

1 GRIFFITHS TRAIL: Short Hike

Approximate Distance: 15 - 15 km

This scenic trail surrounds the Hamlet of Grande Cache and is popular for hiking, running, and biking with several access points and viewpoints. Please follow the trailhead signage and directional markers as you enjoy exploring this trail.

TRAILHEAD: The main trailhead sign is located on the north side of Hoppe Avenue, located in the southwest corner of the community, situated just before the Grande Cache Institution sign. If driving, park within the gravelled area on the north side of the road, across from the trailhead.

Additional Access Points:

Sheldon Coates School: Starting from the school parking lot, cross the field north towards the cut line. Once there, you will follow the cut line of approximately 30 m, which will lead you to the trail.

Taboggan Hill: You will find access to the trail on the corner of 105 St. and 105 Ave.

Golf Course Road: The trail can be accessed from Memorial Drive on the corner as the road veers left towards the Grande Cache Campground and Grande Cache Golf & Country Club.

Highway 40 North: Head north of the "Welcome to Grande Cache" sign, and you will find access to the trail on either side of the highway.

2 LAKES TRAIL: Short Hike

TRAILHEAD: The trail starts on the south side of Hoppe Ave., just west of Highway 40. It goes south behind the houses and heads down the hill towards Victor Lake. You can also access the trail from the Tourism Centre. Cross the highway towards the metal building on the west side of the highway. The trail is just to the left of this building. No trail head sign. Our newest trail, going from the town site to Victor Lake and on to Grande Cache Lake. The first part of the trail is downhill, ending at the old airstrip on Victor Lake. From the east end of the lake, the trail follows the canal from Victor Lake to Grande Cache Lake. Once past a bridge across the canal (the Mt. Louie Trail intersects here) look for the trail markers branching off to the west. The next section of trail cuts through the trees to the side of Highway 40. The trail follows the highway to the beach at Grande Cache Lake.

3 MOUNT LOUIE: Day Hike

(1844 m / 6,050 ft) Approximate Distance: 5.5 km (one-way) Elevation Gain: 714 m / 2,350 ft

Mount Louie makes a great day hike and is well worth the effort. This moderately steep trail runs directly up a northwest-facing ridge. Watch your footing as you step across erosion-resistant conglomerate rock *Continued next panel...*

Mount Louie, cont... that you will encounter along the way. Impressive views that can be seen early on, combined with alternating terrain, make this trail a favourite among locals.

TRAILHEAD: Drive approximately 4 km south of Grande Cache along Hwy 40. Turn right into the Cowlick Creek Staging area, where you will find parking and an access road leading to the trail. Turn right at the end of the access road and continue along the canal between Grande Cache Lake and Victor Lake until you arrive at the bridge crossing. Watch for waterfowl and other wildlife who are known to frequent this area. Once you have crossed the bridge, the trail will cut through a black spruce-filled boggy area before gaining higher ground surrounded by tall aspen and poplar trees. At about the 1.1 km mark, the trail will branch off to the left onto a lesser trail, and make sure to stay left onto the Mt. Louie trail. The trail will begin to ascend the rocky ridge and gain elevation.

CAUTION: The rocky trail can become quite slippery when wet; please proceed with caution. At approximately 3.5 km, the trail will lead you into a dense forest; watch for red markers adorning the trees to ensure that you are still following the trail. Once you emerge from the forested area onto open slopes, you will continue the final push towards the summit. Once you arrive at the summit, allow yourself enough time to rest and take in the breathtaking views. Be sure to sign the guest book located inside the Mt. Louie cairn box and take a 'selfie' with the cairn box if you are or are planning to participate in the Passport to the Peaks Program.

4 COWLICK CREEK: 2-4 Days

Approximate Distance: 16 km (one-way) / Elevation Gain: 150 m / 500 ft An extended access point to the Willmore Wilderness Park, Cowlick Creek Staging area offers a natural trail experience. It is the desired route by backpackers and those on horseback wanting to explore the trails mainly through valleys with minimal elevation gain.

TRAILHEAD: Drive south from Grande Cache on Hwy 40 for approximately 4.0 km and turn west into the Cowlick Creek Staging Area, where you will find parking and an access road. Follow the road to the canal and continue right, cross the bridge, and continue west until you reach the Mt. Louie junction. At the junction, you will veer right and continue; the trail will ascend at first until eventually, it will begin descending. At approximately 6.5 km, the trail will converge with another wider trail and lead you through dense forest before descending to Cowlick Creek. Here you will notice a campsite and several more located along the creek. However, a more established campsite is located farther along the trail. Once you reach the upper meadows and flats, where the trail becomes less defined, you will experience amazing views.

5 SULPHUR RIM TRAIL: Day Hike

Approximate Distance: 7.5 km circuit / Elevation Loss: 30 m / 100 ft

The Sulphur Rim Trail is a multi-use trail designed for ATV use as well as Nordic skiers and hikers. The trail is located within the boundaries of Grande Cache. The trailhead is located 3.2 km west of Hwy 40 on the left side of Hoppe Avenue before the Grande Cache Institution. You will notice several trail junctions that are well marked along the way. Once you reach the halfway point, the trail will follow the rim of the Sulphur Canyon for a short distance. This section opens to some of the most breathtaking views. You can also create a larger loop by exiting onto Firemen's Park Road and head back towards the hamlet, entering the hamlet on 104 Street up to Hoppe Avenue. This loop is approximately 15 km in total.

6 SULPHUR GATES: Short Hike

Approximate Distance: 0.2 km (one-way)

A short hike with breathtaking views!

TRAILHEAD: Drive approximately 6 km north from Grande Cache on Hwy 40 and turn left onto Sulphur Gates Road. Follow the gravel road approximately 6.8 km's to the far southeast corner of the Sulphur Gates Staging Area where you will find parking and washroom facilities. You will see a trail that branches into two directions, the right leading into the Willmore Wilderness Park and the left that leads to the Sulphur Gates lookout platforms; veer left. Follow this wide, well-groomed trail until you arrive at the steep 75 metre cliffs overlooking the confluence of the Smoky and Sulphur Rivers. Allow yourself enough time to take in this spectacular view and enjoy!

CAUTION: Make sure to stay within the parameters of the guardrails and keep children and/or pets within arms reach as you ascend to the uppermost platforms.

7 EATON FALLS: Day Hike

Approximate Distance: 3.5 km (one-way) / Elevation Gain: 15 m / 50 ft

The trail is a very old fire access road that begins on the southwest corner of the Sulphur Gates Staging Area (please see 'Sulphur Gates' for directions). Fairly soon into the trail you will overcome several hills and gullies, most individuals should be able to manage these inclines by taking their time. The trail is wide and open which allows for great visibility and offering plenty of views to distract from the efforts along the way. Approximately 2 km in, the trail will come to a junction and the access to Eaton Falls will veer onto a lesser trail to the right for about 500 metres until finally reaching the falls. Once there you will observe that the falls themselves are cut deeply into sedimentary rock. *continued next panel...*

Eaton Falls, cont...

CAUTION: Refrain from venturing under the cliff edges as rocks can dislodge from above, keep children and/or pets close by and always utilize caution near water sources.

8 KVASS FLATS / CORRAL CREEK: 1-4 Days

Distance: 12.2 km / Elevation Gain: 90 m / 300 ft

TRAILHEAD: Head towards Eaton Falls (see entry above). Where the trail junctions with the falls to the right, continue straight down the main trail which is an old fire access road leading straight into Kvaas Flats. The trail will open into a wide meadow. You will know you have arrived once you get there. Once you reach the flats, there are camping opportunities used by outfitters in the area, or continue to follow the trail towards Corral Creek. For a different experience, head left from the main trail onto a lesser trail approximately 4.5 km into the hike. This option leads you closer to the Smoky River and is a nice trail that leads to Kvaas Flats. From the flats, you can then loop back onto the main trail and head back to complete a 12.5 km day hike (assuming that a stop at Eaton Falls was included). Please allow approximately 4-5 hours to complete this loop.

9 MOUNT MAWDSLEY: 1-3 Days

(2,134 m / 7,000 ft) Distance: 11.2 km / 7.0 miles one way. Gain: 1,174 m / 3,850 ft

Hikers are required to pass a river crossing to reach the trailhead and a canoe is required. Avoid using this trail in the spring when waters run fast and high.

TRAILHEAD: Drive north from Grande Cache on Hwy 40 for approximately 6 km and turn left onto Sulphur Gates Road. Follow this gravel road until you reach the staging area. You will carry/drag your canoe onto the trail that heads into Willmore Wilderness Park. Head down the old fire access road approximately 100 m to a small creek. Follow this small creek until you reach its outlet into the Smoky River. Diagonally, cross the gravel bar in your canoe until you find yourself across from the evident landing site on the far bank.

CAUTION: No obvious landing sight opposite of the gravel bar is a clear indicator that the river is too high to cross safely. Pick up on the trail and follow the markers closely; the trail can become quite vague in areas. You will eventually cross a small stream and begin to climb upward onto a rocky spine. Stay on the crest of this spine until the trail levels off. You will notice an intersecting trail which cuts through a slight dip. Head right and follow this trail until you reach an old hunting camp. There is more than one trail leading from this camp so make sure you take the trail to the right.

13 MOUNT HAMELL: Day Hike

(2,130 m / 6,986 ft) Approximate Distance: Depends on route Elevation Gain: 1,128 m / 3,700 ft.

You will notice this striking mountain to the north of Grande Cache. This trail makes for a diverse hiking experience. The trail will lead you through small peaceful meadows to extremely unforgiving barren rock faces. The trail is great for the summer months but also features several icefalls during the winter. There are multiple routes to the summit and below you will find two of the most popular routes while very different from one another. Equally impressive is the incredible folded rock strata which makes up the east face of the mountain and the upper walls of Hells Creek gorge. From the summit of Mount Hamell on a clear day, you will notice Mount Robson to the south and the Sir Alexander group to the west.

13a) Mount Hamell (South Access Road): Day Hike

Distance: 9.8 km / 6.0 miles one way The trail follows a forest look-out access road that leads up the south face of the mountain. While the grade is manageable, the distance is longer than the alternate route listed in the entry below, therefore this route will take more time to reach the summit.

TRAILHEAD 1: Head approximately 10.2 km north on Hwy 40 from Grande Cache and turn left at the far end of a grassy flat. The access road will enter the forest on the right. Park at this point and continue along by foot. Follow the red markers and make sure to head left at the first junction located approximately 0.3 km in and then head right at the following junction located approximately 0.2 km farther along. You will now follow the trail leading up to the summit of Mount Hamell.

TRAILHEAD 2: Drive 8.2 km north on Hwy 40 from Grande Cache turning left onto Beaverdam Road. Drive according to weather and road conditions as this road is known to be quite rough, especially during extreme weather. Continue along Beaverdam Road for approximately 6.8 km until you notice a well travelled trail to your right, just as the road begins to descend from the top of the pass. This trail is longer, but you do save yourself approximately 1,700 ft of climbing overall.

CAUTION: These trails are often frequented by ATVs so proceed around blind corners and steep hills with caution.

13b) Mount Hamell (Northeast Ridge): Day Hike For a more challenging climb up Mount Hamell, this route is one of many natural goat trails. Ascending steeply up the northeast ridge this route is for those who enjoy a challenge and are comfortable on steep, exposed rocky ledges.

TRAILHEAD: Drive 12.5 km north on Hwy 40 from Grande Cache and turn left opposite to the gun range. Follow this road a short distance to the signed trailhead. The trail is deceiving at first, starting out wide and level through dense forest. It will change just before the *continued next panel...*

Mount Mawdsley, cont... Leading out to the southeast before changing directions heading southwest. Pay attention to the red markers along the way. After approximately 45 minutes, you will reach a small, clear stream and if you look to the left of the trail, through the trees, you will see a rocky ridge. Once you have crossed the stream, watch for the trail that branches left and ascends the steep final length to the treetline before turning left and traversing the upper slopes. Force your way up the rocky slopes by following the treetline around to attain the shoulder. Make your way to the cairn box where you can sign the guest book and take a photo with the cairn.

10 MOUNT STEARN: Day Hike

(2,013 m / 6,604 ft) / Approximate Distance: 7.6 km (one-way) Elevation Gain: 1,006 m / 3,300 ft

Mount Stearn is located to the west of Grande Cache. A hike with several transitions, from steep wooded inclines to vast alpine meadows. Atop the summit, you will experience breathtaking views of Grande Cache, Willmore Wilderness Park, and Lightning Ridge.

TRAILHEAD: Drive approximately 6 km heading north from Grande Cache on Hwy 40 and turn left onto Sulphur Gates Road. Continue along this road for approximately 3.6 km until you are just past the gravel pit. Park across from the marked trailhead. The trail follows up the crest of a ridge parallel a small stream for a short time before ascending through diverse montane forest. Other than a few steep areas, the overall grade is quite manageable. The forest will begin to noticeably change from combinations of pine and aspen to dense spruce and subalpine fir around the 2.8 km mark. This identifies the transition into the subalpine zone. The trail will lead to an old campsite which makes for a great location to enjoy a break, before winding its way upwards. Suddenly you will emerge from the trees into meadows adorned with wildflowers (depending on the season). The trail will lead again through subalpine fir until it finally breaks free into the open meadow where the trail temporarily splits; one direction leads a lesser trail along a small stream to the right and the other maintaining slightly higher ground to the left. The trail continues with a manageable grade to the head of the valley and a knoll where it directs westward towards Lightning Ridge. The shoulder of Mount Stearn is located to the left. Pick a route leading up the grassy slopes then continue walking towards the summit knob. At the knob you will encounter a short scramble to the top where you will find the Mount Stearn cairn box.

13b) Mt. Hamell, Northeast Ridge, cont... banks of Hells Creek when it veers to the right and leads you straight up a steep rocky slab. The next section climbs steeply up the northern rim of the deep gorge to access the main northeast ridge. The scramble to the ridge itself can be quite tricky so proceed with caution. Once at the top of the ridge you can take a break and know that you have successfully climbed the hardest portion of this trail. While still steep, the trail continues up the narrow spine. The angle will ease off and the route becomes straightforward until you reach a sandy-coloured scree slope. Here you will notice a multitude of crisscrossed goat trails, watch for the red markers to ensure that you remain on the trail. The trail becomes flat for a period where you can marvel at the amazing rock strata of the east face. Watch to the left for a marked route as you approach the north slope leading you through the last section of subalpine fir. You will make your way up the steep, yet grassy slope, then continue for a short distance along the top ridge to the summit. The fire look-out building located at the top is occupied all summer, and while visitors are often appreciated, please be respectful. Here you will find the Mount Hamell cairn box, sign the guest book, take a photo, and enjoy a break while taking in the view.

CAUTION: This ridge is known for its heavy tick infestation in the spring, take precautions, dress accordingly and check your person and pets frequently. Conglomerate rock can become quite slick when wet as well as loose pebbles can create tricky footing. Be extra cautious during your descent and watch your footing very carefully.

14 TWIN FALLS: Short Hike

Approximate Distance: 0.6 km (one-way) Elevation Gain: 50 m / 150 ft

This is a short, pleasant trail that leads you to a small but scenic set of waterfalls that reveal themselves out of a gorge located on the east side of Mount Hamell. To access the trailhead, you will drive approximately 11.3 km north on Hwy 40 from Grande Cache. At this point you will notice a small access road located on the left side of the Hwy that you will turn left on and continue for approximately 0.7 km along until you reach the powerline and Hells Creek (the road will come to a dead-end at this point). The trail from this area will lead you up the south side of Hells Creek to a viewpoint of Twin Falls. Stay alert for wildlife including mountain goats and bighorn sheep who are known to frequent the hillside as well as deer and elk who frequent the nearby wooded area.

CAUTION: Hells Creek is prone to mud slides during and after extremely heavy rainfall or during periods of thaw that often occur during the spring. Do not descend into the creek during these times. In addition, the steep banks erode easily and may be unstable, proceed with extreme caution.

While exploring our trails please note the following Trail Etiquette: hike, a day hike or multi-day backpacking trip. to the map on the reverse side. The trails are numbered according guide that have been updated. The trails are numbered according exploring and has created most of the trail descriptions in this Local hiking guide, Terry Deamer, has spent over two decades for hiking or training on the course. shown on the map are the Canadian Death Race trails, suitable change but a major river crossing at the spectacular Hells Gate summit, and not only includes over 17,000 feet of elevation and ends on a 4200-foot plateau, passes over three mountain worlds toughest adventure races. The 118 km course begins Alberta Parks at 780-865-8395. bike or on horseback. For topographic maps of the Park, contact vehicles are permitted within the Park. Access is only by foot. are rarely traveled and may be in poor condition. No motorized within the Willmore Wilderness Park boundaries, although some preserving this unique mountain area. Over 750 km of trails exist in the Willmore Wilderness community plays a significant role in unspoiled Willmore Wilderness Park. south of Grande Cache and Edmonton is 450 km south east of (163 km) and Hinton to the south (143 km). Jasper is 210 km (163 km) and connects Grande Cache with Grande Prairie to the north Canada. Highway 40 (Bighorn Highway or Scenic Route to in the northern part of the Rocky Mountains in western Alberta, river valleys. The Hamlet of Grande Cache, MD of Greenview, is feet provides a panoramic view of 21 mountain peaks and two the pristine Willmore Wilderness Park. An elevation of 4200 mountain plateau facing south towards the Continental Divide the picturesque community of Grande Cache is built on a

Welcome to Grande Cache

trails, keep clear and yield to downhill traffic. **SHARE THE TRAIL.** Be considerate of all users. When ascending reciprocates provided. If you pick it up, be sure to pack it out. **DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY.** Please place in **KEEP PETS ON LEASH.** Ensure your pets are kept under control and clean up after them while enjoying the trails. **RESPECT WILDLIFE.** If you encounter wildlife, keep your distance. Do not follow or approach wildlife. **BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS.** Stay alert to help keep you and your group members safe. Please do your part to preserve wildlife and keep their habitats safe and healthy. **ecosystems throughout the trail.** Kill certain plant and animal species, including surrounding **STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.** Going off trail can harm or **STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.** Going off trail can harm or **STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.** Going off trail can harm or

10a STEARN HIGH COUNTRY LOOP: 2-5 Days

Approximate Distance: 24 km Elevation Gain: 960 m / 3,150 ft

For those looking for an authentic back-country camping experience, this is a great choice.

TRAILHEAD: Begin as you would when hiking Mount Stearn (see Mount Stearn above). Approximately 4.8 km into the trail you will emerge from the trees where there are two possible campsites. One, to the right as you follow the trail through subalpine fir is best for unpredictable weather as it is within the treetline and adds more protection from the elements. The second, is situated along a creek just a short distance further up the trail. Additional random camping opportunities are scattered throughout the meadow and hillside and can be found by scouting the area. If you can push on, continue the trail until you reach the next drainage, along the foot of Lightning Ridge (see Lightning Ridge below), where you will discover even better camping at the junction of the Mount Stearn and Lightning Ridge trails. Two established campsites are located even further along the trail into the high country along the base of Lightning Ridge allowing easy access to trails leading to Lightning Ridge or Volcano Peak. As you make your way back, take the trail over the pass located on the south end of Lightning Ridge and continue down towards Kvaas Flats. Along the way you will experience amazing views as you descend through alternating forest and open slopes. You can then set up camp again in Kvaas Flats or make the additional trek back out to the Sulphur Gates Staging Area and access road, leading you back towards your starting point.

11 LIGHTNING RIDGE: 1-2 days

(2,485 m / 8,150 ft) Distance: 11.3 km / 7.0 miles one way. Gain: 1,480 m / 4,850 ft

Lightning Ridge is located just beyond Mount Stearn to the west of Grande Cache and is the highest point in the immediate area. To reach the summit you will need to be prepared for a long day, however, the result is well worth the effort. From the summit you can see it all, with a panoramic view spanning the Sir Alexander Group to the west, Grande Cache, and the Grande Cache Valley below to the east and north, the Smoky River Valley that carves its way through the Willmore Wilderness Park and its many peaks to the south. If you look to the north on a clear day, you will also get a glimpse of the northern prairies on the distant horizon.

TRAILHEAD: Start your trek as you would for Mount Stearn (see Mount Stearn above). From the knoll located at the head of the high valley directly behind *Continued next panel...*

CANADIAN DEATH RACE (CDR) TRAILS

The Canadian Death Race is 118km course that teams of 1 to 5 racers run every August long weekend, over a 24 hour period. The course is divided into 5 sections, or 'legs'. Below is how to hike or train on each leg, omitting most highway and street portions that form part of the official course. Directions are noted as abbreviations: ie. (S) for South. Most of the course is marked with orange flagging and paint, once you leave a roadway.

CDR-1 LEG 1: The Downtown Jaunt

Distance 14.2 km

Elevation: +244m / -287m

Description: New start route for 2022! Approximately 1 km of initial pavement, followed by trail and 8 km of gravel road. It includes a net elevation loss of 500 feet, rolling hills with flat sections, several creek crossings, and one significant downhill. The course will start in downtown Grande Cache at Central Park. It then continues past Grande Cache Lake and Peavine Lake, mainly on quad trails, and includes a section along a ridge with a spectacular view of Peavine Lake and the mountains of Willmore Wilderness Park. After crossing Washy Creek and skirting the north end of the CN rail yard through a deep mud bog, enter the first full aid station and relay exchange zone.

CDR-2 LEG 2: Flood & Grande Mountain Slugfest

Distance 29.6km (~25.7 Marathon)

Elevation: +1624m / -1526m

Description: Includes about 1 km of pavement. The rest is dirt trail with rocky and swampy sections and approximately 6 km of hard packed dirt road. Net elevation gain is 500 feet, but the total elevation change is well over 6000 feet. This leg of the race is characterized by long sustained climbing with about 3 km of very rough terrain and two creek crossings. The trail from the summit of Flood Mountain to the summit of Grande Mountain is the roughest piece of trail in the Death Race. The power line down the front of Grande Mountain leading back into town is the most dangerous part of the entire course. This is due to the steep, rocky drop-offs and unstable footing while running downhill. The Slugfest is the most technical section and is rated the second hardest leg of the Death Race (although many rate this leg as the hardest of all). The Near Death Marathon course bypasses the Flood Summit Loop but otherwise is the exact same Legs 1 and 2 and finishes at the Start/Finish Line at the end of Leg 2.

CDR-3 LEG 3: Old Mine Road (AKA "City Slicker Valley")

Distance 20.5 km

Elevation: +345m / -632m

Description: A bit of pavement to start and the rest is a dirt road with several creek crossings. One creek runs right down the trail as you descend the first part of the Mine Road; making for very slippery, rocky, terrain for 30 meters. This section passes through the lowest point in the race, hitting the very bottom of the Smoky River valley floor, with knee deep water for 25 meters. (If it's a wet summer, it's worse.) With a net elevation loss of over 600m, this section is the fastest and easiest of the race and one of the most beautiful, offering stunning views of the Smoky River valley.

CDR-4 LEG 4: Hamell Assault

Distance 35.2 km

Elevation: +1576m / -1549m

Description: This is mostly dirt trail and hard packed gravel. While the net elevation gain is almost zero, the total elevation change is well over 1500m, which comes practically all at once. The ascent of Mount Hamell is broken into two very long climbs, with one small reprieve as you gain the shoulder of the mountain at the mid-point. At the forestry tower on the summit of Mount Hamell, runners check in and then continue toward the spectacular cliff bluffs at Hells Canyon, where they must retrieve a prayer flag as proof they have made the turnaround point. The descent is strewn with boulders and deep ruts. The downhill is not that technical, but any falls will be on very unforgiving ground. (Read the waiver section about being in remote areas and not being rescued in time to prevent serious injury or death.) This entire leg is fantastically scenic.



Photo credit: Raven Eye Photography, courtesy of Sinister Sports

GRANDE CACHE & AREA

TRAIL MAP



Local Multi-Use Trails And Other Activities

www.mdgreenview.ab.ca

The preceding text and the trails shown on the Grande Cache Trails Map were modified from "Selected Hiking Trails Guide" by Terry Deamer.

