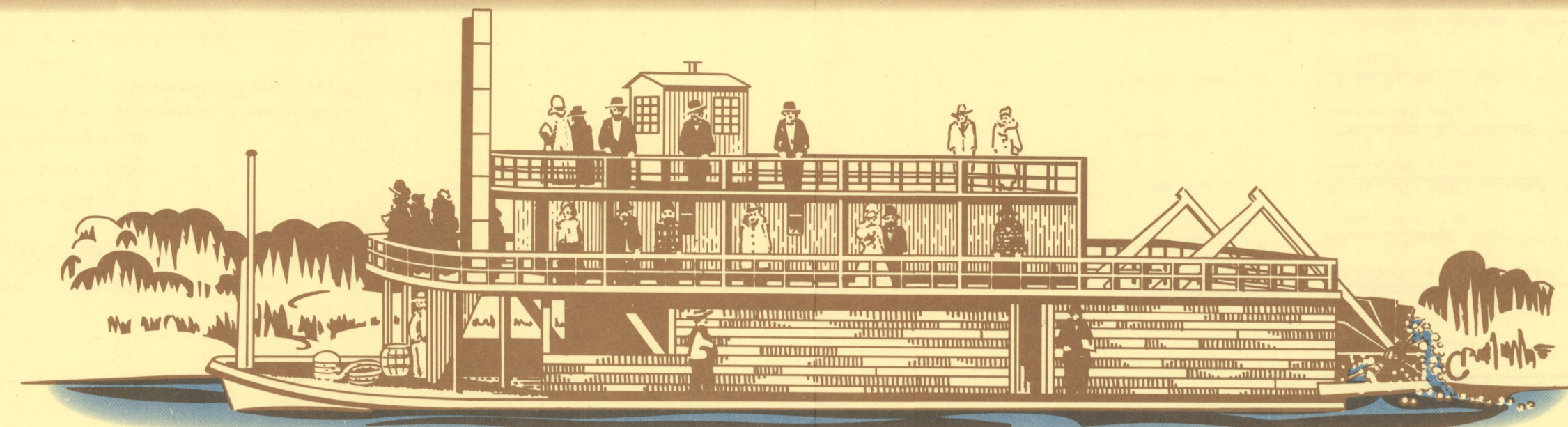


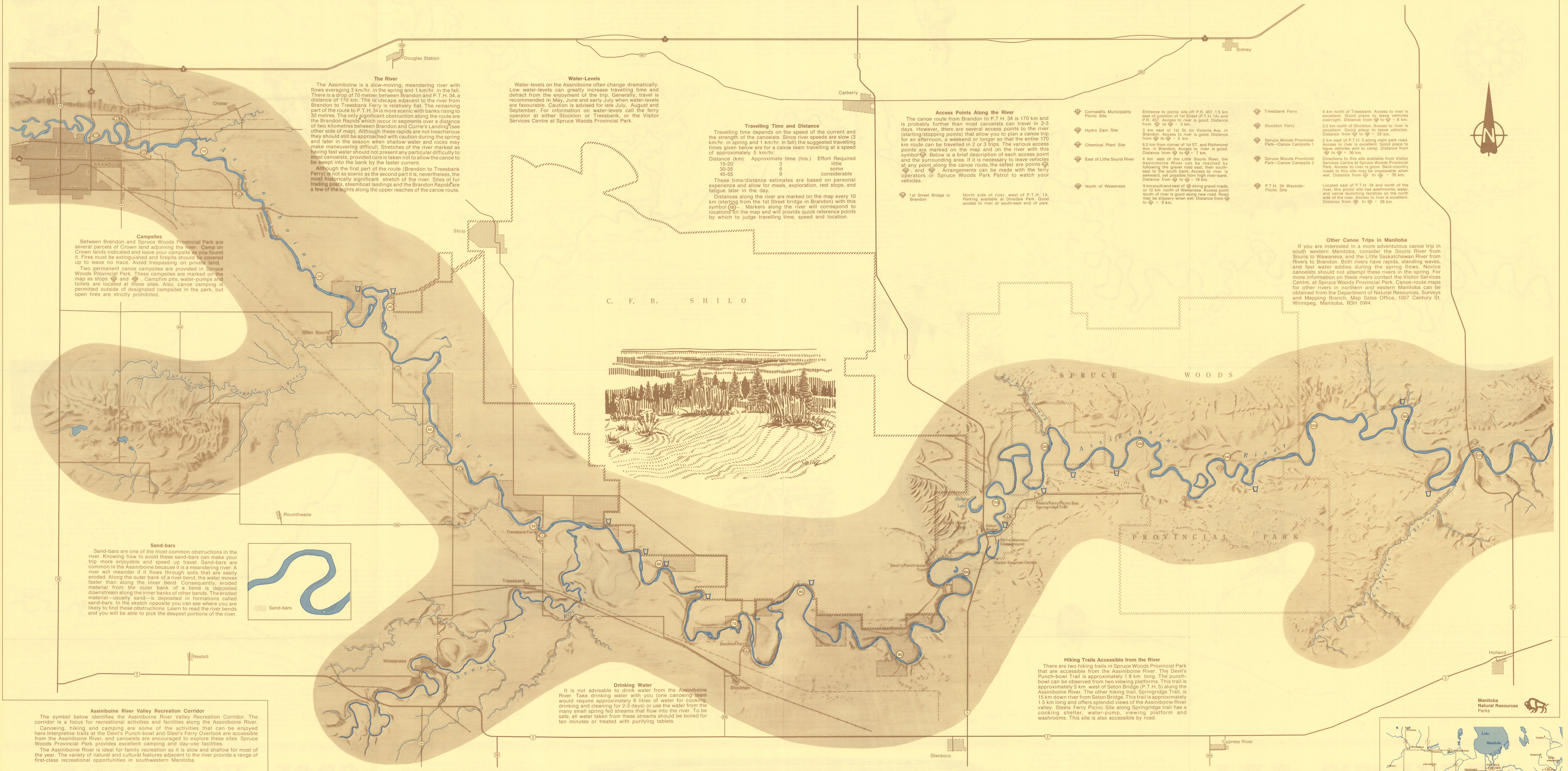
ASSINIBOINE RIVER CANOE ROUTE

From 1879 to 1885, the paddle-wheel steamer Alpha travelled the Assiniboine River from Winnipeg to Fort Pelly, Saskatchewan, a distance of approximately 1650 kilometres. On April 27th, 1885, the Alpha ran aground on the banks of the Assiniboine River and was plundered. This ended her days as a riverboat. You will probably travel along only a section of the route of the Alpha, but you will pass through some of the most historic and scenic stretches of the Assiniboine River.



This map provides information necessary to plan a canoe trip down the Assiniboine River from Brandon to P.T.H. 34. Indicated are campsites, sources of water and the various access points to the river. On the reverse is a historical account of one of the journeys of the Alpha in 1883. Though not a glamorous vessel, she carried settlers and freight into the interior of Manitoba and Saskatchewan before the railway became a major means of transport.

JOURNEY OF THE S.S. ALPHA



The River
The Assiniboine is a slow-moving, meandering river with flows averaging 3 km/hr. in the spring and 1 km/hr. in the fall. There is a drop of 70 metres between Brandon and P.T.H. 34, a distance of 170 km. The landscape adjacent to the river from Brandon to Treestank Ferry is relatively flat. The remaining part of the route to P.T.H. 34 is more scenic with banks rising to 30 metres. The only significant obstruction along the route are the Brandon Rapids which occur in segments over a distance of two kilometres between Brandon and Currie's Landing (see other side of map). Although these rapids are not treacherous they should still be approached with caution during the spring and later in the season when shallow water and rocks may make maneuvering difficult. Stretches of the river marked as having fast water should not present any particular difficulty to most canoeists, provided care is taken not to allow the canoe to be swept into the bank by the faster current.

Although the first part of the route (Brandon to Treestank Ferry) is not as scenic as the second part is, nevertheless, the most historically significant stretch of the river. Sites of fur trading posts, steamboat landings and the Brandon Rapids are a few of the sights along the upper reaches of the canoe route.

Water-Levels
Water-levels on the Assiniboine often change dramatically. Low water-levels can greatly increase travelling time and detract from the enjoyment of the trip. Generally, travel is recommended in May, June and early July when water-levels are favourable. Caution is advised for late July, August and September. For information on water-levels call the ferry operator at either Stockton or Treestank, or the Visitor Services Centre at Spruce Woods Provincial Park.

Travelling Time and Distance
Travelling time depends on the speed of the current and the strength of the canoeists. Since river speeds are slow (3 km/hr. in spring and 1 km/hr. in fall) the suggested travelling times given below are for a canoe team travelling at a speed of approximately 5 km/hr.

Distance (km)	Approximate time (hrs.)	Effort Required
15-20	3	little
30-35	6	some
45-55	9	considerable

These time/distance estimates are based on personal experience and allow for meals, exploration, rest stops, and fatigue later in the day.

Distances along the river are marked on the map every 10 km (starting from the 1st Street bridge in Brandon) with this symbol (10). Markers along the river will correspond to locations on the map and will provide quick reference points by which to judge travelling time, speed and location.

Access Points Along the River
The canoe route from Brandon to P.T.H. 34 is 170 km and is probably further than most canoeists can travel in 2-3 days. However, there are several access points to the river (starting/stopping points) that allow you to plan a canoe trip for an afternoon, a weekend or longer so that the entire 170 km route can be travelled in 2 or 3 trips. The various access points are marked on the map and on the river with this symbol (A). Below is a brief description of each access point and the surrounding area. If it is necessary to leave vehicles at any point along the canoe route, the safest are points (A) and (B). Arrangements can be made with the ferry operators or Spruce Woods Park Patrol to watch your vehicles.

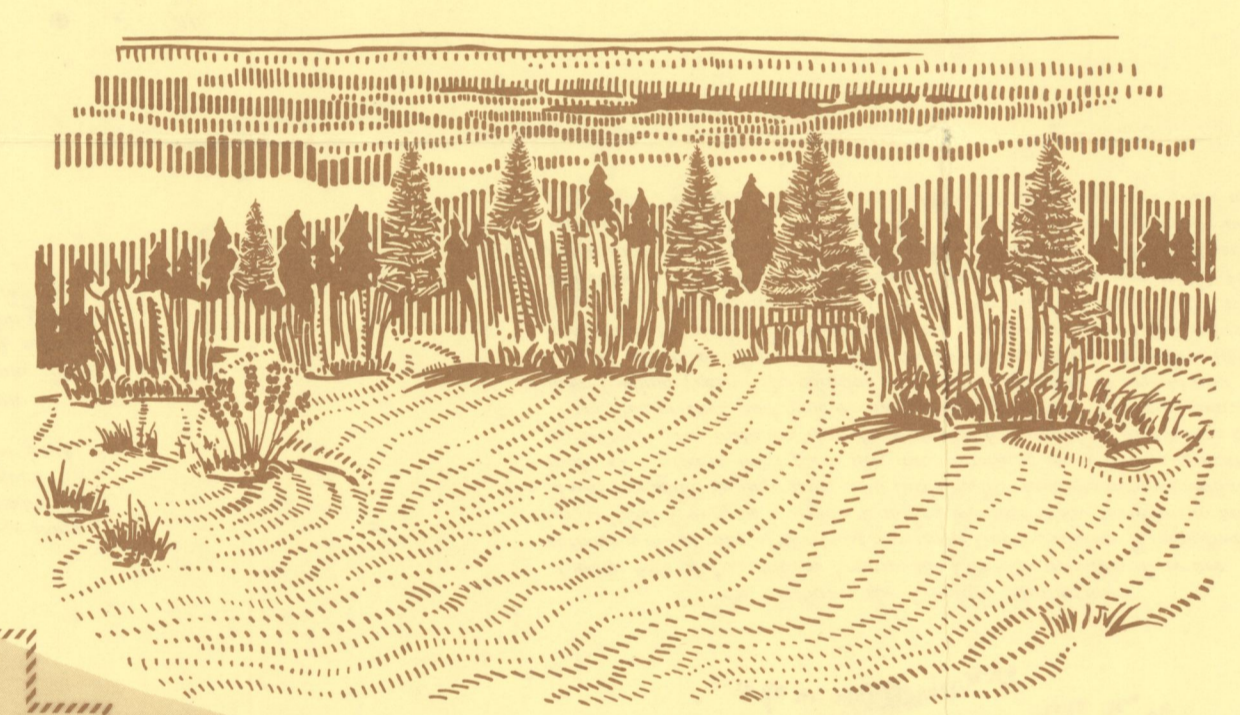
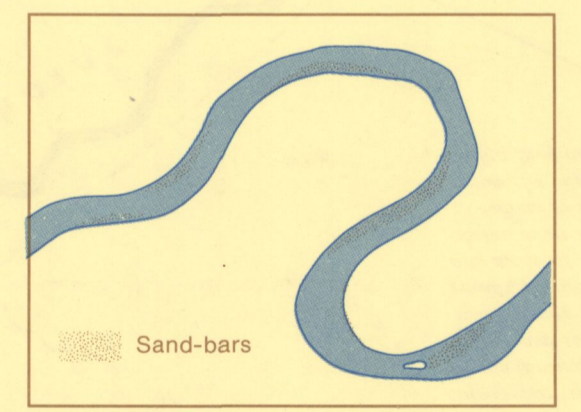
- 1st Street Bridge in Brandon: North side of river, west of P.T.H. 1A. Parking available at Devils Park, good access to river at south-east end of park.
- Corwallis Municipality Picnic Site: Entrance to picnic site off P.R. 457, 1.5 km east of junction of 1st Street (P.T.H. 1A) and P.R. 457. Access to river is good. Distance from (A) to (B) = 3 km.
- Hydro Dam Site: 3 km east of 1st St. on Victoria Ave. in Brandon. Access to river is good. Distance from (A) to (B) = 3 km.
- Chemical Plant Site: 8.5 km from corner of 1st St. and Richmond Ave. in Brandon. Access to river is good. Distance from (A) to (B) = 7 km.
- East of Little Souris River: 4 km east of the Little Souris River, the Assiniboine River can be reached by following the gravel road east from south-east to the south bank. Access to river is excellent, yet possible from high river-bank. Distance from (A) to (B) = 19 km.
- North of Wawanesa: 9 km south and east of (A) along gravel road, or 12 km north of Wawanesa. Access point south of river is good along river road. Road may be slippery when wet. Distance from (A) to (B) = 9 km.

- Treestank Ferry: 4 km north of Treestank. Access to river is excellent. Good place to leave vehicles overnight. Distance from (A) to (B) = 8 km.
- Stockton Ferry: 2.5 km north of Stockton. Access to river is excellent. Good place to leave vehicles. Distance from (A) to (B) = 22 km.
- Spruce Woods Provincial Park - Canoe Campsite 1: 2 km east of P.T.H. 5 along main park road. Access to river is excellent. Good place to leave vehicles and to camp. Distance from (A) to (B) = 38 km.
- Spruce Woods Provincial Park - Canoe Campsite 2: 2 km east of P.T.H. 5 along main park road. Access to river is good. Back-country roads to this site may be impassable when wet. Distance from (A) to (B) = 35 km.
- P.T.H. 34 Wayside - Picnic Site: Located east of P.T.H. 34 and north of the river, this picnic site has washroom, water, and canoe launching facilities on the north side of the river. Access to river is excellent. Distance from (A) to (B) = 28 km.

Other Canoe Trips in Manitoba
If you are interested in a more adventurous canoe trip in south western Manitoba, consider the Souris River from Souris to Wawanesa, and the Little Saskatchewan River from Rivers to Brandon. Both rivers have rapids, standing waves, and fast water eddies during the spring flows. Novice canoeists should not attempt these rivers in the spring. For more information on these rivers contact the Visitor Services Centre, at Spruce Woods Provincial Park. Canoe-route maps for other rivers in northern and eastern Manitoba can be obtained from the Department of Natural Resources, Surveys and Mapping Branch, Map Sales Office, 1007 Century St, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3H 0W4.

Campsites
Between Brandon and Spruce Woods Provincial Park are several parcels of Crown land adjoining the river. Camp on Crown lands indicated and leave your campsite as you found it. Fires must be extinguished and firepits should be covered up to leave no trace. Avoid trespassing on private land.

Two permanent canoe campsites are provided in Spruce Woods Provincial Park. These campsites are marked on the map as stops (C) and (D). Campfire pits, water-pumps and toilets are located at these sites. Also, canoe camping is permitted outside of designated campsites in the park, but open fires are strictly prohibited.



Drinking Water
It is not advisable to drink water from the Assiniboine River. Take drinking water with you (one canoeing team would require approximately 6 litres of water for cooking, drinking and cleaning for 2-3 days) or use the water from the many small spring fed streams that flow into the river. To be safe, all water taken from these streams should be boiled for ten minutes or treated with purifying tablets.

Hiking Trails Accessible from the River
There are two hiking trails in Spruce Woods Provincial Park that are accessible from the Assiniboine River. The Devil's Punch-bowl Trail is approximately 1.9 km long. The punch-bowl can be observed from two viewing platforms. This trail is approximately 5 km west of Seton Bridge (P.T.H. 5) along the Assiniboine River. The other hiking trail, Springridge Trail, is 15 km down river from Seton Bridge. This trail is approximately 1.5 km long and offers splendid views of the Assiniboine River valley. Steels Ferry Picnic Site along Springridge trail has a cooking shelter, water-pump, viewing platform and washrooms. This site is also accessible by road.

Assiniboine River Valley Recreation Corridor
The corridor below identifies the Assiniboine River Valley Recreation Corridor. The corridor is a focus for recreational activities and facilities along the Assiniboine River. Canoeing, hiking and camping are some of the activities that can be enjoyed here. Interpretive trails at the Devil's Punch-bowl and Steels Ferry Overlook are accessible from the Assiniboine River, and canoeists are encouraged to explore these sites. Spruce Woods Provincial Park provides excellent camping and day-use facilities.

The Assiniboine River is ideal for family recreation as it is slow and shallow for most of the year. The variety of natural and cultural features adjacent to the river provide a range of first-class recreational opportunities in southwestern Manitoba.

- CANOE CHECKLIST**
- 1) Personal flotation devices (life jackets, etc.)
 - 2) Sleeping bag, sleeping pad/foam
 - 3) Paddles
 - 4) Clothing (warm/cold weather garments)
 - 5) Footwear (waterproof or easy-to-dry)
 - 6) Bailing can/boat sponge
 - 7) Water purification tablets
 - 8) Camping accessories (insect repellent, suntan lotion, camera)
 - 9) Repair kit for canoe (fiberglass kit/duct tape)
 - 10) Personal water supply
 - 11) Short tie-down straps to fasten gear in canoe
 - 12) Food supply for trip (including snack foods)
 - 13) Cooking source (backpack stove, fuel, matches)
 - 14) Food supply for trip (including snack foods)
 - 15) Cooking utensils, dishes, cups, etc.
 - 16) Tent (pegs, tent fly, groundsheet)
 - 17) Water purification tablets
 - 18) Plastic bags (to keep important items dry)
 - 19) Wallet/car keys/money
 - 20) Leave details of itinerary with someone else.

