

# Mississippi River Canoe Route

A canoe trip down the Mississippi River is a journey through history. Scattered along its banks are reminders of the past: rocky shores scraped of their soil by advancing glaciers; potholes gouged out of the granite by swirling rocks and water; ancient paintings by native peoples; old log slides, dams, and mill ruins. Today, the Mississippi River is

used primarily for recreation.



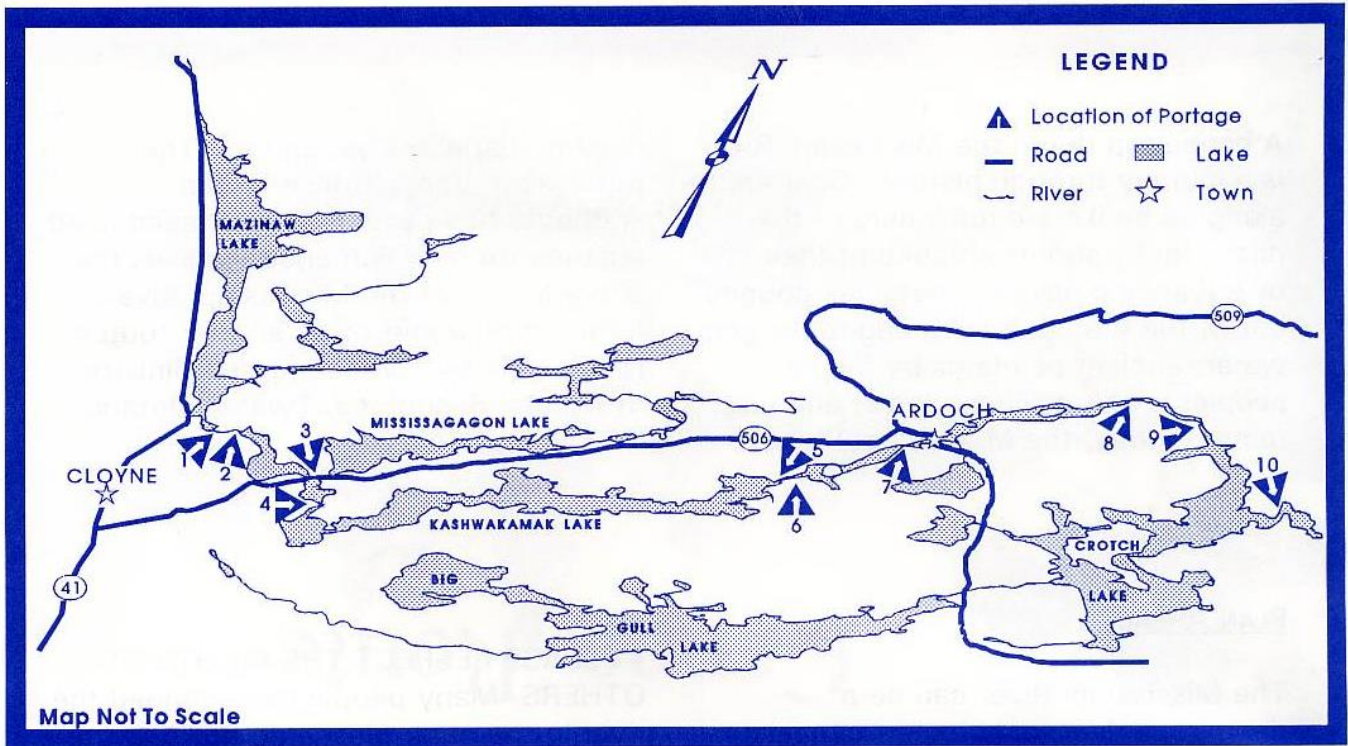
## PLAN AHEAD:

The Mississippi River can be a dangerous river; only expert canoeists are advised to canoe the river in the spring. In the summer, the river is often low and rocky. If you are inexperienced, travel with a seasoned canoeist. Here are some safety tips to keep in mind:

- always wear your life jacket
- use portages where necessary
- always check rapids from shore before attempting to run them, if in doubt, walk or line your canoe
- leave trip plans and expected arrival times with a responsible person in case of accident or injury
- obtain the topographic maps listed on the back cover of this brochure before departing - these can be obtained from the Canada Map Office, Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources 130 Bentley Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E9 - (613) 952-7000
- always carry a compass
- try to plan in advance your overnight stops as well as the distance you must cover each day to meet your goal
- treat all dams and water control devices with respect as they can be extremely hazardous.

- PLEASE RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS Many people have canoed the river in the past; please do not ruin the experience for future visitors.
- please use the designated campsites - there are numerous Crown land and commercial campsites along the route.
- do not camp on privately-owned land without permission from the owner, it is a violation of the Trespass to Property Act.
- please pack out your garbage or use refuse containers provided at designated points along the route.
- leave the area as you would want to find it. Remember that many of the portages are on private land and it is only through the kind cooperation of the landowners that the portages have been established.
- please exercise caution when building fires at designated campsites and make sure that all fires are out before leaving.

*This brochure is for informational purposes only. Although every effort has been made to ensure the enclosed information is correct, the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority takes no responsibility for, nor guarantees the accuracy of, the information contained within.*



Map Not To Scale

**ROUTE DESCRIPTION:**

The route as described is based on low water conditions. It should not be solely relied upon to describe conditions at the time of your trip. It takes approximately 4 full days to travel from Mazinaw Lake to High Falls on Dalhousie Lake. From Dalhousie Lake to the Ottawa River will take at least 4 more days.

**PORTAGE DIFFICULTY RATING SYSTEM:**

The portages along the route have been ranked according to their degree of difficulty. A portage rated ★ typically would be short and over flat terrain. A portage rated ★★ would be the most difficult, typically a long portage over rough terrain.

**PORTAGE DESCRIPTIONS**

**1** - Mazinaw Lake Dam - 40m on the West (right) side - must use portage to bypass dam - easy takeout and put-in - mix of rocky and sandy shore - easy trail with steep slope down to put-in - path can be slippery when wet - trail is short and well-marked -



**shallow water** - takeout is bedrock - put-in is sandy with some bedrock outcrops to either side - both can be difficult in low water - trail is well-marked and gently sloped - Note the marble outcrops in water and along shore -



**2** - Marble Narrows - 80m on the West (right) side - can line or walk canoe through, depending on water conditions - many rocks and submerged logs in water before and after portage - **dangerous in**

**3** - Marble Lake Outlet - 40m up slope, turn right and then left under the bridge to put-in on rocks in mid-stream - **Do Not Portage on East (left) shore** - takeout is easy (grassy, sloped beach area) - put-in can be difficult in both high and low water



conditions - loose rock underfoot can shift - must use portage unless very high water - Note: HWY 506 crosses the river at this point.



**K4** - Georgia Lake Rapids - 20m on West (right) side, up over ridge and down under Hydro line, over well-marked and very short trail - easy takeout - difficult put-in - rocky shore at both ends - recommend lining or walking through rapids -



**K5** - Kashwakamak Lake Dam - 290m along moderately difficult terrain - well-marked trail on the North (left) side of the river - use of portage recommended rather than running or lining rapids - easy takeout (beside dam) and put-in (at small pond) - **Caution: falls very near to takeout point - stay clear of log booms -**



**K6** - Logjam Rapids - 500m on the South (right) side of the river - trail is moderately steep and long, but well-marked and easy to follow - must use portage - easy takeout - extremely difficult put-in point - steep slope, very slippery when wet - canoe slide and handrail in place - use **extreme caution** when raising or lowering canoe and ascending or descending slope - outhouse midway through portage - **Note: rapids are quite pretty and swift but dangerous - do not attempt to run -**



**K7** - Farm Lake Dam - 120m on South (right) side along well-marked path - must use portage - easy takeout and put-in - steep slope down steps to put-in - also steep drop off on left side - narrow, slanted path - please use existing fire pit and clearings - **Crown land - Note: Use caution when approaching weir -**



**K8** - Sidedam Rapids - Two options:  
1) Bypass entire set of rapids - 300m on West (right) shore across foot bridge - **Caution: wooden bridge can be slippery - fairly difficult portage due to rocks and uneven footing -**

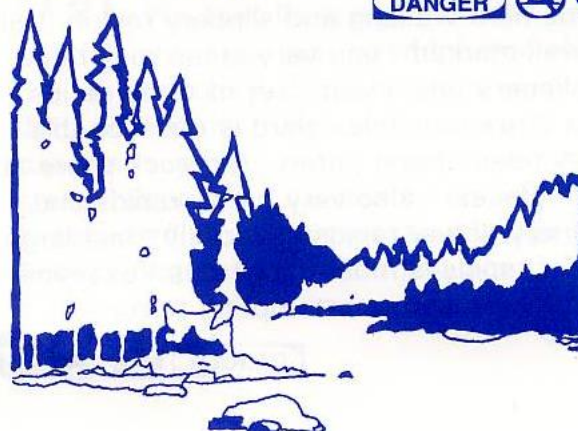
2) Put canoe back into water after portaging 50m on West (right) side - canoe to next sign - second portage: **110m** over well-marked trail - takeout is easy, on bedrock shelf in deep water - river is very rocky even in high water - camping allowed on both sides of the river except where prohibited by signs - **Crown land** - access point for the route -



**K9** - Whitefish Rapids - 25m on West (right) side along short, fairly easy trail - use portage or liftover depending on water levels - easy takeout - difficulty of put-in varies with water levels on Crotch Lake - camping permitted unless prohibited by signs - **Crown land -**



**K10** - King's Falls Dam - 95m - on North (left) side of bay - past cottage on right, down road to put-in at boat dock/launch - must use portage - easy takeout (sandy beach) and put-in (bedrock shore) - **Note: keep to left of log booms when approaching beach - dam is dangerous - swift current - trail (road) is well-marked and short -**



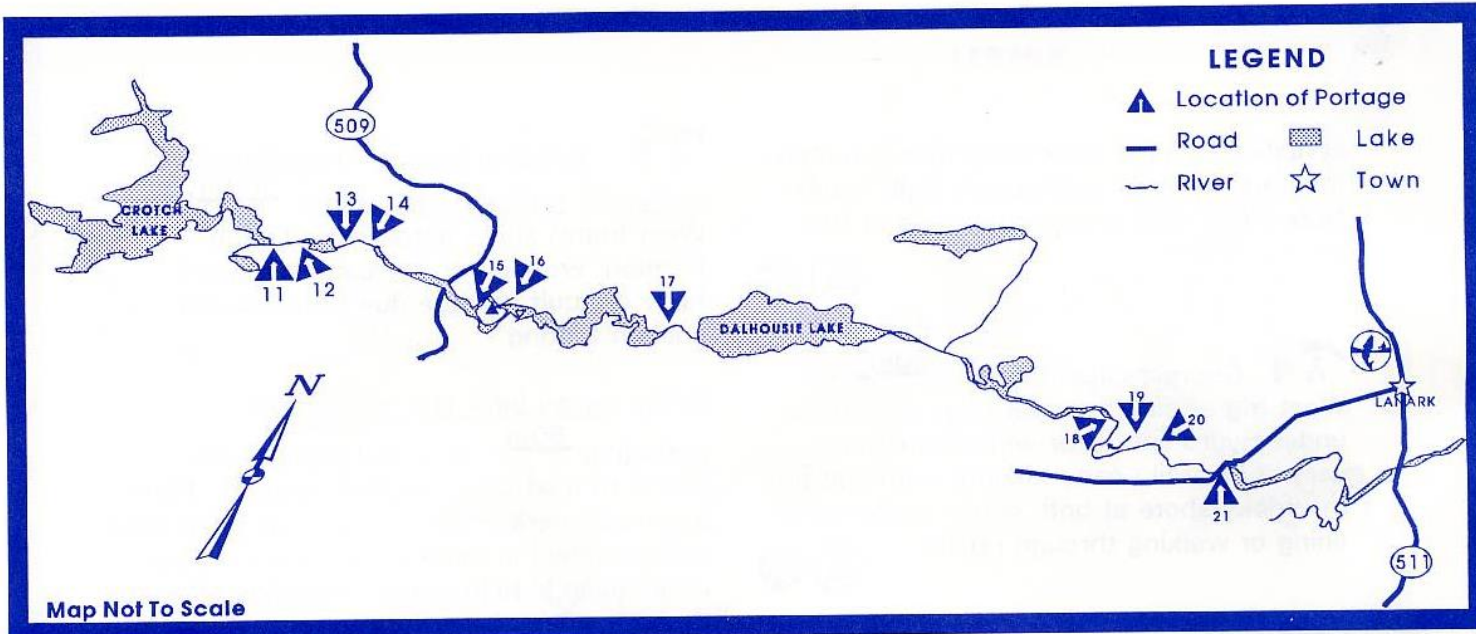
Scenic Area



Toilet Facilities



Hazardous Conditions



**K11** - King's Chute - 460m on the South (right) side of the river - trail is long and arduous, but well-marked - steep in places and rocks are slippery when wet - exercise caution when using trail - must use portage - **rapids are dangerous** - fast flowing current, very close to takeout - possible to run but only by experienced whitewater canoeist after an examination from shore - easy takeout at bedrock shore - keep right - put-in is moderately difficult - fast-flowing water with swirls and eddies along the shore - many spots to rest and look at scenic waterfalls and rapids - King's Chute to Miller Lake a very scenic and exciting stretch of the Mississippi -



**K12** - Otter Rapids - 335m along the South (right) shore - terrain similar to King's Chute - very steep in places with some hard walking and slippery rocks - trail is well-marked - one very steep rock ridge is slippery when wet - set of three rapids - first 2 are runnable - third is questionable - easy takeout and put-in - (bedrock shore at both places) - also very pretty rapids and scenery, lower rapids especially - last large set of rapids is most dangerous - examine from shore before attempting to run -



**K13** - Ragged Chutes - 800m along North-West (left) shore on terrain ranging from gentle to moderately steep slopes - must use portage - **Caution: large waterfall very near takeout point - keep to North-West (left) shore** - trail is wide and easy to follow - keep straight on the trail, which has two branches to the right - 1st -to old logging bridge - 2nd -to remains of log slide (chute) at lower falls - take time to appreciate the natural beauty and historical significance of this site - moderately difficult takeout due to steep bedrock shore - easy put-in at sandy beach - private property -



**K14** - Miller Lake - 375m on the North (left) shore - long hard portage with some very difficult spots - recommend running (or lining in low water) rapids after examining them from shore - takeout and put-in are both difficult due to steep bedrock and changing water levels - put-in is particularly steep, a rocky slope down to the water - Note: takeout is on Crown land and camping is permitted around this area -



• Option of two portages, #15 or #16 - recommend using MacLaren's Depot Snye (#15) because it is shorter and more scenic



**T15** - MacLaren's Depot Snye - set of four short portages - 1st - **30m** on left side of cove - loose rock and shale underfoot, slippery when wet -

2nd portage - **50m** on path along right shore - takeout at bedrock shelf 25m downstream, before set of small riffles - very pretty - put-in at large flat bedrock outcrop - canoe slide in place for difficult lift -

3rd portage - **50m** on right at small cove at narrowing of river - put-in on bedrock shelf at pond -

4th portage - **50m** beginning at small footbridge on left - cross 2nd bridge and follow trail to end of island, bypassing narrow rocky spillway - takeout and put-in are both moderately difficult - can run some of the rapids in high water - **danger - many submerged rocks** - some firepits and picnic tables at last portage -



**T16** - MacLaren's Depot - **880m** on North (left) shore before large rapids - follow moderately steep subdivision road - take first left down hill - take second left at Y-intersection - follow road down to clearing at last portage on Snye route - **do not run rapids** at takeout point - very fast and dangerous -



**T17** - High Falls - **1200m** down gravel road, through gate, down hill to beach at Dalhousie Lake - must use portage - easy takeout and put-in - **Caution: falls are very near takeout - keep left after crossing booms in bay area - avoid spillgates** - washroom facilities 250m up the road at park area - south of put-in point



**T18** - Sheridan's Rapids - **430m** on the East (right) side over well-marked path, up

hill through forest, turn left on flat ground, through private yard, down driveway, turn left on path through woods and field to river - recommend running or lining rapids, though shallow - portage trail is moderately long - vegetation may be dense - takeout and put-in are both difficult due to fast, shallow water and rocky shore - Sheridan's Rapids to Playfairville is stretch of water with the most continuous rapids and fast-flowing water -



**T19** - Rapids - **400m** on the left side over a very long and steep trail - suggest lining or running rapids - trail is both long and very rugged - footing remains uneven and slippery in places - takeout at sandy bank is easy - put-in is difficult due to rocky shore and shallow water - be watchful for presence of poison ivy - possible to run rapids - **Caution: first chute is most difficult - examine closely before running** -



**T20** - Old Dam Site - **75m** on left bank before dam ruins - trail is well-maintained and easy to follow - recommend running or lining through rapids - although fast, they are not dangerous - takeout is easy - put-in point is difficult due to fast-flowing water - no portages available for the next few sets of rapids - must paddle or line through -



**T21** - Playfairville Bridge - **200m** on South (right) side, across bridge and along the road to rocky, difficult put-in on West (left) side of river (right side of road) - can run rapids in high water - easy takeout up grassy slope - **use caution** when walking beside road and when crossing bridge - Note: private campground just down-river



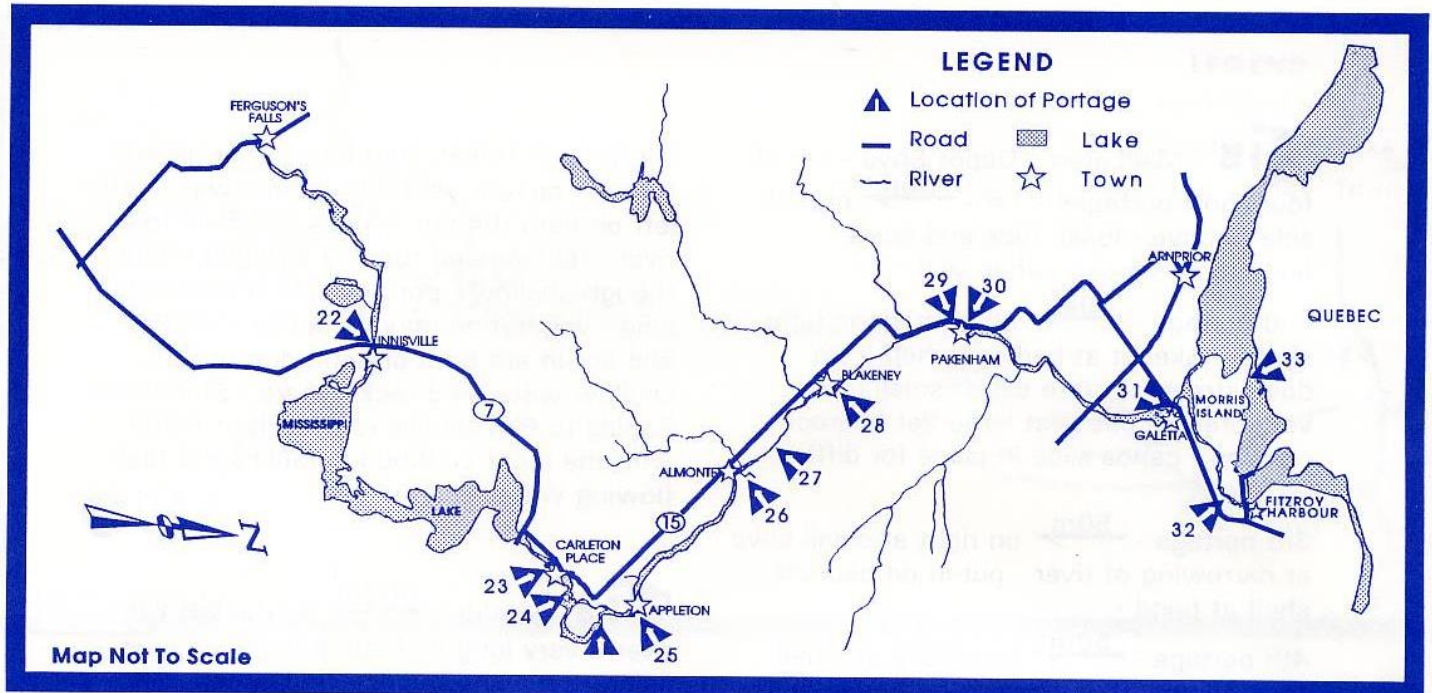
Scenic Area



Toilet Facilities



Hazardous Conditions



**22** - Innisville - 425m on South (right) shore between cottages, down private cottage road, across HWY 7, turn left to the put-in point - recommend paddling or lining canoe under bridge if possible - easy takeout - cross lawn directly between cottages - do not stray to either side - put-in can be difficult due to rocks and low water levels - **Caution must be exercised when crossing HWY 7** -



**23** - Carleton Place Dam - 635m on East (right) side of river before warning buoys - go out driveway, turn left on Mill St., pass under railway trestle, follow grassy path on left - cross small auto bridge, cross in front of second auto bridge and follow path into woods along river to put-in - takeout behind Town Hall/Police Station is difficult due to steep rock wall at river's edge - **do not use circular staircase**: private property - put-in is easy, on bedrock in shallow water - weir is very near takeout - **keep away** - washrooms available in Town Hall -



**24** - Arkland Rapids Chute - 250m on South (left) bank of island - hard portage due to dense vegetation - watch for poison ivy and poison oak and many holes concealed in the long grass - undefined trail, follow blazes- recommend running or lining if possible rather than using portage - **do not paddle through the mill chute: it is very rocky and fast** - rapids outside the chute may be run after an examination from shore - easy takeout on bedrock shelf - put-in can be difficult due to bedrock shoreline, depending on water levels -



- Munroe's Rapids - no portage trail available - although swift, rapids can be run -



**25** - Appleton Dam - 295m on the East (right) side around dam, turn left and follow the road down to boat launch at small park area - must use portage - steep rocky bank at difficult takeout point rises up to a grassy plateau at the road - dam is near the takeout point - **do not go near spillway** - recommend canoeists keep to right shore after passing under the bridge -



Portage Length In Metres    Camping Not Permitted    Camping Permitted

This document is for information only. Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority does not own or maintain the route and portages. Use at your own risk.

**T26** - Almonte Generating Station - 560m through downtown Almonte - pass in front of Town Hall, turn right on Little Bridge St. and pass under the railway bridge (**low overhead**) - turn right on Mill St. and continue to the end - cross Highway 44 (Almonte St.), turn left, and descend by stairs or roadside to Metcalfe Park Conservation Area - must use portage - Note: watch for spikes as you canoe underneath the bridge at the takeout - takeout is at gravel boat launch at Town Hall - easy although fast water and falls nearby - at put-in, watch for strong currents as you pass through the outwash from the waterfall - can be strong and unpredictable - watch out for vehicles and other pedestrians when portaging -



**T27** - Riffles - 70m on the East (right) side - recommend running rapids - takeout is at rock outcrop - follow trail along shore, across fence, down grassy road to beach put-in area - short portage, relatively easy -



**T28** - Blakeney - 300m down road, across bridge, turn left at path on old road bed - follow trail down to water - **caution crossing bridge, no sidewalk - path down to put-in is clay - very slippery when wet - Do Not Run Rapids!** - must use portage - takeout and put-in both moderately difficult - takeout has rock shoals and bedrock shoreline with shallow water - put-in has steep slope down to rocky shore - rapids near to portage - keep left in river -



**T29** - Pakenham - 185m on West (left) shore to path - follow trail through scattered trees and grass to put-in point - rapids can be run in high water after examination from shore - recommend lining or running if possible - takeout is moderately difficult - bedrock river bottom and shore with shallow, fast-flowing water - put-in is relatively easy, in deeper,

calmer water - rapids near to takeout point -



**T30** - Pakenham Bridge - 260m on West (left) side, up steep bank, through/around park area, across road to MTO park and put-in at boat launch area - must use portage - takeout's difficulty varies with water levels - usually moderate - put-in is easy at boat launch - falls are **very close** to portage - fast water around blind curve - keep left and head for portage sign - **caution** crossing road at bridge - be sure to visit the Pakenham Bridge Conservation Area -



**T31** - Galetta - 100m - keep to west of island on river - take canoe out above the dam on the west (left) side - follow road and put canoe in just below bridge -



**T32** - Mississippi Snye @ Fitzroy Harbour - 2.1km - takeout at railway bridge - follow trail, take first left on paved road, then left again past subdivision on right - cross over small bridge and take next right on **small** access road to put-in point on the river - recommend canoeists paddle as far as possible along the Snye, unless low water conditions force using the portage - takeout is moderately difficult due to shallow, fast-flowing water - put-in is easy - rock shore at end of access road - exercise **caution** walking on town streets and crossing roads -



**T33** - Mississippi River @ Morris Island - 3.5km - if proceeding on to the Ottawa River, use extreme caution - follow shoreline and take out at Morris Island Conservation Area parking lot - 1st bay past railway trestle - **CAUTION: WATER LEVELS FLUCTUATE DRASTICALLY ON THIS PART OF THE OTTAWA RIVER DUE TO CHATS FALLS HYDRO DAM IMMEDIATELY DOWNSTREAM - STRONG CURRENTS - DO NOT CANOE FURTHER DOWN OTTAWA RIVER!** -



Scenic Area



Toilet Facilities



Hazardous Conditions