

MAIN RIVER WATERWAY PROVINCIAL PARK

Main River Waterway Provincial Park is a unique aquatic system and a valuable watershed. Located at the base of the Great Northern Peninsula, it flows in a southeastern direction from the Long Range Mountains until it runs into the Atlantic Ocean near the community of Sops Arm. As the Park is a wilderness area, entry by road is purposely limited, but by taking Route 420 off the TCH to Sops Arm, you can access the area by a woods road, which goes 13 km up-river to a bridge. In winter, snowmobiles can access greater areas of the park.

The Main River was designated as Newfoundland and Labrador's first Canadian Heritage River in 2001. In 2009, it was added to the list of Provincial Parks, and named Main River Waterway Provincial Park, comprised of a 152 km² corridor within the 1,048 km² watershed. The Park is managed by the province's Parks and Natural Areas Division.



Main River lies in the Long Range Barrens ecoregion (Northern Range Subregion) where dwarf patches of black spruce and balsam fir are found, and in the Northern Peninsula Forest ecoregion (Eastern Long Range Subregion) where balsam fir dominates with black spruce more common at higher elevations. The river rises approximately 675 m above sea level and runs 57 km from tundra-like barrens through old-growth forests. About 17 km from the headwaters it slows and winds throughout grasslands, known as "the Big Steady", and then reaches two-century-old birch and spruce stands with trunks reaching 75cm in diameter. Finally, the river runs through a 23 km white-water canyon before emptying into the Atlantic Ocean.

Recognized for both its recreational and natural values, the Park is used by outdoor enthusiasts and is home to many different species of animals that reside in different habitat types. Some animals that can be found are: moose, black bear, caribou, fox, raptors, waterfowl, salmon, brook trout, and ~70 species of birds. This undisturbed boreal forest is also home to a core population of the threatened Newfoundland Marten. Historic findings in the Park include early Inuit habitation of approximately 2,100 years ago, evidence of Beothuk culture, and later French and English fishing enterprises. Visitors to the park can enjoy white-water canoeing, paddling, angling, snowmobiling, eco-tourism ventures, kayaking, bird watching, and scientific research.



Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd. originally held all timber rights in this area, but in 2001 they donated the timber rights to the park, and agreed to carry out only selective harvesting in the surrounding 49 km² Special Management Area. In 2010, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd. sold the timber rights to the Crown, for this area and other parcels, to be designated as protected areas or for sources of fibre.

For more information on the Main River Waterway Provincial Park visit:

<http://www.env.gov.nl.ca/parks/rivers/main/>