

What to expect at Bowron Lake Park

Approaching from Wells, the first indication of the park is the commercial lodges. The BC Parks boat launch is at the northwest corner of Bowron Lake between two of the lodges. However, the registration centre is 2 km further on from the boat launch, at the northeast corner of the lake.

There is a pleasant 25-site vehicle-accessible campground near the registration centre. Many park visitors stay here before setting out on the circuit. The first portage of the canoe circuit starts adjacent to the registration centre. West Side paddlers can start either at the boat launch or at the canoe dock at the provincial campground.

All paddlers, reservation or not, must report to the Bowron Lake registration centre and attend a mandatory canoe circuit orientation. Orientation sessions occur daily between 8 am and 12 pm. The registration centre is open from 8 am to 6 pm, 7 days per week from May 15 to September 30.

Park Staff

Stationed at various patrol cabins around the circuit, park staff are responsible for ensuring public safety, providing information, enforcing regulations, dealing with problem wildlife, visitor assistance, campsite and trail maintenance, and fire suppression. They patrol at random, so you may run into them at any time during your trip. Before May 15th and after September 30th, do not rely on staff being available in the park.

Communications

Six public two-way radios have been placed strategically around the circuit for use in the event of an emergency only (see brochure/map); they are not to be used for personal calls or other reasons. **Abuse of radios will result in prosecution.** There is no cell phone reception on the circuit. Visitors may bring their own registered communication system, but are not permitted to access radio frequencies used by BC Parks. Telus radio phone transmissions can be received on the north and west sides of the park.

T-shirt Sales

The registration centre sells T-shirts with a unique Bowron Lake Park design and other souvenirs of the park.

Learning Resources

We recommend the following material. It will help with canoeing techniques and wilderness camping. Local canoe clubs may offer courses.

- Video & book - Path of the Paddle – by Bill Mason (*Both book and video are canoeing classics*)
- Book- Paddle Your Own Canoe - by Joanie and Gary McGuffin - A new resource with great photos clearly showing canoeing techniques.

Bowron Lake reference material in print:

- The Bowron Lakes: BC Wilderness Canoe Circuit – by Chris Harris. A photographic journey through the park.

Other Canoeing Opportunities

Other destinations for extended canoe trips are: the Turner Lake Chain in South Tweedsmuir Park; Murtle, Clearwater, and Azure Lakes in Wells Gray Provincial Park; the Stikine River in Spatsizi Provincial Park.

Essential Equipment

The list below is the minimum needed to safely paddle the circuit. Please ensure you bring these items. Luxuries (ie folding chairs) are nice, but remember you will have to carry everything on portages. For your safety, please ensure you can load all equipment and people in your canoe & still have at least 15cm (6") of freeboard when the canoe is in the water. (Freeboard is the vertical distance between the water and the lowest point on the rim of the canoe.) Try this at home before you leave. Less than 15 cm of freeboard means either too much gear or too small a canoe.

Paddling:

- Canoe or sea kayak
- Paddles, plus 1 spare paddle/boat
- Life jacket/PFD - one per person
- Two 15m (50ft) 5 mm (min.) diameter ropes for tying canoes
- Bailer & sponge
- Sunscreen/sun hat/sunglasses
- Waterproof pants, jacket and hat
- Sneakers that can be wet/all terrain sandals
- High-energy snack/lunch food
- Map of the lakes (park brochure)
- Water bottles

• Waterproof containers for 1st 60lb of equipment (if using cart) & rope to tie into the boat.

• Survival kit - one for each paddler (Fanny pack with emergency blanket, fire starter, matches and snack food).

Portaging:

- Large backpack/portage pack with hip belt
- Hiking boots and socks

Clothing:

Use polyester or wool clothing, and dress in layers. Jeans and other cotton items are not suitable for the circuit - weather can be cold & wet for days at a time, and cotton holds the damp against the skin. This can cause hypothermia. A fleece or wool hat can be a lifesaver, since a high proportion of body heat is lost through the head.

Not essential but recommended:

- Bear pepper spray
- Camera and film
- Canoe/kayak cart for portages (see rules)
- Binoculars
- Field guides to birds, plants, etc.
- Swimsuit

Camping:

- Matches/lighters in waterproof cont.
- Fire starter, e.g. candles
- Flashlight/headlamp & spare batteries
- One-burner portable stove and fuel
- Food – dehydrated food recommended; canned food is heavy & fresh food may not keep. Plan each meal: measure out the food, then double-bag it to keep it dry.
- Garbage bags
- Pocket knife/Swiss Army type recommended
- Spoon, fork, bowl, cup
- Pots - lightweight nesting style
- Scrubby for cleanup
- Wash kit-small towel, toothbrush, comb, contact lens solution, medications, etc.
- Toilet paper
- Insect repellent
- First aid kit and blister kit
- Axe – one per party

- Water treatment system, e.g. filter and collapsible water jug
- Tent - good quality with waterproof fly and mosquito netting
- Tarp/heavy duty plastic sheet - for keeping rain off your gear
- String/rope to hang tarp
- Sleeping bag (0°C (32°F), or warmer in shoulder seasons
- Sleeping pad - closed cell foam or "Therm-a-Rest" type

Bowron Lake Provincial Park Canoe Circuit

Pre-Trip Information Booklet



The Bowron Lake Canoe Circuit is a wilderness area. Anyone planning to paddle the circuit should come to the park well prepared and with some canoeing experience.

This booklet will help you prepare for your trip around the Canoe Circuit, with extra information about reservations, park regulations and suitable equipment.

Bowron Lake Park offers two canoe trip options:

- a six-to-ten day circuit of all ten lakes;
- or a one-to-three day tour of the lakes on the park's west side.

The number of departures onto the canoe circuit is limited to protect the visitors' experience and reduce impacts on the park.

Park Facility Operator: Shuswap Adams Parks Ltd.
Telephone: 250-377-8888 Park e-mail: parkinquiries@telus.net

For more information: www.bcparks.ca

The webpage is updated with weather and circuit conditions during spring and summer.

Visit www.bcparks.ca
for more information!



BC Parks

Booking Information

Reservations available starting January 2 and ending September 21, for reservations between May 15 and September 30.

Online: Visit camping.bcparks.ca

Reservation call centre: toll-free in Canada/USA 1-800- 689-9025 or internationally 1-519-826-6850

Open daily 7 am to 7 pm PT

Reservations

Reservations may be booked up to 2 days prior to your departure date. Visitors receive a guaranteed departure date and confirmation number and must report to registration centre between 8 am and 12 pm noon on their departure day. At 3 pm, visitors who have not claimed their reservation are considered no-shows. No-shows' reservations will be given to first-come, first served visitors.

Visitors are classified as **Individual parties** or **Groups**, as described below:

Individual Parties– Reservations for individual parties (1-6 people) are strongly recommended. Individual parties can travel the full circuit or west side at their own pace and select a campsite as they go. The stay is limited to 14 nights total. In addition to reservation spots, a minimum of 4 first-come, first-served drop-in spaces per day are available. To secure a first-come, first served drop-in spot, individual parties need to show up in person at the registration centre and be prepared to wait up to 3 days for a departure time. There is no other way to get on the wait list.

Groups – Reservations for group parties (7 to 14 people) are mandatory, and should be made well in advance. One group is permitted to depart each day. Groups must have a designated leader, responsible for registration of the group and the conduct and actions of all persons in their group. Groups are required to camp at predetermined group campsites, which will be allocated when the group arrives at the park. Groups paddling the entire circuit must follow an assigned seven-night itinerary. If visiting the west side only, groups may stay one, two or three nights.

Note: If partial cancellation results in less than 7 people in group (no longer a "group" by definition), you will still be required to adhere to group policy and campsite allocations as per the reservation made and must pay for a minimum of 7 people.

Peak Use Periods

The peak use period is the last week of June until the 1st weekend of Sept. During the height of summer, individual parties should prepare to share campsites or move to the next campsite if the first one is full. Plan to make camp early to ensure intended campsite is available. Consider beginning your trip mid-week when the number of canoes departing is lowest or to travel during shoulder periods: the lakes are usually ice-free by mid-May; in the fall expect snow by late September.

Note: Staggering use evenly over the season and entire circuit length helps maintain the wilderness atmosphere of Bowron Lake Park.

Fees

Reservation fee – There is a non-refundable reservation fee of \$18.00 (plus tax) for each vessel booked.

Circuit fees are due in full at the time of making a reservation.

Canoe/Kayak Type	Full Circuit	West Side
Solo canoe/kayak	\$60.00/person	\$30.00/person
Tandem/ double kayak	\$60.00/person	\$30.00 /person
Voyageur canoe large canoe for 4 or more	\$60.00/person	\$30.00 /person

Changes to a reservation can be made for a fee of \$6.00 (plus tax) per vessel, provided that space is available. No changes are permitted 28 days or less before the departure date.

Cancellations are subject to a \$6.00 (plus tax) per vessel cancellation fee.

Refunds– If a trip is cancelled more than 28 days before the departure date, customers receive a full refund less cancellation and non-refundable reservation fees. If cancellations are made with 28 or less days notice, no refunds apply.

Orientation time – Customers will be informed of their mandatory orientation time, either 9:00 a.m. or 12:00 noon, when booking. This time is booked to spread out orientation over the day and prevent bottlenecks. Visitors must be at the registration centre at their assigned time.

Rules and Regulations

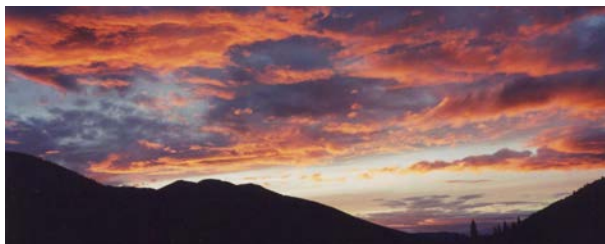
The following regulations ensure the comfort and safety of park visitors and help reduce impacts on the park's facilities and natural values. Up to 4,500 people travel the circuit each season; impact of visitor use is considerable.

These regulations will be enforced. Repeated violations or serious infractions may result in charges under the Park Act and/or eviction from the Park.

Canoe Carts are permitted on the circuit, but to reduce damage to trails, the following restrictions apply:

- Maximum axle width of canoe carts is 75 cm (30 inches). Wide track tires are **recommended**.
- If using a cart, the weight of cargo in canoe must not exceed 28 kg (60 lbs.) Portages are rugged & may be muddy. You must backpack all gear in excess of the 28 kg limit. This prevents wear & tear on trails. Do not attempt to hand-carry duffel bags, coolers or other cargo: use large, comfortable backpacks or portage packs with hip belts. Weigh your gear & ensure enough space in your packs before leaving home. Some portages are over 2 km in length.

You must pack out all garbage. Only paper may be burned in campfires. Do not attempt to burn plastics, tin foil or other non-paper items: they pollute the air, and often do not burn completely. Remains left in fire pits can attract bears.



Rules and Regulations cont.



No commercially packaged beverage or glass containers are permitted on the circuit: i.e. no drink cans, bottles, liquor bottles, tetrapaks or glass jars. This protects the parks' pristine environment. Canned food is okay, but cans must be cleaned & packed out. Dried food & juice products in reusable plastic containers or zip-lock bags are best.

Visitors MUST use metal bear-proof caches to store all items with any odour that could attract bears. **This regulation is strongly enforced.** It applies to **all** food and garbage, as well as cooking equipment and toiletry items. Bears have an excellent sense of smell, & may even be attracted to toothpaste or mosquito repellent. Bears become "problem bears" when they learn to seek out human food. There is little or no chance of correcting food-conditioned bears, and park rangers may be forced to destroy them when they become aggressive. Don't contribute to food conditioning. Remember... **A FED BEAR IS A DEAD BEAR** Caches are located in each camping area and at most portages. Please leave room in the caches for other campers' food – they are not to be used to keep firewood or equipment dry.

Campfires are permitted in metal fire rings in designated campsites **only**. Please share the fire ring with others at your campsite. Fires are not permitted on beaches. Firewood is provided in very limited quantities at marked wood lots throughout the circuit. Woodlot locations are posted at the registration centre.

Visitors must carry and use portable stoves for cooking, as firewood is limited and may not be available at all locations. Cooking with stoves also reduces odours left in fire pits that may attract bears to campsites.

Music boxes with external speakers are prohibited on the circuit. This rule protects the quality of the wilderness experience for all park users.

Firearms and Crossbows are prohibited in Bowron Lake Provincial Park. Pepper spray is permitted **ONLY** if clearly labelled by manufacturer: "Bear Use Only."

Dogs and other pets are not permitted on the circuit. **This rule is strictly enforced.** Pets and bears are not compatible. Pets are permitted in the vehicle access campground and park entrance area, but must be on a leash at all times.

Fishing is permitted on the circuit in compliance with BC Non-Tidal Sports Fishing Regulations. Carry a valid BC fishing license, and familiarize yourself with the specific regulations that apply in the park. Licenses are not sold in the park, but may be purchased at nearby resorts and sporting goods stores. Outfitters can also provide advice on lures to best attract bull trout, kokanee, rainbow trout and lake trout. June and September are the best months for fishing.

Powerboats are permitted **only** on Bowron Lake and are **not allowed** on the Bowron Slough or other lakes on the circuit. For your safety, staff members use powerboats to travel throughout the circuit.

Aircraft are only permitted to land on north end of Bowron Lake. Aircraft landings are **restricted** in all other areas of the park. (with the exception of aircraft used by BC Parks for park management purposes.