

To Reach the Park

The Shubenacadie Canal Headquarters is located at the Fairbanks Centre in Dartmouth at 54 Locks Road, 2 km from the junction of Hwy 111 and Route 318.



Shubenacadie Canal and Waterway

A National Civil Engineering Historic Site



You could say *the Shubenacadie Canal and Waterway* is an outdoor museum running across the very heart of Nova Scotia. Beginning on the Dartmouth waterfront and following a traditional Mi'kmaq route to the Bay of Fundy, you'll marvel at the feats of engineering and sheer human effort that went into the canal's construction. Explore all or part of it by driving, walking, cycling, paddling, or boating and let yourself become one with the past.



Canal History The Mi'kmaq used this waterway to move between their summer encampment on the Atlantic coast and their hunting grounds in the interior. By following this route of rivers and lakes, they could easily travel the 115 kilometres from what is now Halifax Harbour to the Bay of Fundy, with only 5 kilometres of overland portage required.

By the early 1800s, merchants in the garrison town of Halifax and ports along the Bay of Fundy were looking for a fast, safe route to move goods from one side to the other, rather than the dangerous sail around Cape Sable. Turning the Mi'kmaq portage routes into a navigable waterway would provide that passage.

In 1826, some 300 workers, including stonemasons specially recruited from Scotland and Ireland, got to work. It was backbreaking labour, mostly done by hand. Locks, dams, terraced embankments, stone hut foundations, and the remnants of two marine railways remain a testament to their effort. By 1861, the waterway was complete.

Small inland steamers and barges transported goods through a series of nine locks, up two incline marine railways, across seven

lakes, and one river. But for all the effort and costs that went into building the canal, it was no match for the age of rail. In 1871 the canal company ceased operation, leaving behind a stone and water tribute to a dream made real; one we can still see and touch today.

Appreciate Nature The route of the Shubenacadie Canal and waterway was literally etched in stone; the natural lakes and rivers were carved out of the bedrock by the receding glaciers of the Ice Age. Following the canal today will take you through lake shores, bogs, marshes, and streams. Trees range from old-forest hemlock and fir to younger stands of spruce, birch, and poplar. Mayflowers and lady slippers bloom in the spring, with asters and goldenrods signaling the start of fall. A wide variety of ferns grow summer-long.

During the spring, Atlantic salmon, American smelt, striped bass and shad come up the Shubenacadie River and return to the sea in the fall. Eels also come up and stay until they are ready to return to their spawning grounds.

Eagles are a common sight along the route from the Dartmouth lakes to Maitland.

RESERVATIONS 1-888-544-3434

9:00 am to 11:00 pm AT (7 days a week)

www.novascotiaparks.ca (24 hours)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parks and Recreation Division
Department of Natural Resources
RR # 1, Belmont,
Colchester County,
Nova Scotia, B0M 1C0
(902) 662-3030
www.novascotiaparks.ca

Shubenacadie Canal Commission
54 Locks Road
Dartmouth
Nova Scotia B2X 2W7
(902) 462-1826

Shubie Campground
Dartmouth (not a provincial park)
(902) 435-8328

NOVA SCOTIA
Natural Resources

Photos courtesy Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

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The still waters are a magnet for boating enthusiasts.



Take the Tour Whether you have an hour or several days, there are many ways to experience this historic canal/waterway. By foot, you can trace its path by going to any of the multi-purpose trails, walking paths, or parks that dot the route. Bicycles are also welcome on most of these trails. But perhaps the most authentic way is by kayak or canoe. Boat launches are marked on the map. Some portaging is required.

Sullivan's Pond This man-made pond was used as a reservoir to provide water to drive the turbine that powered the marine railway. It also provided the link to Lock 1, which raised vessels to the level of Lake Banook.

Lock 1 This lock is almost completely restored and, with its granite walls, is a wonderful example of the British tradition of lock construction. The massive wooden lower gates are replicas of the originals.

Lake Banook and Lake Micmac The first two major lakes along the route are filled with a different type of traffic today: swimming, kayaking, and canoeing abound, as well as skating in winter. Bike or walk along the Shubenacadie Trail (a multi-purpose trail) that hugs these lakes. It follows the canal corridor for four more lakes.

Fairbanks Centre and Shubie Park See a working model of a lock, read the interpretive exhibit, or pick up a map of walking trails. In Shubie Park you can follow the self-guided interpretive signage to Locks 2 and 3. Lock 3 has been partially restored. Its construction style is in sharp contrast to Lock 1. You'll also see the famous "deep cut," the most expensive and labour-intensive section

of the canal, which took 4-5 years to build. Visit the remains of the Canal Camp where the canal labourers lived. Walking trails meander through a natural forest setting alongside the canal – great for biking, jogging or walking the family dog.

Portobello The remains of an incline marine railway built during the mid-1850s can still be seen here. Hike or bike to this site (5km from Fairbanks Centre) or drive and park nearby.

Lock 4 Fall River This lock between Lake Thomas and Fletchers Lake is partially collapsed, but most of the stone blocks remain visible.

Lock 5 Wellington Explore a fully restored lock that connected Fletchers Lake to the Shubenacadie Grand Lake.

Lock 6 Hornes Settlement Built in 1857, the rubble stonewalls of this lock remain largely intact. Follow the interpretive signs along the nearby walking trails for more about this and Lock 7's role in the Canal's history.

Lock 7 Enfield A walking trail and remnants of this lock remain.

Shubenacadie River By kayak or canoe, you can pass through the remains of river Locks 8 & 9 in Elmsdale and Lantz.

South Maitland Twice a day, the lower 30 km of this river experiences a tidal bore from the incoming Fundy tides. These bores can reach more than a metre in height. View the tidal bore from the look-off at South Maitland.

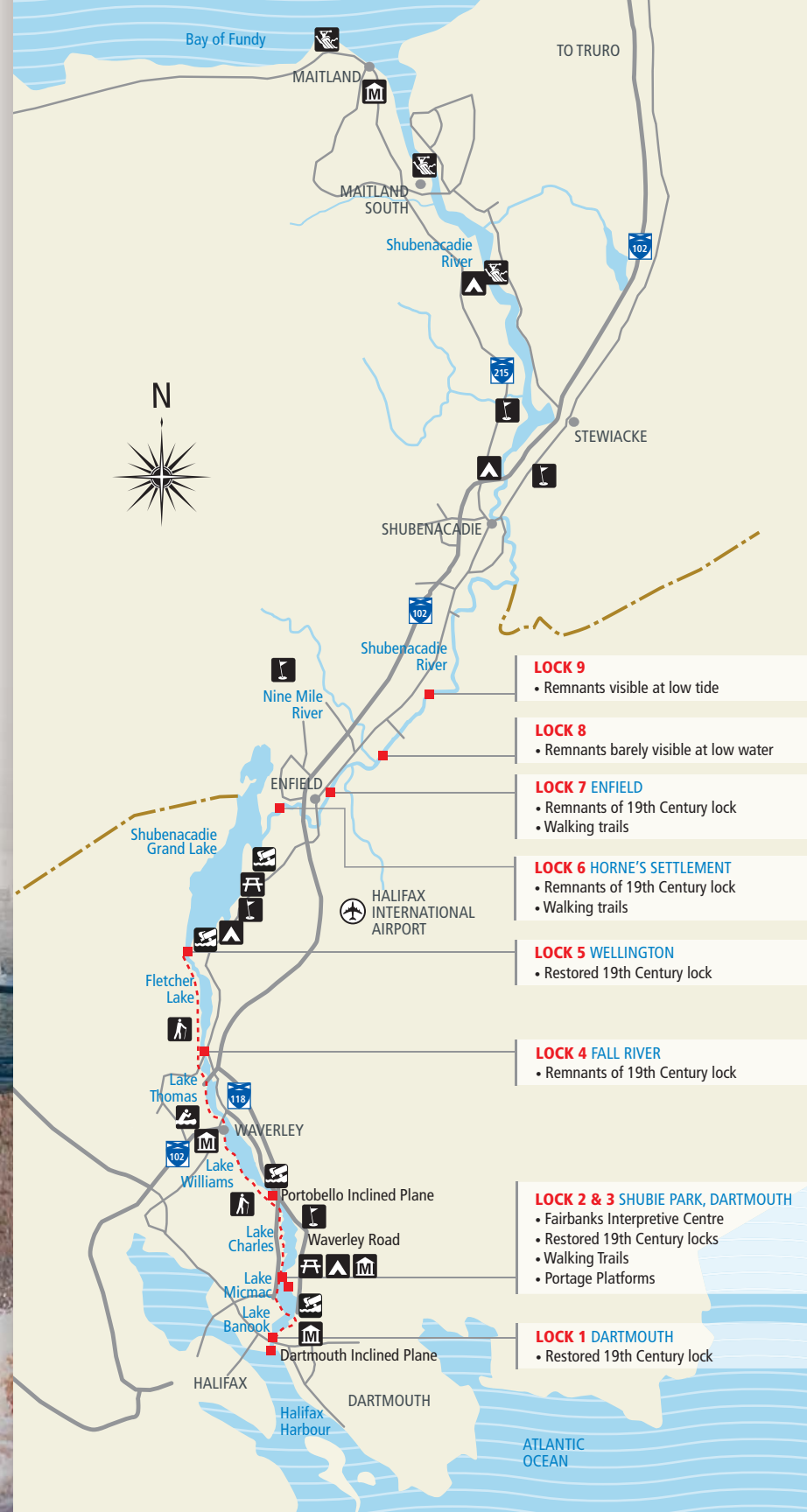
Maitland End of the canal/waterway and the hometown of shipbuilder W.D. Lawrence whose home is open to visitors. The tides on this shore are the highest in the world.

When the tides turn, take a wild ride on the Shubenacadie River.

Area Attractions

- Shubenacadie Provincial Wildlife Park and Greenwing Legacy Interpretive Centre – Enjoy walking trails and a living exhibit of many native and non-resident species of animals and birds. At the Greenwing Centre, get a hands-on lesson about the value and function of wetlands through interactive exhibits, as well as close-up views of wildlife in a wetland habitat.
- Laurie Provincial Park and Oakfield Provincial Park, Shubenacadie Grand Lake, provide great opportunities to picnic, swim, or boat along the historic waterway. Laurie Park also offers camping.

- Ride the world's highest tides at Maitland. Entrepreneurs offer tidal bore rafting at various locations along the river.
- Discover more information about the waterway at the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, the Waverley Heritage Museum, or the Lawrence House Museum in Maitland.
- For more information about these and other attractions please consult the *Nova Scotia Doers and Dreamers Guide*, visit a Visitor Information Centre or the website at www.novascotia.com



Shubenacadie Canal and Waterway

- Picnic Area
- Walking Trail
- Boat Launch
- Canoe Rentals
- Camping
- Tidal Bore Rafting
- Golfing
- Museum
- Walking Trail
- County Line



LOCK 9
• Remnants visible at low tide

LOCK 8
• Remnants barely visible at low water

LOCK 7 ENFIELD
• Remnants of 19th Century lock
• Walking trails

LOCK 6 HORNE'S SETTLEMENT
• Remnants of 19th Century lock
• Walking trails

LOCK 5 WELLINGTON
• Restored 19th Century lock

LOCK 4 FALL RIVER
• Remnants of 19th Century lock

LOCK 2 & 3 SHUBIE PARK, DARTMOUTH
• Fairbanks Interpretive Centre
• Restored 19th Century locks
• Walking Trails
• Portage Platforms

LOCK 1 DARTMOUTH
• Restored 19th Century lock

