

Biking

The Lake Louise Area



Bike Photo / P. Owsal



Welcome to Lake Louise. Take a trail less travelled and explore our beautiful natural environment by bicycle.

Biking in the Lake Louise area offers both experienced and novice riders unparalleled views of protected landscapes, featuring glaciers, mountains, lakes and rivers. From the doorstep of your accommodations or camping site, you are minutes away from over 100 kilometres of bike trails. Rides vary from novice road options to more difficult remote backcountry mountain biking trails. While other national parks offer scenic beauty of the natural landscapes, biking in the Lake Louise area transports riders to a unique outdoor experience. Biking in the Lake Louise area typically extends from May to October. This guide will help you plan an enjoyable and safe biking experience while keeping the park's natural environment as beautiful as possible.



Banff Lake Louise Tourism / P. Zhou

LAKE LOUISE: KEEP BEARS WILD!



Parks Canada / A. Althival

EASY

LAKE LOUISE ROAD RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on ride length and elevation gain.

1 Great Divide

10.5 km one way, minimal elevation gain, easy
Starting Point: Parking lot at 3.6 km mark of Lake Louise Drive

This route (formerly the 1A Hwy) is closed to vehicles. Though paved, the surface is rough. It winds past the Great Divide at 7.5 km and continues to the Trans-Canada Highway in Yoho National Park. About 500 m west of the Divide, a challenging 1.3 km trail up along Ross Creek connects to the Ross Lake Trail (#6). It allows an alternative return to the trailhead for advanced mountain bikers.

LAKE LOUISE TRAIL RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on trail length, elevation gain and remoteness.

4 Bow River Loop

7.1 km loop, no elevation gain, easy
Trailhead: Lake Louise Campground or opposite the historic Lake Louise train station (Station Restaurant) beside Bow River bridge

Ideal for families, this gentle riverside trail travels both sides of the Bow River and can be shortened by cutting across any of the bridges. Interpretive signs along the way highlight the Bow River ecosystem. This trail is popular with pedestrians who may not hear your approach above the river's sound; ride respectfully and make your approach known. This route connects with the Tramline Trail (#5).

5 Tramline

4.5 km one way, elevation gain 195 m, easy
Trailhead: Opposite Lake Louise train station (Station Restaurant) beside Bow River bridge

This wide trail is the former route of a tramway (1912 to 1930). It offers a quiet ride up and down from the valley floor to upper Lake Louise. The trail comes out at the upper Lake Louise parking lots, an alternative starting point for a downhill ride on this trail.

MODERATE

LAKE LOUISE ROAD RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on ride length and elevation gain.

3 Bow Valley Parkway

28 km one way, minimal elevation gain, moderate
Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre

From Lake Louise to Castle Junction, the Bow Valley Parkway (1A) winds through montane forest near the Bow River. This is a busy road with narrow shoulders; consider riding midweek when traffic is lighter. Numerous short hikes, viewpoints and interpretive signs are accessible from the road. The Bow Valley Parkway continues farther eastward towards the town of Banff and reconnects with the Trans-Canada Highway or the Banff Legacy Trail, after an additional 21 km, making the entire Bow Valley Parkway 49 km in length or 98 km return to Lake Louise.

LAKE LOUISE TRAIL RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on trail length, elevation gain and remoteness.

8 Pipestone

7.2 km one way, elevation gain 165 m, moderate
Trailhead: Slate Road, turn off Trans-Canada Highway—1.5 km west of Lake Louise

This well-defined gravel and dirt trail heads up along the Pipestone River into the Pipestone Valley north of Lake Louise. Watch for horse users and bears. Not far from the trailhead, an 800 m side trail offers a short, sometimes muddy, trip to Mud Lake. Cyclists are not permitted beyond the bike turnaround point at km 7.2.



Bike Photo / P. Owsal

DIFFICULT

LAKE LOUISE ROAD RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on ride length and elevation gain.

2 Moraine Lake Road

15 km one way, elevation gain 385 m, difficult
Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre

This narrow, mountain road has no shoulders and heavy mixed traffic. It's best to ride Moraine Lake Road and Lake Louise Drive early or late in the day when traffic volume is lower. From the turnoff at the 3 km mark of Lake Louise Drive, Moraine Lake Road climbs to spectacular views of Consolation Valley and the Valley of the Ten Peaks. Mountain bikers can create a loop by combining with the challenging Moraine Lake Highline Trail (#7).

LAKE LOUISE TRAIL RIDES
Difficulty ratings are based on trail length, elevation gain and remoteness.

6 Ross Lake

7.3 km one way, no elevation gain, difficult
Trailhead: Tucked behind the Chateau Lake Louise staff residences

One of the few trails that crosses from Banff to Yoho National Park, this trail winds and dips through sub-alpine forest to a small lake nestled against an impressive rock wall. Expect to yield to horse traffic on the first 100 m. A challenging 1.3 km trail down along Ross Creek connects to the Great Divide Road (#1), allowing a loop return.

7 Moraine Lake Highline

9.3 km one way, elevation gain 305 m, difficult
Trailhead: Small parking area on the right, 2.5 km up Moraine Lake Road

The most demanding of the Lake Louise trails, this single-track trail climbs onto the shoulder of Mount Temple and then descends to Moraine Lake, one of the loveliest spots in the Canadian Rockies. Hikers are often encountered on the first km from the trailhead. Roots and rocks on the narrow trail might pose a challenge. The upper trail section, often exposed as it follows side hills, offers tremendous views. The trail can be combined with Moraine Lake Road (#2) to make a loop. When buffalo berries (an important food for bears) ripen in mid to late summer, the upper section of this trail is closed to all users. This will allow grizzly bears to forage undisturbed and keep visitors safer. A stub trail allows access from the trail to the Moraine Lake Road at the bottom of the seasonal trail closure. Check with Lake Louise Visitor Centre staff and trailhead signs for closure dates and important information.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

RULES OF THE TRAIL

- **Be a mountain park steward, ride with care!** Riding non-designated or closed trails, building new trails or riding off-trail displaces wildlife and destroys soil and vegetation. These activities are also illegal and violators may be charged under the National Park Regulations.
- **Be bear aware.** Cyclists are particularly susceptible to sudden, dangerous bear encounters because of the speed and silence of their travel. Be alert, make noise, slow down, carry bear spray and look ahead.
- **Ride designated trails.** It is your responsibility to know where you can and cannot legally ride.
- **Avoid riding during extreme conditions.** Wet, muddy or very dry trails are more likely to be damaged.
- **Help preserve the quality of our trails.** Ride, don't slide— avoid skidding your tires by hard braking. Ride over obstacles, not around them. If obstacles are above your skill level, walk your bike.
- **Ride within your limits.** Inattention for even a moment could put yourself and others at risk.
- **Leave no trace.** Be sure to pack out what you pack in. Leave natural and cultural objects undisturbed for others to discover.
- **For the safety of wildlife, your pet and yourself,** keep your dog under control and on a leash at all times.
- **Yield appropriately.** Let your fellow trail users know you are coming. Make each pass a safe and courteous one. Cyclists travelling downhill should yield to ones headed uphill.

SHARE THE TRAIL

- The bike trails in Banff National Park are all shared-use trails— expect to encounter hikers and horseback riders. Ride in control and be ready to stop at any time.
- When you approach a hiker, slow down and make your presence known.
- Bicycles are fast and quiet, and can easily spook horses. When approaching oncoming horses, move to the side of the trail, stop and allow the horse party to pass. When passing horses from behind, slow down, let riders know of your presence before you get too close and ask for instructions.

SAFETY

You are responsible for your own safety. Be prepared for a breakdown or accident. Know how to repair your bike and carry the necessary tools and parts.

- Choose rides that match your abilities. Be conservative—start with easier, shorter trails. Park staff or bike shop employees can help you select a suitable route.
- Wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.
- Bring extra food, water and clothing. Surface water may be contaminated. Mountain weather changes quickly and it can snow any month of the year.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Travel with others and keep your group together.
- Avoid wearing earbuds. Be alert at all times.
- Ask for advice at the Lake Louise Visitor Centre about trail conditions, descriptions, warnings or closures, and weather.

EMERGENCY

In case of EMERGENCY call 911 or 403-762-4506. Cell phones are not always reliable in the backcountry.

MORE INFORMATION

Lake Louise Visitor Centre
403-522-3833, Samson Mall
LL.info@pc.gc.ca

Banff National Park website: www.pc.gc.ca/banff
Trail Conditions Report: www.pc.gc.ca/banfftrails
Weather: www.weatheroffice.gc.ca
For area maps and guidebooks, visit a local retail biking outlet.

For more information on biking in the park visit: Bow Valley Mountain Bike Alliance www.bvmba.org.



Done with this Brochure?
Please return for re-use to a park facility or share it with others.



Banff Lake Louise Tourism

9 Icefields Parkway

230 km one way, moderate to difficult
(depending on section or length of ride)

Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre.
(You can access the start of the parkway by crossing the pedestrian bridge over the Trans-Canada Highway, near the western end of Sheol Road, then riding along the bike path beside Highway 1 westward, until it connects with the Icefields Parkway)

Whether it's for a short ride or a bike tour over several days, the Icefields Parkway has a lot to offer. Hailed by many as one of the most beautiful scenic roads in the world, this route is famous for its bike touring opportunities. The Icefields Parkway follows the continental divide as it leads riders over two mountain passes. En route, cyclists will peddle past beautiful lakes, towering mountains, thundering waterfalls and awesome glaciers. Be cautious, this is a busy road in the summer. Fortunately, there is a wide shoulder in most places. If you just want to ride a section of the parkway, you can always drive to your chosen starting point. For more information, ask for the Icefields Parkway brochure at the Lake Louise Visitor Centre.

www.pc.gc.ca/banff-bears

BIKING

LAKE LOUISE AREA

The small community of Lake Louise, surrounded by spectacular classic Rocky Mountain scenery, welcomes visitors and serves as a starting point for all that the area has to offer. From biking, hiking, camping, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, bird watching, horseback riding, wildlife viewing or a trip to a historic tea house, Lake Louise has plenty to offer.

- Easy
- Moderate
- ◆ Difficult

LAKE LOUISE ROAD RIDES

Difficulty ratings are based on ride length and elevation gain.

Great Divide 1

10.5 km one way, minimal elevation gain, easy
Starting Point: Parking lot at 3.6 km mark of Lake Louise Drive

Bow Valley Parkway 3

28 km one way, minimal elevation gain, moderate
Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre

Icefields Parkway 9

230 km one way, moderate to difficult (depending on section or length of ride)
Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre.
 (You can access the start of the parkway by crossing the pedestrian bridge over the Trans-Canada Highway, near the western end of Sheol Road, then riding along the bike path beside Highway 1 westward, until it connects with the Icefields Parkway)

Moraine Lake Road 2

15 km one way, elevation gain 385 m, difficult
Starting Point: Lake Louise Visitor Centre

LAKE LOUISE TRAIL RIDES

Difficulty ratings are based on trail length, elevation gain and remoteness.

Bow River Loop 4

7.1 km loop, no elevation gain, easy
Trailhead: Lake Louise Campground or opposite the historic Lake Louise train station (Station Restaurant) beside Bow River bridge

Tramline 5

4.5 km one way, elevation gain 195 m, easy
Trailhead: Opposite Lake Louise train station (Station Restaurant) beside Bow River bridge

Pipestone 8

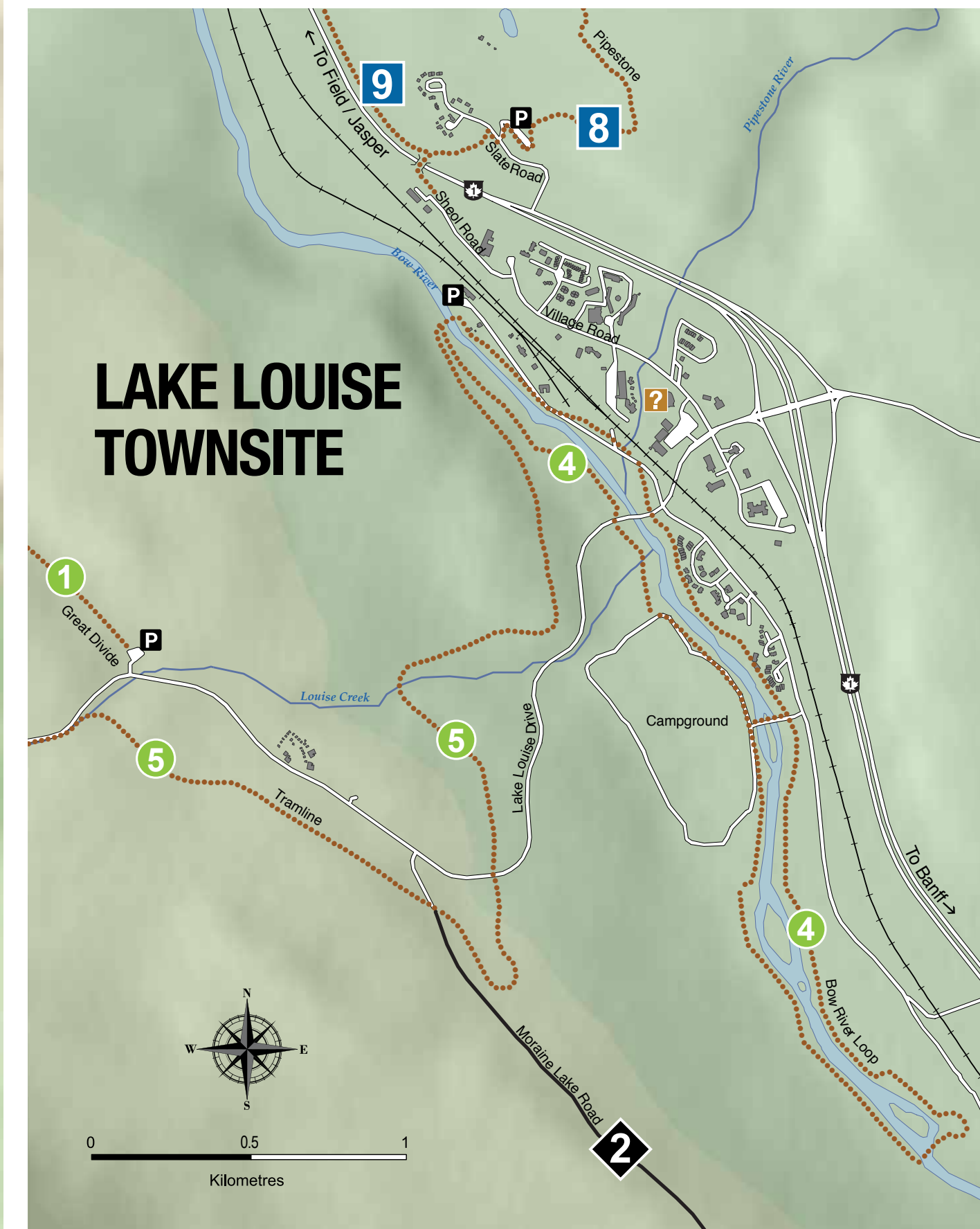
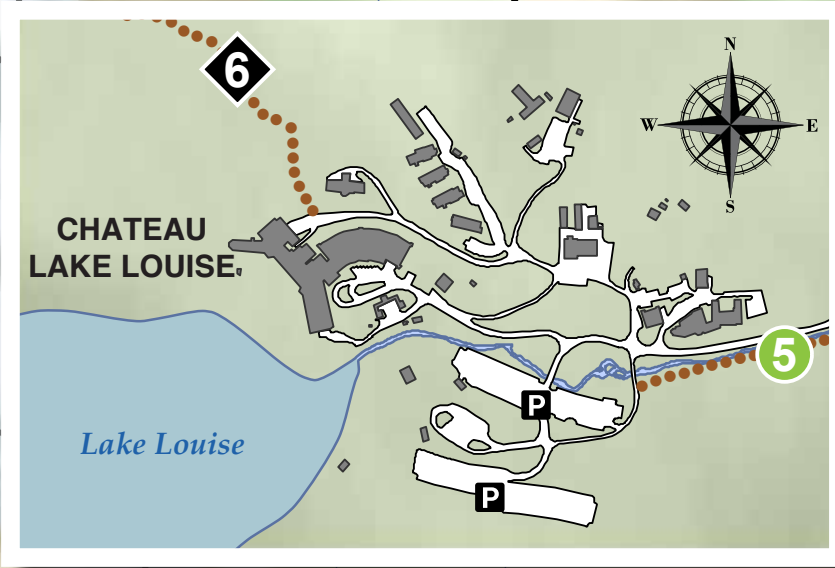
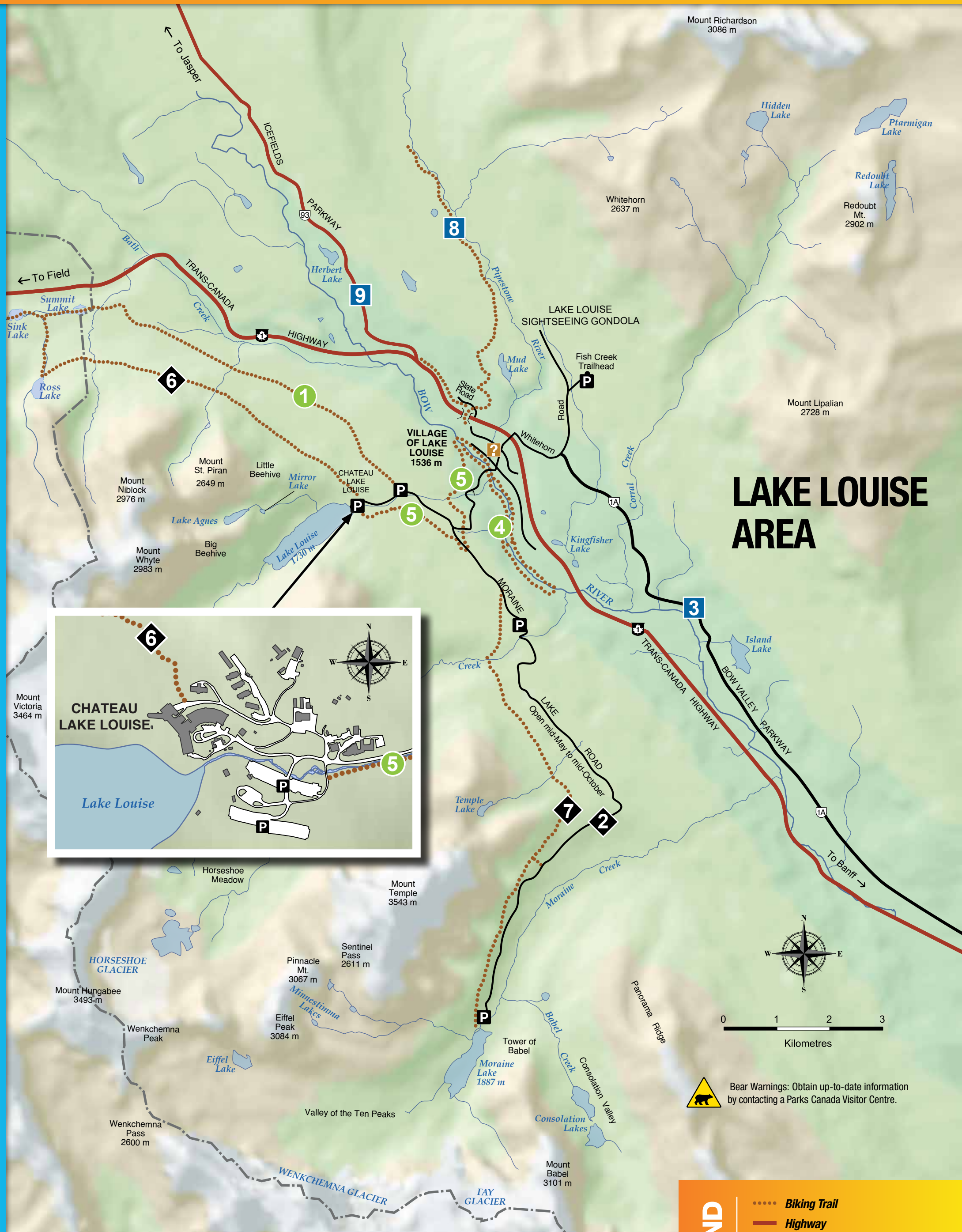
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Ross Lake 6

7.3 km one way, no elevation gain, difficult
Trailhead: Tucked behind the Chateau Lake Louise staff residences

Moraine Lake Highline 7

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Trailhead: Small parking area on the right, 2.5 km up Moraine Lake Road



How was your trip?

Please send us your comments at ll.info@pc.gc.ca and report trail problems to park staff.

LEGEND

- Biking Trail
- Highway
- Road
- Park Boundary
- ? Visitor Centre
- P Parking



Bear Warnings: Obtain up-to-date information by contacting a Parks Canada Visitor Centre.