



Highlights:

This is a beautiful wilderness route, comprised of river and lake paddling. It's a circular route that begins at Tibbitt Lake and proceeds to Upper Terry Lake, Saunders Lake, up the Ross River to Ross Lake, and through the Pensive Lakes before heading down the Cameron River back to Tibbitt Lake. The area receives few visitors and there is an excellent chance that you will spot bald eagles, arctic loons, terns, several species of ducks, and possibly a wandering black bear.

Itinerary:

This circular route begins and ends at Tibbitt Lake, a 70 km drive from Yellowknife along the Ingraham Trail. Parking is available at Tibbitt.

Upper Terry Lake can be reached in either of two ways. The first involves paddling north on Tibbitt Lake and traveling through Goop Lake. There are two portages of 300 m each, into and out of Goop Lake. The second way is to paddle southeast from Tibbitt Lake to Terry Lake. Hug the left shoreline of Terry Lake and follow it northeast. Continue north through Terry Lake to Upper Terry Lake. See the **Tibbitt Lake Loop** route brochure for more detailed information on this section.

There are as many as thirteen portages between Upper Terry Lake and Ross Lake - a total distance of about 25 km. The numerous portages and upstream paddling will require extra effort. The first portage is along the northeast shoreline of Upper Terry Lake. The trail follows a high rocky ridge and offers a beautiful view of Upper Terry Lake on one side, and a large marshy area on the other. The portage is approximately 750 m long. (cont)

Duration & degree of difficulty:

Distance:	60 km
Average Trip Time:	4-5 days
Portages:	20+
Longest Portage:	900 m

This is truly an isolated wilderness trip. Because of the number of portages, the danger of big winds and waves, and isolated rapids, this route is suitable only for experienced canoeists. Paddlers should have some white-water experience before attempting this route. The rapids require scouting, but many are runnable.

It is possible to become wind-bound on the bigger lakes, so allow extra time, perhaps even a day, to compensate for lost time. Portages cross rugged terrain and many low lying wet areas. Appropriate footwear is required for wet conditions and walking on slippery rocks.

Paddling up the Ross River requires either walking with or lining the canoe as an alternative to portaging or paddling. The last day of the trip is a straight white-water run down the Cameron River.

Nearest camping:

Reid Lake Territorial Park is 10 km from Tibbitt Lake, back along the Ingraham Trail.



Northern Frontier Visitors Centre
4807-49th Street
Yellowknife NT X1A 3T5
Ph: (867) 873-4262
www.northernfrontier.com



Northwest Territories Industry, Tourism and Investment

Find out more about Northwest Territories parks and canoe routes at:
www.itl.gov.nt.ca/tourismparks



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Pensive Lakes

Wilderness Tour



A Four to Five Day
Advanced Trip
With Rapids





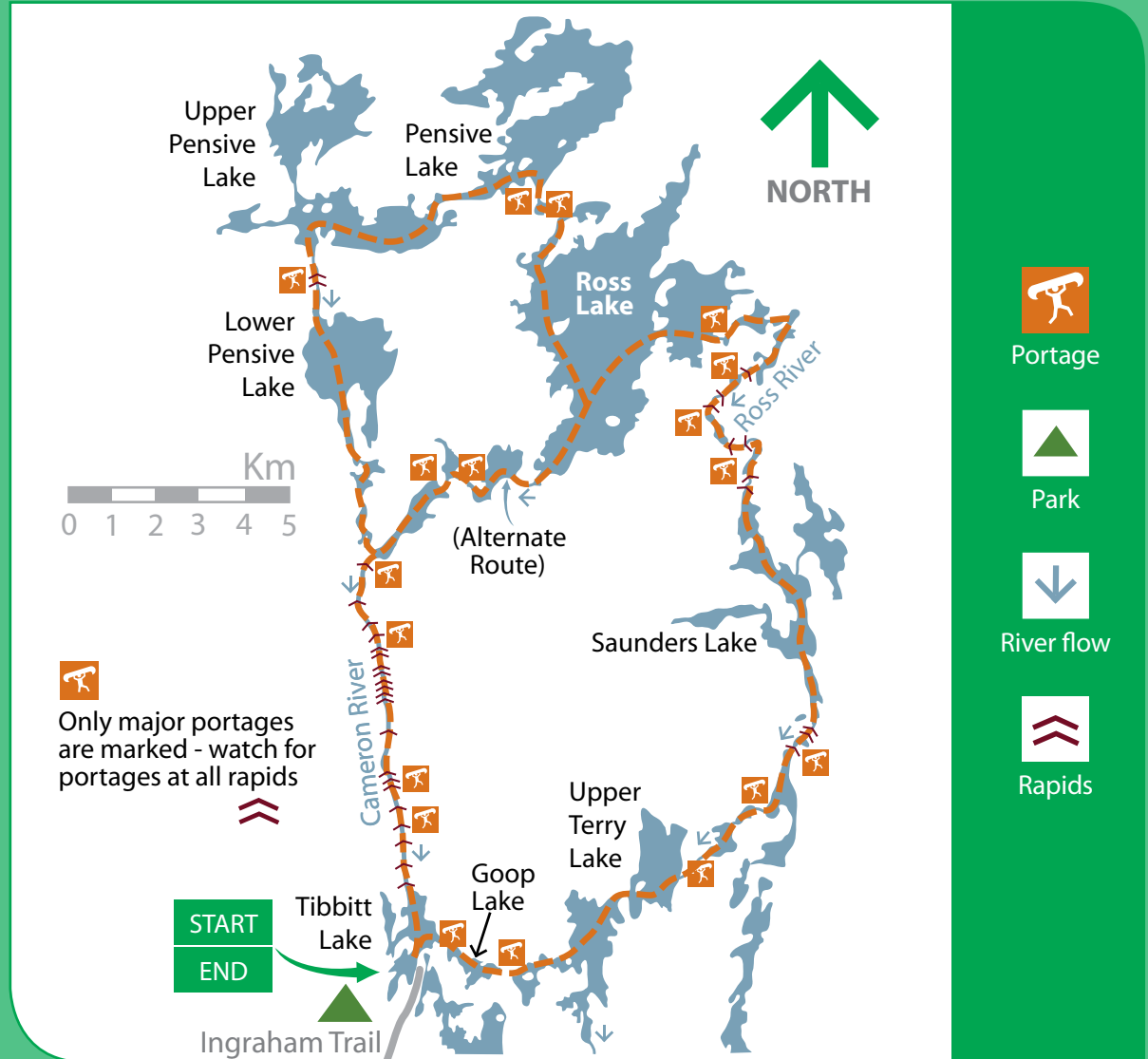
Itinerary (cont):

The next portage is at the north end of the next lake and is approximately 500 m long. Unfortunately the next portion of the route is upstream against the current of the Ross River. If the rapids encountered are short, canoeists may choose to line their canoes through them. Be sure to scout the rapids, but it is often a good idea to take the short portages. Saunders Lake is 6 km long and a good camping area. The next portage is in the bay at the north end of the lake, on the right side of the rapid. The next few portages are generally short and skirt more rapids on the Ross River. The river then opens up into a small elbow-shaped lake with crystal clear water. The windy point at the crook of the 'elbow' is a good place to camp or stop for lunch, with its scenic views of the Ross River. Paddlers can then line the canoes through the next rapid, portage the last set and arrive finally at Ross Lake.

Ross Lake is very large. Wind, waves and getting lost are obvious dangers. The safest way to traverse this lake is to hug the eastern, and then the northern shorelines, approximately 7 km paddle. The portage between Ross and Pensive Lakes is a winter road, although there is a bog to be crossed midway along the trail. Pensive and Lower Pensive Lakes are both over 6 km long. The rapids between them are runnable. There are many islands on the Pensive Lakes for good camping.

The Cameron River is an 8 km stretch of rapids with several ledges as well as runnable rapids. Be sure to land at all portages and scout rapids before running them. Paddlers should be careful when approaching portages as some access points require ferrying out of rapids.

The final stretch of paddling is 2 km across Tibbitt Lake to the starting point.



Pensive Lakes Wilderness Tour Canoe Route

This is a wilderness canoe trip and is not entirely predictable. Routes are not maintained on a regular basis. Changes in weather or water level, overgrown trails, and many other risks could affect the accuracy of the information in this brochure. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety.