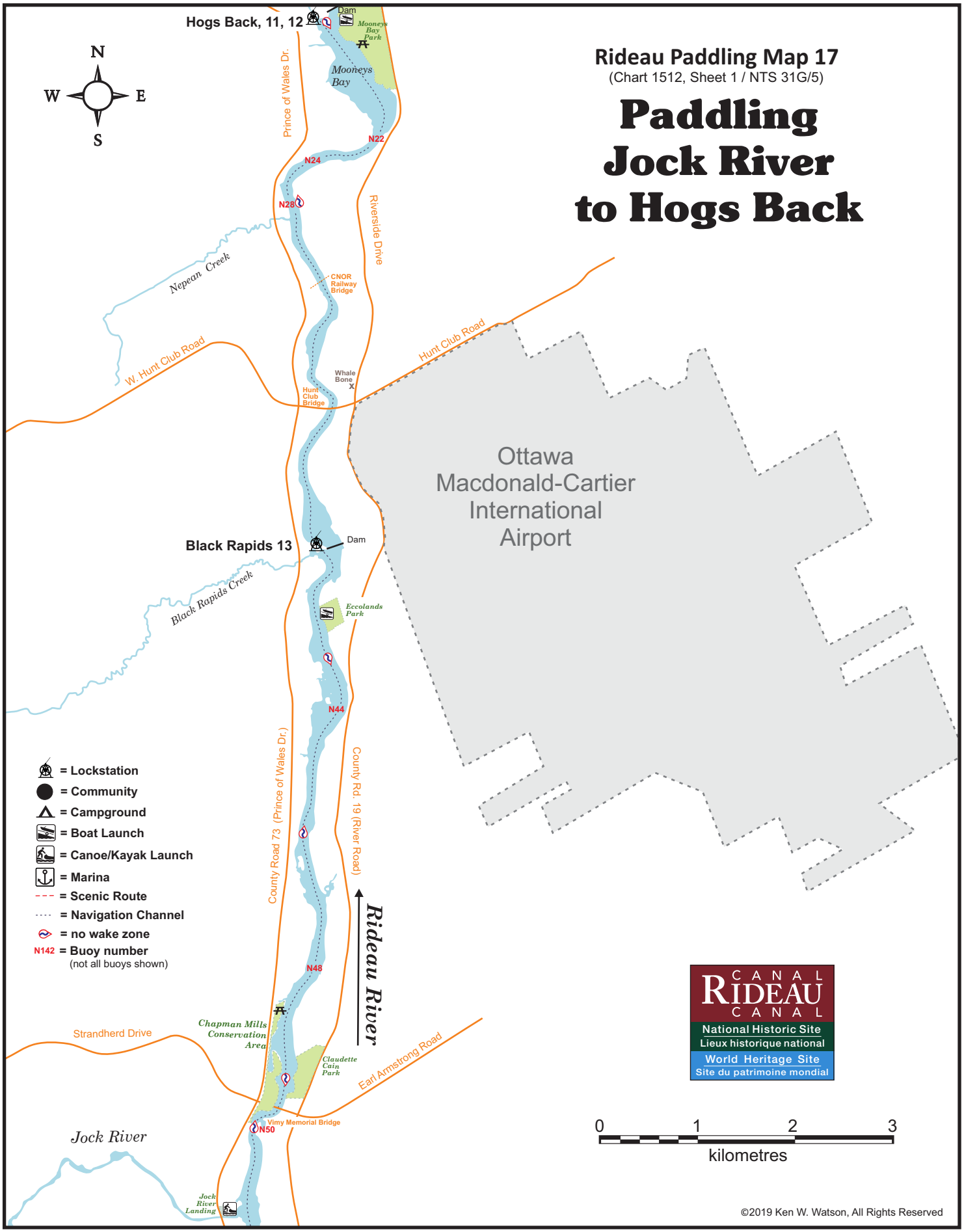

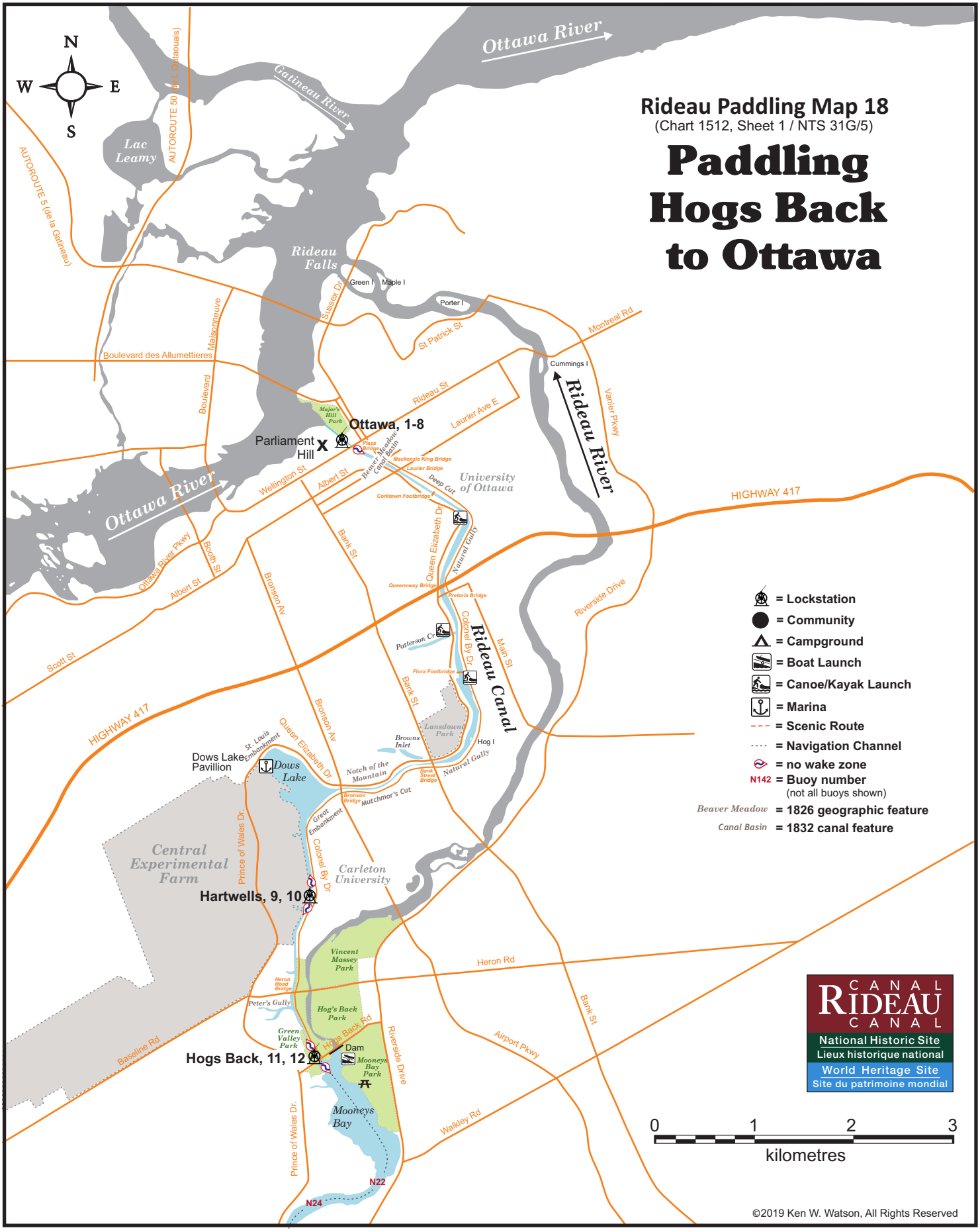
Rideau Paddling Map 18
(Chart 1512, Sheet 1 / NTS 31G/5)
Paddling Hogs Back to Ottawa
N
W
E
S
Ottawa River
Gatineau River
Lac Leamy
AUTOROUTE 50 (de L'Outaouais)
AUTOROUTE 5 (de la Gatineau)
Rideau Falls
Green I
Maple I
Porter I
Sussex Dr
St Patrick St
Montreal Rd
Cummings I
Rideau River
Vanier Pkwy
Boulevard des Allumettieres
Maisonneuve Boulevard
Rideau St
Laurier Ave E
Ottawa, 1-8
Parliament Hill
Major's Hill Park
Plaza Bridge
Beaver Meadow
Canal Basin
Mackenzie King Bridge
Laurier Bridge
Deep Cut
University of Ottawa
Corktown Footbridge
Wellington St
Albert St
Bank St
Queen Elizabeth Dr
Natural Gully
Queensway Bridge
Pretoria Bridge
HIGHWAY 417
Ottawa River Pkwy
Booth St
Bronson Av
Riverside Drive
Patterson Cr
Colonel By Dr
Rideau Canal
Main St
Flora Footbridge
Scott St
Lansdowne Park
Browns Inlet
Hog I
Dows Lake Pavillion
St. Louis Embankment
Dows Lake
Notch of the Mountain
Bank Street Bridge
Bronson Bridge
Mutchmor's Cut
Great Embankment
Queen Elizabeth Dr
Central Experimental Farm
Prince of Wales Dr
Colonel By Dr
Carleton University
Hartwells, 9, 10
Vincent Massey Park
Heron Rd
Heron Road Bridge
Peter's Gully
Hog's Back Park
Hogs Back Rd
Green Valley Park
Dam
Mooneys Bay Park
Hogs Back, 11, 12
Baseline Rd
Riverside Drive
Airport Pkwy
Bank St
Mooneys Bay
Prince of Wales Dr.
Walkley Rd
N22
N24
= Lockstation
= Community
= Campground
= Boat Launch
= Canoe/Kayak Launch
= Marina
= Scenic Route
= Navigation Channel
= no wake zone
N142 = Buoy number
(not all buoys shown)
Beaver Meadow = 1826 geographic feature
Canal Basin = 1832 canal feature
CANAL RIDEAU CANAL
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Site du patrimoine mondial
0 1 2 3
kilometres
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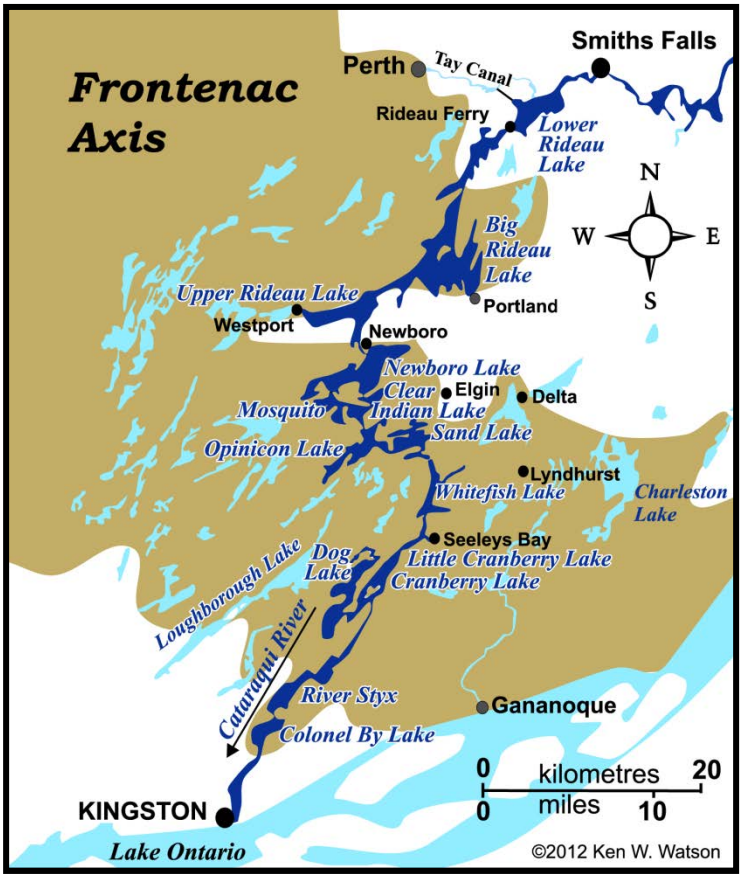
GEOLOGY of the RIDEAU CANAL

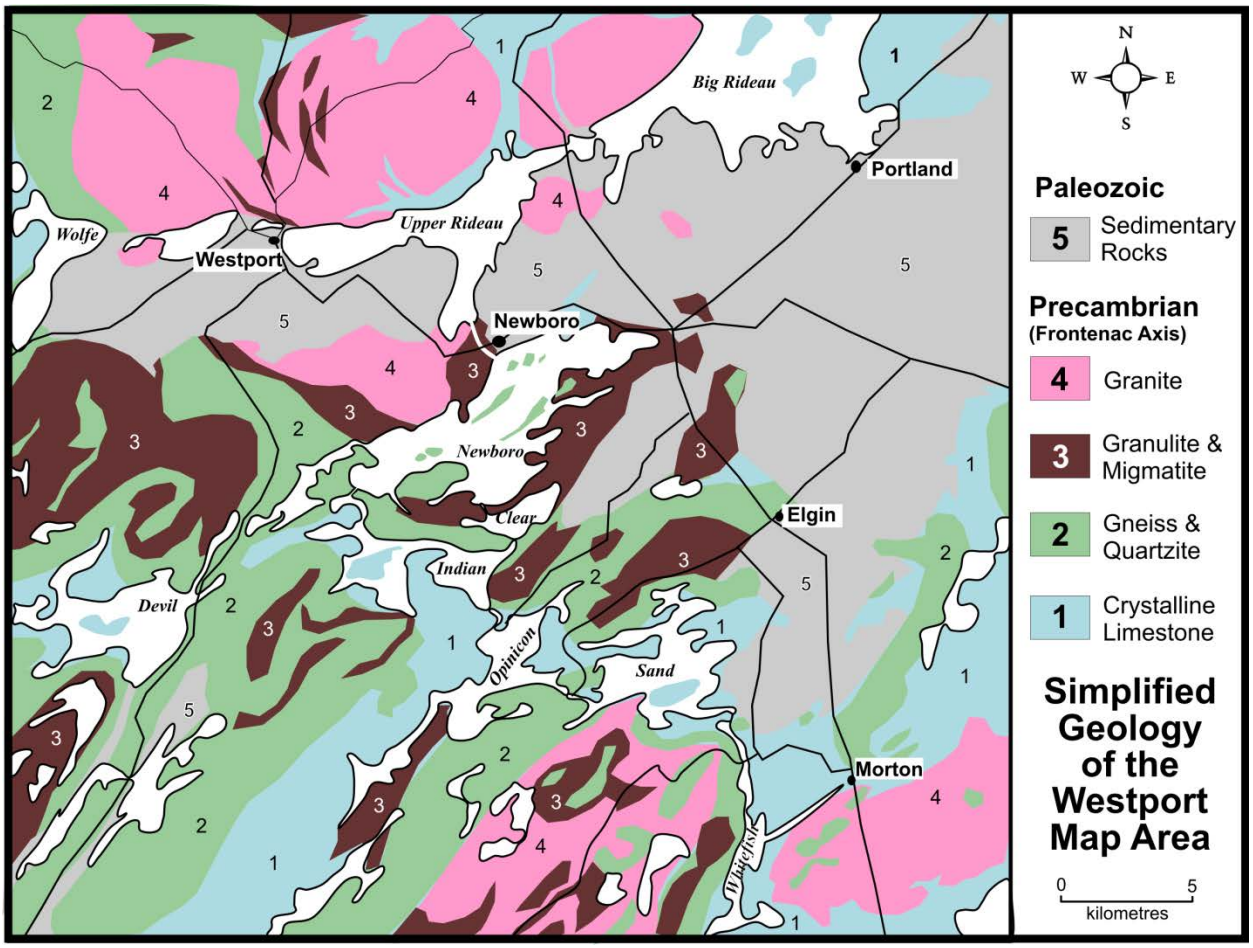
As you paddle the Rideau Canal, the route you follow is defined by its geology. The area is underlain by part of an old mountain range, the Grenville Mountains, eroded down over many millions of years. Much of this eroded mountain range has been covered by younger sedimentary rocks, but portions of the old mountains are exposed, partly a result of their original topography and partially due to the eroding away of younger overlying rocks. This area is known as the Frontenac Axis. In essence, if you paddle from Kingston to Smiths Falls, you'll be paddling over a (very old) mountain range.



The Frontenac Axis can be thought of as a ridge connecting the extensive area of the Canadian Shield to the north and the Adirondack mountains to the south. On the Rideau, the southern irregular boundary of the Frontenac Axis is near Kingston Mills and the northern irregular boundary is on the northern reaches of Big Rideau Lake. The Frontenac Axis is made up of rocks formed 1.35 to 1.06 billion years ago (Precambrian: middle to late Proterozoic age) and then deformed and metamorphosed 900 million years ago. The rock types that you'll be able to see as you travel through the Frontenac Axis include granite, syenite, monzonite, migmatite, gabbro, quartzite, marble, gneiss and pegmatite. Many of the lakes are underlain by marble (crystalline limestone) which provides some buffering against acid rain.

To the north and south of the Frontenac Axis are younger, 520 to 460 million year old (Paleozoic: Cambrian to Lower Ordovician age) rocks including limestone, sandstone, dolomite, shale and conglomerate. Most of these rocks were laid down in a shallow sea that covered this area, which was near the equator at that time (part of the Laurentia Continent which eventually formed the core of the North American Continent due to continental drift). The rocks near Kingston are dominated by limestone which provided much of the building material for the early town (hence Kingston's nickname, the Limestone City). In the centre part of the Rideau, on the margin of the Frontenac Axis, the younger sedimentary rocks tend to be dominated by sandstone. Beyond that, from Smiths Falls to Ottawa the rocks are mostly dolomite, limestone and shale.

More recently, three events have impacted on the landscape – the ice last age, glacial Lake Iroquois and the Champlain Sea. During the last ice age, which peaked about 20,000 years ago, the Rideau area was covered by ice up to 1.5 kilometres (1.0 mi) thick. The ice polished and moved rocks, excavated some of



This highly simplified geology map shows some of the contact area between the Frontenac Axis (units 1, 2, 3 and 4) and the younger sedimentary rocks (unit 5) in the central Rideau area.

Map adapted from GSC Map 1182A by H.R. Wynne-Edwards, GSC Memoir 346, 1967.

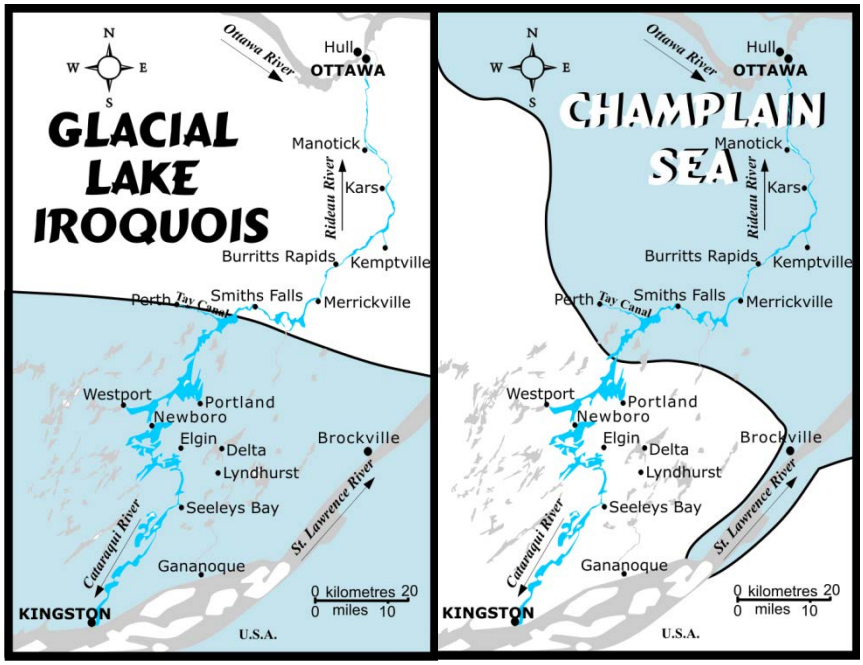
the landscape and left large deposits of sand and gravel. The weight of the ice depressed the landscape by about 175 m (575 ft) below where it is today.

By 14,000 years ago, the climate began to warm up, melting the glaciers and forcing them to retreat. In the area of Lake Ontario, today's exit of the lake down the St. Lawrence River was blocked by ice and a large lake, about 30 m (100 ft) higher than today's Lake Ontario, formed. That lake, known as Lake Iroquois, extended as far north as Perth and Smiths Falls.

Evidence of that lake exist today in form of glaciolacustrine (a big word for glacial lake) deposits. These include near shore sediments such as gravel and gravelly sand, and deeper water deposits such as silt and clay. These deposits are found all over the southern Rideau, including on heights of land, such as near the top of Rock Dunder. This is because the overall landscape was depressed, and features such as Rock Dunder formed part of the bottom of this large lake.

By about 13,350 years ago a channel opened up in the ice dam (near Rome, NY), rapidly draining much of the lake. At the same time the land was rising as the weight of the ice was removed (this rising is called "isostatic rebound").

As Lake Iroquois and subsequent glacial lakes were getting smaller, the glaciers were continuing their retreat from the St. Lawrence lowlands. About 13,000 years ago this allowed waters from the Atlantic Ocean to mix with glacial melt-waters and river drainage to create a brackish sea known as the Champlain Sea which extended past (west and south) of Ottawa.



Very generalized representations of glacial Lake Iroquois and the Champlain Sea in the Rideau region.

The southern limit of this sea on the Rideau Canal was near Nobles Bay of Big Rideau Lake. If you were paddling the sea back then, you would have been enjoying it in the company of whales. The bones of a humpback whale were found near Smiths Falls and beluga (white) whale bones have also been found in Champlain Sea deposits. This sea retreated as the glaciers moved north and the land continued to undergo isostatic rebound. By about 11,100 years ago, the central Rideau had risen above sea level and the land that we see today was being revealed. Rivers and streams continued to modify the landscape up until the building of the Rideau Canal.

There are a some interesting geological features in the Ottawa area. The northern part of the Rideau River is the youngest part of the waterway (outside of canal altered sections) since, in the immediate post-glacial period, the Ottawa River had a channel to the south of where it is today, across much of urban Ottawa to the Mer Bleue area (where the trace of the old Ottawa River channel can be clearly seen). It eventually shifted north (due to isostatic rebound) to its present location and cut a deep channel. The faster excavation by the Ottawa River, through the underlying limestone rocks, compared to the Rideau River, formed Rideau Falls.

Another geological feature at Ottawa is that much of the area is underlain by a thick clay layer, a type of "quick clay" known locally as Leda clay (named after a type of small clam found in the clay deposits). Quick clay is a clay that is not well bonded and is subject to liquefaction, that is, when vibration is induced, it can turn into a liquid and flow. When undisturbed, it looks and acts like a normal solid form of clay. It was formed by glacial silt settling out on the bottom of the Champlain Sea. There it formed a stable type of marine clay, "glued" with salt. When the sea retreated due to the rising land, this clay was exposed to rainfall that removed much of that salt bonding, creating the unstable clay that is present in much of the region today. Earthquakes can cause this clay to liquefy, leading to landslides. Ottawa is a seismically active region (earthquake prone) and, in the future, an earthquake is going to play havoc with the city (if I lived in Ottawa, I'd check to see if my house is sitting on bedrock or on clay).

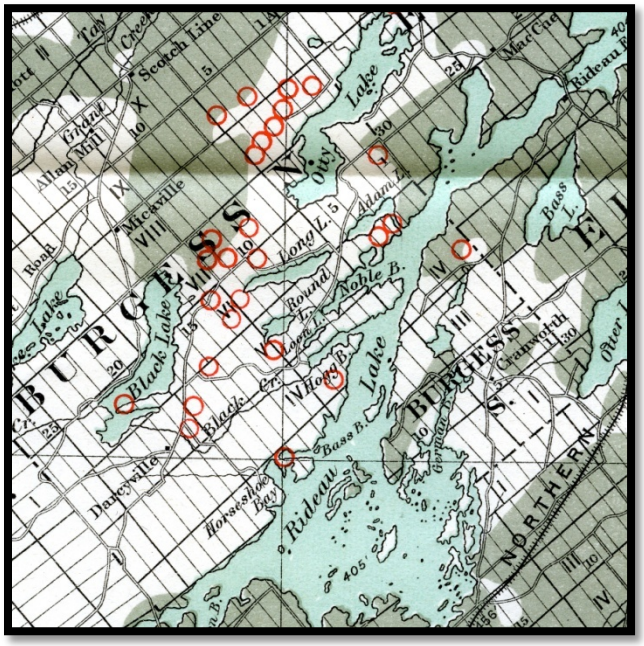
Mining in the Rideau Region

The rocks of the Frontenac Axis are host to some small mineral deposits, several of which were mined in the mid-late 1800s and in the early 1900s. In the Rideau Canal region, minerals such as apatite (for phosphate), mica, feldspar, graphite and iron were mined. A few of these old mining areas have been noted in the guides.

Some of the earliest mining in the region was for rocks to be used for the dams and locks of the Rideau Canal. Rocks of the Frontenac Axis were not suitable for this purpose (too hard and often fractured) and so quarries to mine rocks for the canal were established in the younger sedimentary rocks, mining sandstone or limestone. You can see the local sedimentary geology reflected in the type of rocks used for the building of the locks and dams along the Rideau; limestone in the southern area, sandstone (Potsdam sandstone) in the central Rideau and dolomitic limestone and limestone in the northern part.

The first mine on/near the Rideau Canal (excluding the small scale iron mining near Lower Beverley Lake in the early 1800s) was the iron mine on Iron Island near Newboro opened by the Chaffey brothers, John, Benjamin and Elswood, in about 1850. Phosphate mining (for fertilizer, most was shipped to England) started in the Rideau area in about 1867 and continued to the early 1890s. By the late 1880s, mica mining was also underway. Apatite (phosphate) and mica form in the same geological environment, so as the maps below show, several mines which started off mining phosphate were later mined for mica. Mica mining ended in the 1920s as the value of the mineral fell to uneconomic levels.

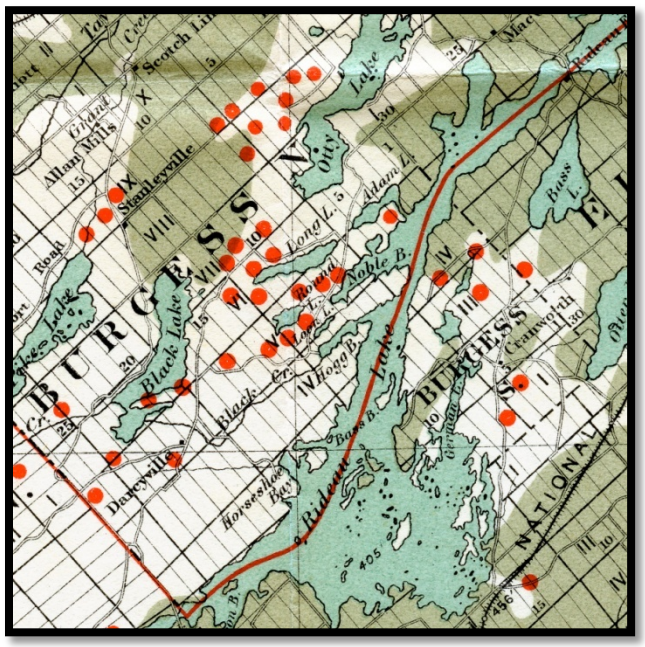
Today, mining in the region is mostly surface quarrying for sand, gravel, and stone.



Phosphate Mines

The location of small scale phosphate mines in the area of Big Rideau Lake.

Section of a map from "Phosphate in Canada" by Hugh S. Spence, Canada Department of Mines, 1920.



Mica Mines

The location of small scale mica mines in the area of Big Rideau Lake.

Section of a map from "Mica" by H.S. Spence, Canada Department of Mines, 1929.

WILDLIFE of the RIDEAU CANAL

Wildlife Viewing

The Rideau spans a wide variety of ecosystems, due to both the underlying geology and human activity in the last 200 years. The Frontenac Axis, a section of the Canadian Shield (Precambrian rocks – very old) underlies the Rideau from Kingston Mills to Lower Rideau Lake. These hard rocks form rugged topography (hills, ravines), including the basins for the lakes on the system. Most of the lakes are underlain by crystalline limestone which acts as a buffer against acid rain (hence the lakes are very productive for fish and other aquatic life). Outside of the Frontenac Axis, younger (Palaeozoic) flat lying sedimentary rocks form the underlying bedrock (it is from these rocks that the stones for the dams and locks were quarried).

The area has been actively logged since before the canal was built, the entire area cut over several times. Most of the region (including many of the islands in the lakes) was farmed or used for cattle pasture at one time. By the early 20th century, small farms on poor Frontenac Axis lands were being abandoned in favour of better (more productive) pastures.

So today, along the Rideau you'll find forested areas (some now 100 years mature), active farmland, scrubland and abandoned farmland, low density cottage/summer home developed (rural) land and urban land. The forests are generally mixed, deciduous trees (oak, maple, ash, basswood, birch, elm) and coniferous trees (most commonly white pine, white spruce and cedar). On flat lying topography you'll find cedar swamps, hardwood (black ash and silver maple) swamps, and bogs. Along the margins of the Rideau Canal you'll find cattail marshes. All these areas support a varied and healthy wildlife population.

The following pages includes some of the most common wildlife that you might spot on your Rideau journey.

Water Birds

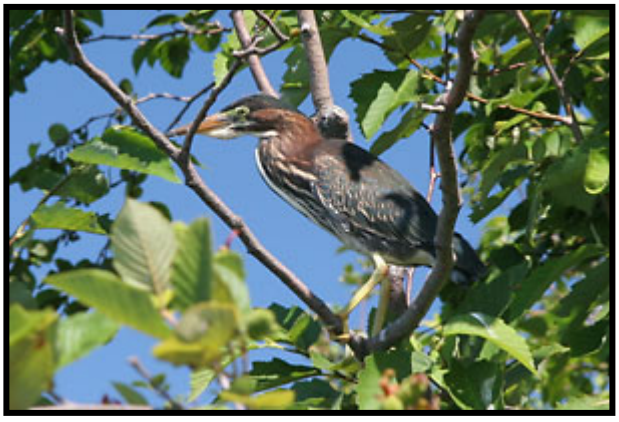
We have lots of water birds on the Rideau. In spring and fall the lakes and marshland areas along the Rideau are host to migratory birds. During the summer we have several types of birds (shown below) that are resident on the Rideau.

Common Loon

On all the lakes plus parts of the rivers, this bird is distinctive for its haunting call. It's a diving bird, swimming underwater to catch fish.

Great Blue Heron

Along the entire Rideau, a large bird is usually seen wading near shore. If you see a white one, it's likely an American Egret.

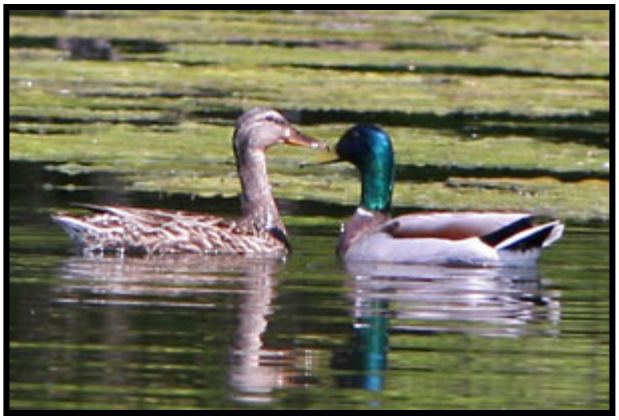


Green Heron

Most common in the shallow water sections (Colonel By Lake, River Styx, Rideau River) this is a small heron. Usually seen perched in a tree.

Canada Goose

Yes, we have these (more each year).



Mallard duck

These ducks quack when flushed. The male has a distinctive green head.

Common Merganser duck

This duck has a pointed red bill – the male has a dark green head, the female a brown head.

Hooded Merganser

Most often seen in spring on the Rideau.

Pied-billed Grebe

A small diving bird.

Ring-billed Gull

A gull with mark on bill.

Caspian Tern

The Caspian Tern (a large white tern with dark orange bill), the Common Tern (a somewhat smaller tern) and the Black Tern (small tern with black body when adult) are all found here.

Trumpeter Swan

An extirpated native species in this region, they were re-introduced in the 1990s. Favourite haunts include Opinicon Lake and Big Rideau Lake (near Narrows and Portland).

Other Birds

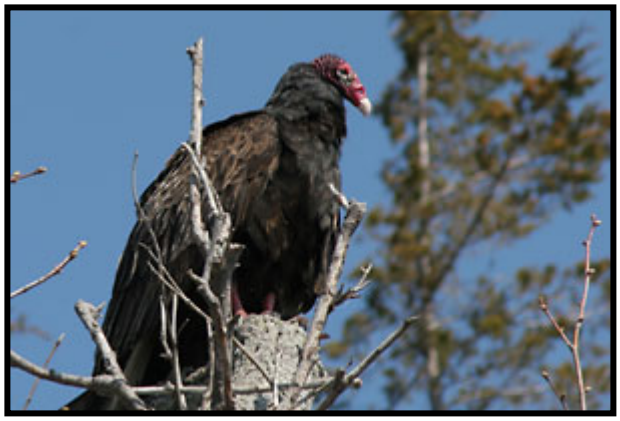
There are many other types of birds that you might spot in the near-water environment; red-tailed hawks, broad-shouldered hawks, red-winged blackbirds, turkey vultures, turkeys, ruffed grouse, bald eagles and many more (bring along your bird book). A few are shown below.

Osprey

Now common along the Rideau - often spotted in their large nests made of sticks perched high in a pine tree or a power line stanchion. It dives to catch fish (quite spectacular to see).

Belted Kingfisher

A very skittish bird – you'll most likely see it flying away from you.



Turkey Vulture

Can often be seen sitting in the top of a dead tree.

Wild Turkey

Yes, wild turkeys can indeed fly.

Ruffed Grouse

This well camouflaged bird, usually found foraging on the ground, takes off with a loud rapid wing motion when flushed.

Pileated Woodpecker

A large woodpecker – you'll hear it pounding away at a tree.

Bald Eagle

An extirpated native species, they are starting to make a comeback (nesting again on the Rideau).

Reptiles and Amphibians

We've got a healthy population of reptiles and amphibians including turtles. The most likely to be seen are the Common Map Turtle, Eastern Snapping Turtle, and Midland Painted Turtle. There also three other less commonly seen turtles, the Stinkpot Turtle (aka Musk Turtle) a small turtle found in areas with aquatic plant growth; Blanding's Turtle with a "war helmet" type shell and bright yellow chin and throat, usually found in wetlands, and the Spotted Turtle, a small turtle with bright yellow spots on its shell, usually found in areas with aquatic plants and a silt bottom.

We've got lots of frogs that will provide you with a nightly serenade. The two biggest are the bullfrog and the green frog. Also the leopard frog, spring peeper and many others.

We've also got snakes, but not any poisonous ones. The two largest snakes are the Northern Water Snake and the Black Rat Snake – both generally found near water. The common garter snake can also be found throughout the region.

We've also got salamanders, mudpuppies and skinks.

Common Map Turtle

These turtles have a peaked shell and yellow-orange lines on the skin and shell.

Midland Painted Turtle

These turtles have a rounded smooth shell with bright red splotches along the edge.

Sunning Turtles

You'll see turtles sunning themselves on rocks or logs. Here we see one painted turtle (middle left) and three map turtles (peaked shell and not as colourful as the painted turtle).

Eastern Snapping Turtle

The snapping turtle almost always stays in the water, you'll find it floating or slowly swimming near marshy areas.

Northern Leopard Frog

A common frog found in the near-water and meadow/pond environment.

American Bullfrog

A common frogs on the Rideau. We also have the Green Frog which is similar, but slightly smaller with a dorsal fold down the back. The bullfrog has a dorsal fold that only wraps around the ear.

Northern Water Snake

A fairly large (up to 4 feet) non-venomous snake found in the near-water environment (looks darker in the water than the photo shows).

Black Rat Snake (aka Eastern Rat Snake)

The largest snake on the Rideau (in fact, the largest snake in Canada – up to 8 feet), this non-venomous snake prefers near-water wooded areas.

Mammals

In the near shore environment you'll likely spot muskrats and beavers. You may even spot the somewhat reclusive river otter (found in the lakes here as well as rivers). And there are the usual Eastern Ontario mammals to be sometimes found near the water: raccoons, black, grey and red squirrels, chipmunks, foxes, coyotes, white-tailed deer and skunks. Black bears, although quite rare in the region, are present.

Muskrat

Most often seen swimming near shore. It has a thin bare tail.

Beaver

You'll usually spot a dam or lodge made of sticks before you see the beaver. Has a broad flat tail that it slaps the water with when disturbed.

American Mink

Often seen foraging near shore.

River Otter

These tend to be somewhat reclusive and are usually found as a family grouping. They present a characteristic inquisitive "heads-up" in the water.

Raccoons

These usually forage at night, but can sometimes be spotted during the day.

White Tailed Deer (fawn)

There are large populations on these along the Rideau. The young fawns have a spotted coat.

Fish

The Rideau is home to healthy populations of many fish species. The lakes and most of the rivers are home to species such as Large Mouth Bass, Small Mouth Bass, Northern Pike and Crappie. Lake Trout are present in some lakes that have depths in excess of 80 ft / 24 m (i.e. Big Rideau Lake). There are Walleye in some areas (i.e. Upper Rideau Lake and the Rideau River) and Muskellunge (Musky/Maskinonge) in some sections of the Rideau River.

Aquatic Plants:

The Rideau hosts quite a variety of aquatic plants.

Submerged Plants: Waterweed (like aquarium plants); Pondweed; Smartweed (holds flower above surface of water); Tape-grass (like underwater grass, flower on coiled stem); Coontail (like a thick furry coon's tail); Water-milfoil (one species an invasive plant).

Aquatic Plants (floating): White Water-lily (white fragrant flower); Bullhead Water-lily (round yellow flower); Frogbit (invasive alien, small floating leaf like water lily); Duckweed (food for ducks, tiny plant).

Aquatic Plants (emergent): Cattail (big brown seed heads); Pickerelweed (blue flowers on stalk); Flowering Rush (invasive alien); Arrowhead (arrowhead-pointed leaves, white flowers); Purple Loosestrife (invasive alien, now controlled by beetles in some areas).

Oh – and those amorphous green blobs floating under the water in near-shore areas. They are benign (not due to pollution), they are a type of filamentous green algae. Their abundance is due to zebra mussels which don't eat this type of algae, but do eat their competition (single-celled algae) – and so, by removing the competition, have allowed these blobs to expand in numbers and length of season.

My thanks to Simon Lunn and the Rideau Roundtable (www.rideauroundtable.ca) for assistance with the wildlife and aquatic plants information.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Table of Distances

Distances are following the navigation channel and have been averaged to the centre of the lockstation. For most paddlers, following shorelines and taking side trips, distances will be greater. Use this as a guide and use the maps (and/or a tool such as Google Earth) for exact distance planning.

LOCATION	Distance from Kingston Kilometres (miles)	Distance from Ottawa Kilometres (miles)
Kingston - Lasalle Causeway	0 (0)	201.1 (125.6)
Kingston Mills Locks	7.0 (4.3)	195.1 (121.2)
Lower Brewers Lock	22.8 (14.2)	179.3 (111.4)
Upper Brewers Locks	25.6 (15.9)	176.5 (109.7)
Jones Falls Locks	43.0 (26.8)	159.1 (98.8)
Davis Lock	50.1 (31.1)	152.0 (94.5)
Chaffeys Lock	53.4 (33.2)	148.7 (92.4)
Newboro Lock	61.3 (38.1)	140.8 (87.1)
Narrows Lock	69.7 (43.3)	132.4 (82.3)
Colonel By Island	75.3 (46.8)	126.8 (78.8)
Lower Beveridges Lock (Tay Canal)	91.4 (56.8)	110.7 (68.8)
Perth Basin (head of Tay Canal)	101.1 (62.8)	120.4 (74.7)
Poonamalie Lock	101.0 (62.8)	101.1 (62.8)
Smiths Falls Detached Lock	104.7 (65.1)	97.4 (60.5)
Smiths Falls Combined Lock	105.3 (65.4)	96.8 (60.2)
Old Slys Lock	106.7 (66.3)	95.4 (59.3)
Edmunds Lock	109.4 (68.0)	92.7 (57.6)
Kilmarnock Lock	115.4 (71.7)	86.7 (53.9)
Merrickville Locks	128.1 (79.6)	74.0 (46.0)
Clowes Lock	131.6 (81.8)	70.5 (43.8)
Nicholsons Locks	132.5 (82.4)	69.5 (43.2)
Burritts Rapids Lock	138.1 (85.8)	64.0 (39.8)
Long Island Locks	178.8 (111.1)	23.3 (14.5)
Black Rapids Lock	187.1 (116.3)	15.0 (9.3)
Hogs Back Locks	193.7 (120.4)	8.4 (5.2)
Hartwells Locks	195.4 (121.4)	6.7 (4.2)
Ottawa Locks	201.1 (125.6)	0 (0)

APPENDIX B: Distances between Lockstations

The distances shown follow the marked navigation channel of the Rideau Canal (shown on navigation charts 1512 and 1513). The length of the lockstation itself is not included in these numbers (a cumulative distance of 1.1 km over 23 lockstations).

For most paddlers, actual distances will be longer (since you will likely not be following the navigation channel) – but they are a quick indication of minimum distances that can be used as an aid for travel planning.

RIDEAU CANAL		
Lockstation	**Kilometers**	**Miles**
Lasalle Causeway to Kingston Mills	6.9	4.3
Kingston Mills to Lower Brewers	15.7	9.8
Lower Brewers to Upper Brewers	2.8	1.7
Upper Brewers to Jones Falls	17.3	10.7
Jones Falls to Davis	10.0	4.3
Davis to Chaffeys	3.3	2.1
Chaffeys to Newboro	7.9	4.9
Newboro to Narrows	8.4	5.2
Narrows to Colonel By Island	5.6	3.5
Colonel By Island to Poonamalie	25.7	16.0
Poonamalie to Smiths Falls Detached	3.7	2.3
Smiths Fall Detached to Combined	0.6	0.4
Smiths Falls Combined to Old Slys	1.4	0.9
Old Slys to Edmunds	2.7	1.7
Edmunds to Kilmarnock	6.0	3.7
Kilmarnock to Merrickville	12.5	7.8
Merrickville to Clowes	3.3	2.1
Clowes to Upper Nicholsons	0.8	0.5
Lower Nicholsons to Burritts Rapids	5.4	3.4
Burritts Rapids to Long Island	40.7	25.3
Long Island to Black Rapids	8.3	5.2
Black Rapids to Hogs Back	6.6	4.1
Hogs Back to Hartwells	1.7	1.1
Hartwells to Ottawa	6.7	4.2
Lockstations (cumulative)	1.1	0.7

TOTAL	**202.1**	**125.6**

TAY CANAL

Lockstation	Kilometers	Miles
Col By Island to Diversion to Tay*	19.3	12.0
Poonamalie to Diversion to Tay*	6.4	4.0
Diversion* to Lower Beveridges	3.2	2.0
Lower Beveridges to Upper Beveridges	0.7	0.4
Upper Beveridges to Perth Basin	9.0	5.6
Diversion* to Perth Basin	12.9	8.0
* Diversion to Tay is about the middle of Lower Rideau Lake		

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APPENDIX C: Lockstation GPS Waypoints (Datum = NAD 83)

The following are co-ordinates for each of the lockstations on the Rideau Canal. These are not intended for navigation (you would need a full set of navigation waypoints) but can be handy if you're carrying a GPS unit and just want to know how close you're getting to the next lockstation.

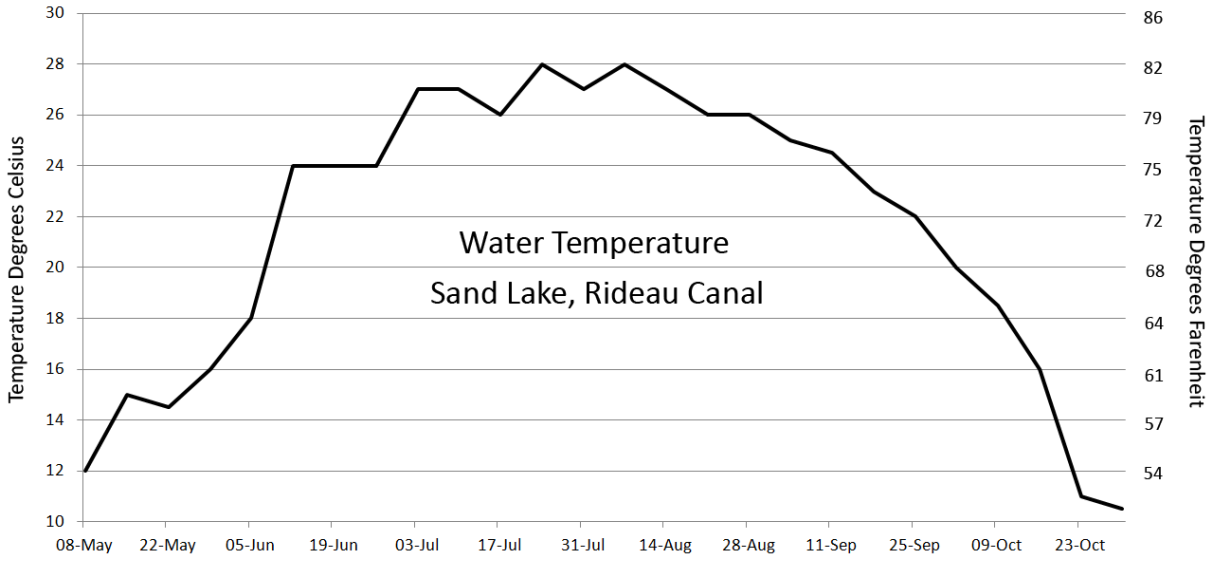
Lockstation	Lower Gate		Upper Gate	
	Latitude	Longitude	Latitude	Longitude
Kingston Mills	N 44° 17.471'	W 076° 26.570'	N 44° 17.592'	W 076° 26.511'
Lower Brewers	N 44° 23.341'	W 076° 19.500'	N 44° 23.363'	W 076° 19.499'
Upper Brewers († Middle Gate)	N 44° 24.769' †	W 076° 18.792' †	N 44° 24.769' †	W 076° 18.792' †
Jones Falls	N 44° 32.688'	W 076° 14.226'	N 44° 32.790'	W 076° 14.350'
Davis	N 44° 33.772'	W 076° 17.512'	N 44° 33.777'	W 076° 17.543'
Chaffeys	N 44° 34.736'	W 076° 19.203'	N 44° 34.751'	W 076° 19.180'
Newboro	N 44° 38.744'	W 076° 19.262'	N 44° 38.752'	W 076° 19.293'
Narrows	N 44° 42.186'	W 076° 17.720'	N 44° 42.178'	W 076° 17.749'
Lower Beveridges	N 44° 52.497'	W 076° 08.354'	N 44° 52.504'	W 076° 08.384'
Upper Beveridges	N 44° 52.601'	W 076° 08.724'	N 44° 52.618'	W 076° 08.746'
Poonamalie	N 44° 53.589'	W 076° 03.334'	N 44° 53.569'	W 076° 03.349'
Smiths Falls Detached	N 44° 53.760'	W 076° 01.626'	N 44° 53.750'	W 076° 01.655'
Smiths Falls Combined	N 44° 53.821'	W 076° 01.233'	N 44° 53.814'	W 076° 01.263'
Old Slys († Middle Gate)	N 44° 53.586' †	W 076° 00.248' †	N 44° 53.586' †	W 076° 00.248' †
Edmunds	N 44° 52.641'	W 075° 59.005'	N 44° 52.659'	W 075° 59.026'
Kilmarnock († centre of lock)	N 44° 53.075' †	W 075° 55.824' †	N 44° 53.075' †	W 075° 55.824' †
Merrickville	N 44° 55.050'	W 075° 50.037'	N 44° 54.993'	W 075° 50.265'
Clowes	N 44° 56.773'	W 075° 49.337'	N 44° 56.759'	W 075° 49.362'
Upper Nicholsons	N 44° 57.084'	W 075° 49.047'	N 44° 57.062'	W 075° 49.052'
Lower Nicholsons	N 44° 57.304'	W 075° 48.955'	N 44° 57.281'	W 075° 48.956'
Burritts Rapids	N 44° 58.958'	W 075° 47.185'	N 44° 58.942'	W 075° 47.208'
Long Island	N 45° 15.080'	W 075° 42.120'	N 45° 15.025'	W 075° 42.112'
Black Rapids († lower gate only)	N 45° 19.293' †	W 075° 41.889' †	--	--
Hogs Back († Middle Gate)	N 45° 22.208' †	W 075° 41.942' †	N 45° 22.208' †	W 075° 41.942' †
Hartwells	N 45° 23.088'	W 075° 41.990'	N 45°23.034'	W 075° 42.010'
Ottawa	N 45° 25.604'	W 075° 41.917'	N 45° 25.495'	W 075° 41.740'

APPENDIX D: Temperature

What to pack in terms of clothes? The following temperature chart will give you some indication of what to expect on your Rideau adventure. Kingston temperatures are a bit lower in the summer due to cool winds off Lake Ontario – most of the Rideau is going to be closer to the Ottawa temperatures.

	OTTAWA		KINGSTON	
Month	**Low**	**High**	**Low**	**High**
May	7 °C / 45 °F	19 °C / 66 °F	7 °C / 45 °F	16 °C / 66 °F
June	12 °C / 54 °F	24 °C / 75 °F	12 °C / 54 °F	21 °C / 70 °F
July	14 °C / 57 °F	27 °C / 81 °F	15 °C / 59 °F	25 °C / 77 °F
August	14 °C / 57 °F	26 °C / 79 °F	15 °C / 59 °F	24 °C / 75 °F
September	9 °C / 48 °F	20 °C / 68 °F	10 °C / 50 °F	19 °C / 66 °F
October	3 °C / 37 °F	14 °C / 57 °F	4 °C / 39 °F	13 °C / 55°F

If you're thinking of taking a dip – the following will give you an idea of the water temperatures. These numbers will fluctuate depending on the year (temperature, sunshine, and rainfall all play a part in the water temperature). The deeper lakes (i.e Big Rideau) may be a bit cooler, the shallower lakes and rivers, a bit warmer. Bottom line is that you can expect, on average, water temperatures above 20°C (68°F) in June, July, August and much of September.



APPENDIX E: The Nature of Wildlife Photography

by Ken W. Watson

Getting eye to eye with nature
A few tips and tricks to taking better wildlife photos

Paddling the Rideau Canal will provide many opportunities for wildlife photography. The following hints and tips are based on my over 40 years of experience as a photographer – applying some or all of these will result in some great Rideau wildlife photos.

These tips are quite detailed (and perhaps somewhat daunting) – but don't worry, even if you just absorb a few of the points, your nature photography will likely improve. Many of the points will apply whether you are using a dSLR with a high quality telephoto lens or the camera in a smartphone.

Here we go:

1) Know general photographic principles – Take a photo course or teach yourself photographic basics. These basics would include how the aperture (f-stop), shutter speed and ISO ("film" speed) relate to each other and how they affect your photos. Be familiar with the "rule of thirds" when composing an image. I won't discuss these here, I'll assume you have some familiarity with basic photographic principles.

2) Have the camera ready – I have a very long list of wildlife photos that I've missed because the camera hasn't been ready to go. The "just hold on while I unpack my camera, turn it on and focus" doesn't work with most animals. Have the camera around your neck, ready to go. If you're buying a new digital camera, a feature to look for is the shooting delay, the time between turning the camera on and being able to take a photo. With my current camera this is virtually instant, but with my first digital it was almost seven seconds (and I watched lots of wildlife leave the scene while the camera was powering up).

3) Check your camera – Before you head out, turn your camera on and check its settings (shooting mode, ISO, exposure compensation). I've blown shots because the camera was left on its last settings and I didn't pay attention to them the next day. In fact it's a good habit to check your settings each time you use the camera. Check the charge on your batteries (and carry spares) and make sure your memory cards have room for a full day of photography.

4) Be observant – This might be self evident, but most wildlife generally prefers to be hidden. Scan ahead of you. Humans generally have good eyes and ears – use these to note animals before they note

you. Once you've spotted something of interest, approach slowly, camera ready. Take photos as you approach (so at least you have something if the animal runs away).

5) Be aware of your appearance to the animal – Are you approaching from upwind or downwind? Most animals use their noses and will want to smell you. It is a great advantage if you are approaching from downwind – it often allows you to get closer to wildlife. Speed is also a factor. For instance in my kayak, if I paddle in towards a sunning turtle, it will bail into the water long before I can get a good photo. But if I drift very slowly (emulating a drifting log) and don't move my body, I can get almost on top of the turtle. Many animals have eyes that are very sensitive to movement (and insensitive to non-movement or very slow movement). So move very slowly and gently.

6) Be close but be respectful – The best wildlife photos are those where the subject fills most of the frame. People like to see the detail on the plant or animal. With animals the trick is not to encroach into their space, particularly where things like young are involved (bird chicks, etc.). Hence the need in this case for a telephoto lens, allowing you to get a close view of the animal while maintaining a respectful distance. Professional photographers use large, very expensive telephoto lenses. My advice is to buy what you can afford. With a point & shoot (P&S) camera, look for the optical x factor (ignore any digital zoom numbers, they are meaningless). Most cameras come with a 3x or 4x optical zoom. But some come with a 10x or greater zoom. If you are doing lots of wildlife photography, look for these higher zooms. Note that most P&S cameras, the x factor starts off at about 35 mm – so a 4x optical zoom is equivalent to a 140 mm telephoto lens, an 8x is equivalent to a 280 mm lens.

If you have an SLR, then get as large a telephoto lens, usually a zoom for flexibility, as you can afford. Most digital SLR have a multiplication factor on the lens size because their sensors are smaller than 35 mm film. In the case of my SLR it is a multiplier of 1.6, so when I put my 400 mm telephoto on the camera I end up having the 35 mm equivalent of a 640 mm lens. With both P&S cameras and SLRs, optical stabilization of the lens is also a very good feature (see Be steady below).

The flip size of getting close is with small objects such as flowers and insects. In this case the feature you want to look for is the lens' macro capabilities, how close in can you get. Some good macro lenses will focus within a few inches of the subject, allowing you to fill the field of view with a small object.

7) Be steady – The reason most wildlife shots don't turn out is because the camera moved during the photo, producing a bit of blurring or fuzziness to the photo. Many people blame this on the camera or the lens, but it is almost always the photographer who is to blame. With a telephoto lens, the general rule of thumb is that you must have a shutter speed equivalent to the lens focal length to produce a vibration free shot. If my lens is set to 500 mm, then by this rule I should have my shutter speed at 1/500 second or faster. An optically stabilized lens can generally add about 2 f-stops of steadiness, in the above example it would allow me to take the same vibration free shot at 1/125 second.

In the ideal world, every shot would be taken on a tripod using a remote shutter release (since the act of pressing the shutter button also induces vibration into the camera). In the real world this is usually not possible. I've yet to figure out how to use a tripod from a kayak, so all those shots are hand held. While hiking or cycling, I carry either a tripod (if I'm really keen) or a monopod. Practise holding the camera steady – think about it during the shot. If the subject is moving (i.e. birds in flight), practise the technique of tracking them (moving the camera at the same speed as the subject).

Some cameras have the ability to adjust shutter speed on the fly. With others you might want to set the camera on its "Tv" setting if it offers one. This is the "shutter priority" setting and you can manually set the shutter speed you want and the camera will adjust the aperture.

Boost the ISO (film/sensor sensitivity) if you absolutely need to. With some cameras this will add noise to the photo, so test the camera first (note the highest ISO you can go before seeing visible degradation) in the photo). The auto setting on most cameras will use an ISO of about 100. But, for instance, if you have a photo where the best you can do is a shutter speed of 1/125 and you want to boost it to 1/500 (and maintain the same exposure), then adjusting the ISO from 100 to 400 will boost the shutter speed to 1/500. I generally leave the ISO of my camera in the 100 range and only boost it when I absolutely need to. Point and shoot cameras generally have a much greater ISO noise than do dSLRs so bottom line remains to test the camera you are using at all its ISO levels to find out where unacceptable noise (graininess) starts.

8) Track the sun – The old adage "keep the sun at your back" is still true with modern day photography. Colours are much better if the animal or flower is in sunlight rather than in shadow. Keep this in mind when trip planning. Given that the sun generally rises in the east and sets in the west, try to plan a route where you are travelling in a westerly direction in the morning, northerly towards noon and easterly in the afternoon. It doesn't have to be exact, but if you have a choice try to travel with the sun behind you rather than into the sun. Also the "magic hour" for photography is generally just after sunrise and just before sunset when the sun is low on the horizon. The sunlight is travelling through more atmosphere and this provides a warmer, richer light. But for most, it is only a happy coincidence to be able to do photography restricted to these magic hours – just be aware that early morning or late afternoon usually have the richest, most saturated light.

9) A Polarizer is your friend – A polarizing filter for your camera can make the difference between an okay photo and a stunning photo. A polarizer will remove glare from the subject. It is most dramatic for shots taken on water and of vegetation (flowers and such). It allows the full vibrancy of the colour to come through. All SLR cameras and many point & shoot (that allow a filter adapter) can use a polarizer. Make sure you get a circular polarizer (not the shape of the filter, all of which are circular, but the type of polarization it does – this type allows the light meters on a digital camera to work correctly).

The downside of a polarizer is that it will cost you about 1.5 f-stops of exposure and it does add another layer of glass onto your lens. Be sure to purchase a high quality polarizer (don't go cheap) and use with discretion (I don't use it all the time – just for shots where I clearly know that a polarizer will greatly enhance the shot). Of note, true polarizing (removing glare from objects) is one effect that cannot be replicated in photo editing software.

10) Think Exposure – Many wildlife photos, particularly wildflower photos, will benefit from a slight underexposure. In some cases this is crucial, such as a white flower on a dark background. Your camera will try to expose for the whole scene and this will overexpose (blow out) the white in the scene. Often it is hard to exactly judge how much underexposure to do. Professional photographers know this (they aren't much better at judging exact conditions) and will bracket the shot – that is they will take 3 photos in a row, one at the proper exposure, one a certain amount (say 1 f-stop) underexposed and one the same amount overexposed. Then later they can judge what was the best shot. Many better P&S and SLR cameras have this auto-bracketing feature built in. But even if you don't have it – if the subject permits, take several shots at different exposure settings. You'll soon learn to guess which way you have to go. If you have a dark subject on a light background you'll have to overexposure to get the best shot (i.e. a red fox on snow).

11) Think depth of field – Depth of field is the amount of the photo that appears to be in focus. It is related to the focal length of the lens, the aperture the lens is set to and the distance to the subject. The larger the focal length, the less depth of field the lens provides. With any given lens, the greater the aperture (i.e. f.22 as opposed to f.5.6), the more the depth of field. The distance to the subject will determine the "thickness" of the depth of field. For instance, a 100 mm lens, set at f.5.6, with a focus point

at 40 feet, might have from 35 to 45 feet in sharp focus. If that same lens is set at f.22 the depth of field might be from 25 to 55 feet. Because of their design (small image sensor), most P&S cameras have a greater depth of field than dSLR cameras. With wildlife photography, the usual desire is to have a low depth of field, making the subject stand out in crisp focus against a blurry background (which helps to define the subject). So dSLRs are generally better than P&S cameras in this respect. Keep depth of field in mind when taking the shot – try multiple shots with different depths of fields and different focus points to see what the effect is.

12) Think framing – Outside of the general rule of thirds (which of course you are familiar with) there are a few other general concepts to think about. If the object is moving (i.e. a flying bird) it is often better to put more space in front of the object than behind it (make the object coming into the photo rather than leaving the photo). With small objects (flowers, insects) think "close up." Fill the frame with the subject – it's the type of detailed view most people don't take the time to see but are fascinated with when they see it in your photo.

13) Think focus – Most cameras autofocus using a best guess technique. This can be difficult if the subject is partially obscured by vegetation or you want to frame off-centre. One trick is to put the subject dead centre, press the shutter halfway down to set exposure and focus, then while still holding down the shutter (to maintain that exposure and focus) reframe the photo and shoot. If it is a really tough autofocus shot (obscured by vegetation) switch to manual focus if you can. Most dSLRs will light up the focus points when you press the shutter halfway done. Make sure one of those focus points is lit up on your subject.

14) Think shots – A huge advantage of digital photography over film is that you can carry an almost unlimited number of shots – digital memory cards are inexpensive, so carry lots of memory and take lots of shots. As previously noted, a good technique is to auto-bracket your photos (take 3 shots at once with different exposures). With a subject that you know will be in motion (i.e. ducks about to take flight) – set your camera to burst mode if you have it – this will take pictures as fast as the camera can, up to the internal memory limit, as long as you hold down the shutter. So when the ducks take off, you might get 15 or 20 photos of each stage of their takeoff and flight.

15) Think tracking – Following on the above (Think shots) concept, another great wildlife technique to cultivate is tracking a moving subject. I touched on this in the "keep steady" section, but to elaborate, learn to follow the action of the wildlife with your camera. When you get good at this, drop your shutter speed when doing this technique. What this will do (if done right – and it is tricky) – is keep the subject in perfect focus while creating motion blur behind the subject – this gives a sense of speed and direction. When used in conjunction with burst mode, it can be very effective to capture that perfect shot of wildlife in motion. Note that some cameras have a special focus mode for this type of action shot (sometimes they will call it a sports focus mode, meant for action sports (it provides continuous, real-time focusing), but it works just as well for wildlife in action).

16) Think sport – This has nothing to do with photographic techniques but think about the reason you're doing photography. For many (even though they won't admit it) the joy is really the act of photography itself, finding the subject, making the perfect composition, taking the photo. The photo itself is somewhat incidental to the activity. The real bonus as I see it is that photography is a great excuse to get physically active. Hiking, cycling, paddling can all be interesting in themselves, but when you combine those activities with photography they make every trip interesting, a new adventure. Nature photography is best done in person (as opposed to being in a motorized conveyance) so there is inevitably physical activity involved. You'll be much more in tune with nature since you'll be looking for wildlife and photo opportunities – you'll see things most other people miss.

17) Think location – Where were those great shots taken? There are several options for locating your photos. Some cameras come with a built in GPS unit that will automatically geotag the photo (incorporate the latitude and longitude into the actual digital photo). If you're don't have a GPS capable camera, but are carrying a GPS unit, you can use software to match the track-logs from your GPS unit (assuming that you are saving those) to the photographs you take on your trip (this is done by matching timestamps – so make sure your camera's time is set correctly). And of course there is the old standby, a notepad – make notes of where you took particular photos. You can use those notes or your memory to manually geotag photos (using software and Google Earth). See below for a link to more info.

18) Label your photos – It is a good idea to digitally label your photos so that you can easily identify what is in the photo (i.e. Great Blue Heron on Newboro Lake, Rideau Canal). This labelling should be done using the IPTC/XMP archival standard – lots of software today supports this. See below for a link to more info.

19) Post-process – Taking a photo is often only half the job. The other half is post-processing, putting your photo into a digital darkroom (photo program). You can enhance shadow detail, improve/correct colour, re-frame and/or crop, sharpen, and much more. If you are really into photography it's worth learning a program such as Adobe Photoshop (a good starter is Photoshop Elements – many techniques learned in Elements can be later applied to the full version of Photoshop).

20) Think safe storage – Initially, while paddling, it is best if all your photos are on memory cards (one in your camera and the others in a waterproof case). Once home, the photos can be transferred to your computer. This is when the Rule of Two kicks in – that is, there should always be two copies of your photos. Before you erase any memory card, you should make sure that the photos are in at least two different places. If you've copied the photos from the card to your computer, make sure those photos also end up on your backup device (which you should have) before you erase the photos on the card. Then, you have to think of the Rule of Three which means a third, off-site backup in case your house burns down or your computer, with backup, gets stolen (See below for a link to more info).

Cloud storage is another option depending on your camera but it requires a data or WiFi connection (and lots of bandwidth if you're taking both videos and photos). It should also be verified that this type of storage is not altering your original photos (that it is not resizing the photos or doing extra compression).

21) Think display – While it is true that for most the real joy is the act of photography itself, it is always nice to share your results. I do it with photo galleries on my own website. There are many free photo gallery websites – do a search for "free photo gallery" and see what you come up with. Most of today's basic ink jet printers do a wonderful job at printing photos. Set up a wall in your house showcasing your efforts, printing 8.5" x 11" photos right at home.

For more information about the digital labelling of photos, the safe storage of digital photos and geotagging, have a look at my "All About Digital Photos" website which you will find at:

www.rideau-info.com/photos/