

Geological & Views

Red Lake



Photo: Doug Smith

Site Identification

Nearest Community:
Savona, B.C.

Geocache Location:
N 50°52.580'
W 120°46.476'

Altitude:
952m

Ownership:
Crown Land

Accuracy:
3 meters

Overall Difficulty: 2

Overall Terrain: 2

Access Information and

Restrictions:

Follow the Red Lake Road from Kamloops or the Sabiston Creek Road from Savona. From Hwy 1, take Sabiston Rd and follow for approx 24 km until you reach Copper Creek Road. Follow Copper Creek Road until you reach Red Lake. Approximately 36 km from Hwy 1.

Parking Advice:

A small parking area at the south side of the lake, right at the boat launch.

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:

Gold Country Communities Society
 PO. Box 933
 Cache Creek, BC.,
 V0K 1H0

Tel: 1-877-453-9467
 email: info@exploregoldcountry.com

For more site pages go to:
www.goldtrail.com

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The Red Lake Road follows a route through the hills to the north of Kamloops Lake, connecting Tranquille to Savona. This 75 kilometre route follows the Tranquille River for over half its route, then winds through valleys to a high viewpoint over the lake, and down the dry hills to the west end of Savona.

Starting at the west end of Kamloops, the Red Lake Road veers around Tranquille, a tuberculosis sanatorium established in 1907 which later became a sanatorium for the mentally handicapped until it closed in 1984. The road crosses the Tranquille River that was the site of a minor gold rush starting in 1858 and continuing into the next century. The road climbs the hills through Lac du Bois Provincial Park past the Dewdrop Range. The red cliffs above the Dewdrop range are the result of a 50 million year old lava flow. The Dewdrop Trail starts from the plateau and climbs the escarpment to the rim and then follows the ridges overlooking Kamloops Lake.

Past the Dewdrop Range, the road passes the Pimple, a lookout over the spectacular Tranquille River Canyon. For the next 15 km, the road winds through the canyon, before crossing the Tranquille River and into the bottom of the valley. The road continues northwest past a few Backcountry ranches, two B.C. Forest Service recreational sites, a small waterfall, and some old buildings before emerging into a more open, grassland and forest environment.

Near the Km 33 sign, the Heller Creek Forest Service Road heads north toward Truda Lake and beyond to Tranquille Lake. About 3km beyond is an important intersection. The right fork goes to Criss Creek, a small community established in the early 1900's. Backroad explorers can opt to follow side roads to the Seven Lakes Road back onto the

Sabiston-Red Lake Road or beyond towards the Deadman's Valley. In dry conditions, these routes are interesting, but good maps/GPS basemaps, good clearance, and a full gas tank is recommended. This is the highest point on the road and if we follow the road to the left it leads down to Red Lake. There is a small community here surrounding the long narrow. At 950m elevation the lake is a favorite from mid-Spring through November, featuring both brook trout and rainbow trout. There is an undeveloped boat launch and a small rustic campsite on the lake.

The road descends the Carabine Creek Valley with a number of photo opportunities in a picturesque setting. At the Copper Creek junction a road leads down to Copper Creek, formerly a stop on the Hudson's Bay Brigade Trail and later was a CNR settlement. It was also an area where the First Nations people obtained copper near the surface. East of Copper Creek is Painted Bluffs Provincial Park. The clay and rock formations are rich in copper, iron, and cinnabar, providing a display of greens, orange, and red hues on eroded ridges. The park is not easily accessible by land. B.C. Parks recommends the area should be approached by boat on Kamloops Lake.

The road continues along the dry hills over Kamloops Lake on the Sabiston Creek Road with many fine views to the south before starting a descent down the hills to the Trans Canada Highway west of Savona. The entire route is a slow drive, best taken in dry conditions. There are many scenic spots along the way to take photos, to geocache, and to explore Gold Country.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Saemerow, Mona. *Then and Now, The Road to Red Lake*

Minimona Publishing, Kamloops, B.C. 2008

Shewchuk, Murray. *Cariboo Trips and Trails*, Fitzhenry Whiteside, Markham, Ontario, 2008

Shewchuk, Murray. *Backroads Explorer, Volume 1* McLean Hunter, Vancouver, B.C., 1985

Mussio, Russell and Wesley. *Thompson Okanagan BC Backroad*

Mapbook, Mussio Ventures Ltd., Coquitlam, BC 2010

Favrholdt, Ken Curator, Kamloops Museum and Archives "Gold at Tranquille" From the Archives

Coordinates

Start of the Red Lake Road: N 50°43.550' W 120°30.441'
Sabiston Creek Road/Highway #1: N 50°45.430' W 120°53.319'
Heller Creek Road Junction: N 50°54.933' W 120°44.027'
Red Lake-Criss Creek Junction: N 50°54.452' W 120°46.354'
Copper Creek Junction: N 50°48.352' W 120°46.604'

Letterboxing Clues: In the rocks near the parking area.