



Nahanni
National Park Reserve

VISITOR INFORMATION PACKAGE

Nahanni. Nah?à Dehé.



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

Canada

For More Information

Contact our Park Offices in Fort Simpson or Nahanni Butte, or visit our website.

Fort Simpson Office

Phone: (867) 695-7750

Fax: (867) 695-2446

Nahanni.info@pc.gc.ca

Nahanni Butte Office

Phone: (867) 602-2025

Fax: (867) 602-2027

Nahanni.info@pc.gc.ca

Hours of Operation

Winter (October 1—May 31)

Monday to Friday 8:30am—12 noon, 1pm—5pm

Closed weekends.

Hours of Operation

Winter (October 1—May 31)

Monday to Friday 8:30am—12 noon, 1pm—5pm

Closed weekends.

Summer (June 1—September 30)

Daily: 8:30am—12 noon, 1pm—5pm

Summer (June 1—September 30)

Daily: 8:30am—12 noon, 1pm—5pm

parkscanada.gc.ca/nahanni



Related Websites

Nahanni National Park Reserve Website: parkscanada.gc.ca/nahanni

Government of the Northwest Territories—Industry, Tourism and Investment: <http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/>

NWT Tourism: <http://www.spectacularnwt.com/>

Weather Conditions

Fort Simpson: http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/city/pages/nt-4_metric_e.html

Nahanni Butte: http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/city/pages/nt-12_metric_e.html

Road and Ferry Conditions: http://www.dot.gov.nt.ca/_live/pages/wpPages/roadConditions.aspx

What kind of explorer are you? Find out how to maximize your Canadian travel experience by visiting www.caem.canada.travel/traveller-types

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Photo: C. Blyth/Parks Canada

Welcome

Nahanni National Park Reserve (NNPR) is an outstanding example of northern wilderness with powerful rivers, wide valleys, ragged mountain peaks and high alpine tundra. The park encompasses a wilderness corridor (30, 000 square kilometers) centered along Nahʔą Dehé (the South Nahanni River) and Tu Naka Dé (the Flat River) in the heart of the Mackenzie Mountains. Acclaimed as Canada's premier wilderness river national park, it is both a Canadian Heritage River and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Nahanni National Park Reserve has been set aside to protect, for all time, a natural area of Canadian significance representative of the Mackenzie Mountains Natural Region. Protective measures afforded by the National Parks Act and the Park Management Plan empower present and future generations to continue to appreciate and experience the park's wilderness environment.

Many of Nahanni's visitors come to experience the dramatic canyons and to see Náįłıcho (Virginia Falls), a towering waterfall of incredible beauty and power. The Dene word Náįłıcho means big or sacred waterfall. Dene oral histories and more recent stories of haunted valleys, gold, and tropical oasis are woven throughout the park's landscape.

Parks Canada staff work co-operatively with the Dehcho First Nations to protect not only Nahʔą Dehé (Nahanni National Park Reserve), but also the surrounding lands of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.



Please read this package carefully. Your safety and enjoyment may depend on it!

Important Information

Pre-trip

Before booking my travel I have:

- ✓ **Contacted Parks Canada in Fort Simpson**
- ✓ **Received the Reservation Request Forms and Visitor Information Package**
- ✓ Completed and submitted the reservation request form, members list, emergency contact, equipment list forms and provided payment for park use fee.
- ✓ Received confirmation from Nahanni of your reservation request

For hiking or rock climbing I have:

- ✓ Provided Parks Canada with a detailed itinerary of my planned trip including any side trips.
- ✓ Ensured my skills and experience are equal to the needs of the trip.
- ✓ Contacted local outfitters or air charter companies to arrange for transport into the park .

For canoeing or rafting I have:

- ✓ Completed the reservation request forms and provided two possible reservation dates for the Virginia Falls campground.
- ✓ Ensured that my skills and experience are equal to the needs of the trip.
- ✓ Contacted local outfitters and/or air charter companies to arrange transportation in the park.

Before Entering Park

- ✓ Registered by notifying the park office

Post-Trip

AFTER LEAVING THE PARK I HAVE:

- ✓ **contacted Parks Canada to de-register**
- ✓ completed the River Survey

Permits

Permits for operating a business (guiding or outfitting), filming and commercial photography, research, landing an aircraft, or carrying a firearm through the park must be acquired through the Parks Canada office well in advance (some permits may take 90 days or more to be issued).

Registration and De-Registration

To Register your Trip

It is a legal requirement to register your group with the park office immediately prior to beginning an overnight trip in the park, and to de-register your group immediately upon completion of your trip. Failure to register or de-register your trip is an offence under the General Regulations of the National Parks Act.

Register before starting an overnight trip in Nahanni National Park Reserve by phoning the park office from your point of departure, or visit the park office personally. Provide your trip leader's name and your reservation date to park staff. A trip can't be registered unless a reservation has been made.

It is important to register your group yourself. Do not rely on someone else to do it for you. When private groups register, park staff will:

- confirm that the information provided with your reservation is complete and accurate;
- ensure you have provided an emergency contact name and telephone number, and
- Inform you of any important public safety information such as area closures, locations of recent bear activity, current forest fires, and current forest fire risk.

If you have any delays or changes to your itinerary, or have a change to your reservation date, it must be done prior to your departure. There is no reliable way to change this information once you are in the park.

To De-Register your Trip

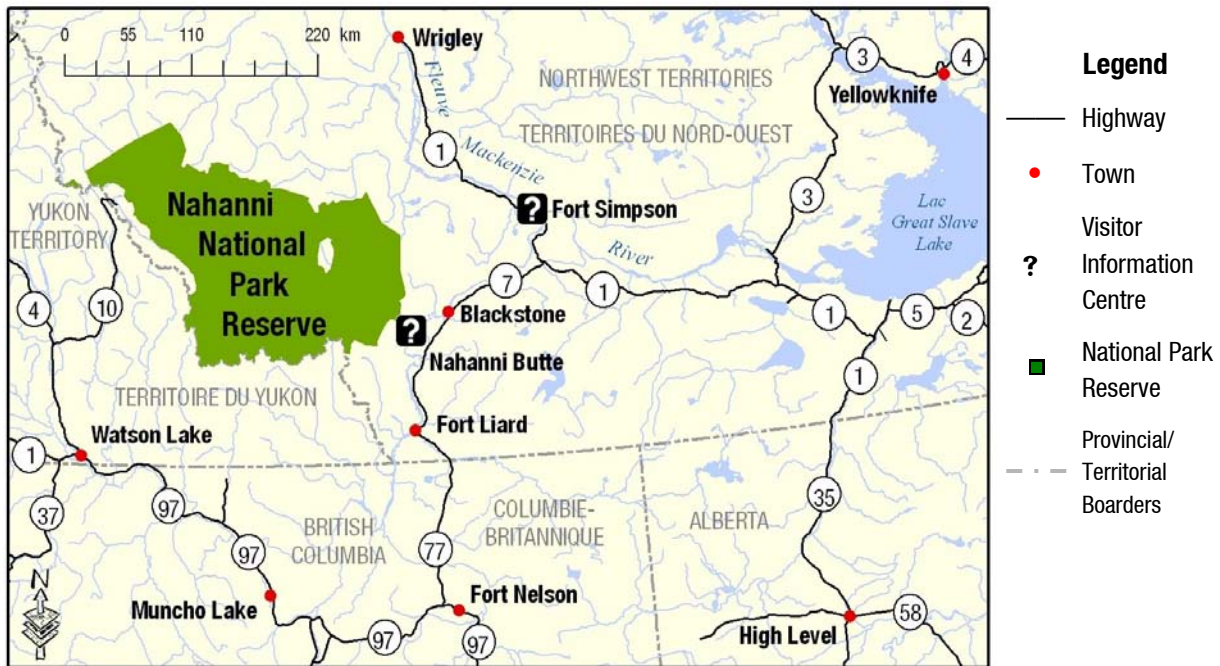
Your de-registration date is the day that you anticipate contacting the park office to de-register. It is essential that your planned date of de-registration is accurate.

Please remember to de-register your trip, failure to do so your group is considered overdue and an investigation will be initiated by our public safety staff.

You can de-register your group in different ways depending on when and where you finish your trip:

- de-register at the Nahanni Butte parks office. This information will be forwarded to the park office in Fort Simpson;
- de-register by telephone or in-person during regular office hours at the park office in Fort Simpson the phone number is (867) 695-7750 and the office is located at 10002 – 100 Street ;
- Or between **June 01 and September 30** each year, you may de-register by telephone **after regular office hours by calling the Duty Officer at (867) 695-3732.**

Planning Your Trip



Topographical Maps

1:250,000 scale maps are adequate for canoeing and hiking; 1:50,000 maps may also be available. NNPR does not provide or sell these maps.

1:50,000 series covering Moose Ponds/Rock

Gardens section:

105-1/13: Mount Wilson 105-1/14: Jones Lake
 105-1/11: Unnamed 105-1/10: Unnamed
 105-1/7: Dozer Lake

1:250,000 series covering the South Nahanni River:

95E: Flat River 95F: Virginia Falls
 95G: Sibbeston Lake 95L: Glacier Lake
 105I: Little Nahanni

Downstream of the park: 95H: Fort Simpson

GPS Coordinates

Rabbitkettle Lake staff cabin	N 61° 57' 33"	W 127° 12' 18"
Sunblood staff cabin	N 61° 39' 51"	W 125° 51' 05"
Virginia Falls Dock	N 61° 36' 26"	W 125° 45' 12"
Flat River Cabin	N 61° 32' 0.14"	W 125° 21' 42.48"
Deadman Valley Cabin	N 61° 14' 40"	W 124° 26' 38"
Kraus Hotsprings	N 61° 15' 21"	W 124° 03' 29"
Nahanni Butte	N 61° 02' 10"	W 123° 22' 51"
Blackstone Territorial Park	N 61° 06' 11"	W 122° 52' 46"

How to Get Here

Highway Access

Operations for Nahanni National Park Reserve are based in Fort Simpson, Northwest Territories. This village can be reached by two highway routes. These are the Mackenzie Highway route (Alberta Highway 35 - Northwest Territories Highway 1) and the Alaska and Liard Highways route (British Columbia Highways 97 and 77 and Northwest Territories Highway 7).

Road distances to Fort Simpson:

Yellowknife, NT: 630km

Fort Nelson, BC: 484km

Edmonton, AB: 1470km

Prince George, BC: 1300km

Air Access to Fort Simpson

First Air and Air Tindi offer scheduled flights to Fort Simpson via Yellowknife from Edmonton, Vancouver, and Calgary.

First Air

1-800-267-1247

www.firstair.ca

Air Tindi

1-888-545-6794

www.airtindi.com

Air Access to Nahanni National Park Reserve

Access to the park is most easily accomplished by chartering a floatplane from one of the NWT communities that surround the Park as well as the Yukon Territory and northern British Columbia. Náìlìcho (Virginia Falls), Gahnghthah Mje (Rabbitkettle Lake), Glacier Lake, the Bunny Bar, Island Lakes, Honey-moon Lake, and Seaplane Lake are designated landing sites inside the park.

All aircraft landings require a park-use permit.

Air Charter Operators

Simpson Air (1981) Ltd.

Phone: (867) 695-2505

Wolverine Air

Phone: (867) 695-2263

Toll free: 1-888-695-2263

Liard Air

Phone: (250) 776-3481

Toll free: 1-800-663-5269

South Nahanni Airways

Phone: (867) 695-2007

Great Slave Helicopters

Phone: (867) 695-2326

Kluane Air

Phone: (250) 860-4187

Fort Simpson Community Information

Community Visitor Information

The village of Fort Simpson is the most popular point of entry into Nahanni National Park Reserve and is where Parks Canada has its main office for Nahanni. This community of 1200 people offers a wide range of services for visitors to the region. These include:

- Overnight accommodation: this ranges from hotels/motels to bed and breakfasts to camping.
- Groceries: fresh produce, dairy, meats, bread, frozen food and packaged goods are available.
- Restaurants: two restaurants provide breakfast, lunch and dinner options.
- Health care: emergency medical services are provided by the Fort Simpson Health Centre.
- Automotive Repair: full mechanical repairs as well as tire repair and towing are available year round.
- Visitor Information: a visitor information centre is open in the village office from May 15 – September 15.
- Arts and Crafts vendors: there are a few local arts and crafts vendors, and an art gallery with limited hours of operation.
- Arts/Music Festival and Cultural events.

Fort Simpson Visitor Information Centre

Phone: (867) 695-3182

www.footsimpson.com

Equipment Rentals

The commercial river outfitters, as well as some of the air charter operators, will rent various equipment including canoes, rafts, spray skirts, paddles, and in some cases, tents. Please contact them directly to determine availability and prices.

For fire-box or fire-pan rental contact please contact Nahanni River Adventures.

Local Stores

Northern Store

(867) 695-2391

Unity 6281 NWT Ltd.

(867) 695-3108

Landmark Grocery

(867) 695- 2700

Arts and Crafts

Open Sky Creative Society

Fort Simpson
(867) 695-3005

Acho Dene Native Crafts

Fort Liard
(867) 770-4161

Dene Fur Clouds

Fort Providence
(867) 699-4922

Tour Companies

More than 50% of overnight visitors use the services of a commercial outfitter. Many companies advertise or promote canoe or whitewater raft trips on the South Nahanni River, however only three are currently licensed by Parks Canada. If you plan to use the services of a commercial outfitting company, your safety depends on choosing a recognized and legally licensed company. If you are aware of unlicensed companies promoting trips on the Nahanni, please inform the park office.

Businesses providing outfitting services require a valid National Parks Business Licence, and a Northwest Territories Tourism Licence. Each individual guide also requires a National Parks Guide Licence. A person guiding* a trip in the park must be employed by a licensed outfitter.

** An individual is guiding a trip when they receive financial gain or their expenses are recovered by leading a trip.*

Commercial Outfitters

Please contact the companies directly to obtain a description of trips offered, as well as current information regarding trip dates and prices. It is your responsibility to ensure that the outfitter you select has a valid national park business licence. A company or guide operating without a licence is putting your safety and the safety of others at considerable risk.

Blackfeather the Wilderness Adventure Company

Phone: (705) 746-1372
Toll Free: 1-888-849-7668
E-mail: info@blackfeather.com
Website: www.blackfeather.com

Nahanni Wilderness Adventures

Phone : (403) 678-3374
Toll free: 1-888-897-5223
E-mail: adventures@nahanniwild.com
Website: www.nahanniwild.com

Nahanni River Adventures

Phone: (867) 668-3180
Toll free: 1-800-297-6927
E-mail: info@nahanni.com
Website: www.nahanni.com



Activities

Paddling the South Nahanni River by raft or canoe is the park's most popular activity. It is a big river with powerful currents, boils and challenging whitewater. River travellers should have intermediate whitewater skills before setting out on their own. Less experienced paddlers may enjoy a canoe or raft trip with a licensed outfitter. There is no defined itinerary for a trip on the South Nahanni River; the river corridor offers spectacular camping spots in locations such as Deadmen Valley, The Gate, and Kraus Hotsprings. It will be more than the landscape that you will remember.

Paddling

People typically begin their river trips at Nájl̄icho (Virginia Falls) or Gahn̄hthah M̄je (Rabbitkettle Lake). A river trip from Nájl̄icho will take 7-10 days, while a river trip from Gahn̄hthah M̄je will take 10-14 days.

To ensure a safe trip, paddlers should scout each of the rapids marked on the maps and assess their ability to navigate them safely. Canoes should be hauled out well above the rapids and securely fastened. Wetsuits are a good precaution if you are whitewater paddling, and it is necessary to learn about hypothermia before your trip. Single canoe trips are not recommended for travel in June, the month with the greatest spring flood potential.

There are alternative starting points such as the Moose Ponds, Island Lakes, Glacier Lake, Seaplane Lake and the Little Nahanni. Please note that most of the Little Nahanni River and from the Moose Ponds to near Island Lakes is outside the park boundary.

Contact our office or an outfitter directly to discuss what trip would fit you best.

Hiking

The Nah̄q̄ Dehé(South Nahanni) region offers spectacular hiking opportunities mostly accessible by boat from the river corridor. There are no formal trails established in the park, although heavy use has resulted in some of the more popular routes becoming quite well defined.

If you are interested in hiking in Nahanni National Park Reserve please contact our office for some of our popular options such as the Ram Plateau and Glacier Lake/ Cirque of Unclimbables.



Rock Climbing

The Cirque of the Unclimbables is a world-class big-wall climbing area located within the newly expanded Nahanni National Park Reserve.

Potentially harsh conditions and a lack of local rescue services make climbing and mountaineering in this area inadvisable for all but the most experienced. Climbers are expected to be completely self-sufficient.

Our public safety staff are trained in swift water rescue, first aid, patient stabilization and evacuation in non-technical terrain. For high-angle technical evacuations, assistance from outside of the Northwest Territories is required. Search and rescue operations may be delayed by poor weather conditions, geography, aircraft or staff availability.

Groups climbing in the Cirque must register and de-register their trip with the park office in Fort Simpson either in person or over the phone.

Dene Cultural Park Use



Photo: Parks Canada

Dene culture is intimately linked to the ecology of Nahʔą Dehé and you may encounter traditional harvesters while travelling in the park. We would like to remind you to respect Dene harvesting rights and refrain from interfering with their activities. Traditional harvesters may travel through the park by motorized use for the purpose of harvesting. If they are transporting a visitor to the park for commercial gain they require a license.

Learning Experiences

Parks Canada protects special places that showcase Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Helping people understand and appreciate this heritage is one of the primary goals. Approximately 800 people visit Nahanni National Park Reserve annually to experience its spectacular scenery and learn about its rich history.

Discover Nahanni's rich Dene culture and unique natural phenomena through guided hikes and campfire program at Gahn̄hthah M̄je (Rabbitkettle Lake) and Ná̄l̄īcho (Virginia Falls).

Friendly and knowledgeable park interpreters are also available at the park offices in Nahanni Butte and Fort Simpson.



Photo: Parks Canada



Gahn̄hthah M̄je (Rabbitkettle Lake)

Join Parks Canada staff on a guided hike to see Canada’s largest freestanding tufa mound, a 10, 000 year-old geological wonder! Learn about the age-old journeys of humans and wildlife in the area, as you hike along the crest of picturesque Emerald Lake.

Guided hikes to Gahn̄hthah are offered twice daily at 08:30 and 13:30. We recommend that visitors adhere to this schedule as closely as possible, as hikes may not be available outside of these times. While you are there, make sure to ask park staff about other interpretive activities and don’t forget to take a dip in Rabbitkettle Lake!

Ná̄l̄icho (Virginia Falls)

Feel the thunder of Ná̄l̄icho getting stronger as you approach a viewpoint overlooking this impressive waterfall, an icon of the Canadian north. Learn about local ecology, culture and geology as you discover why Nah̄ʔ̄a Dehé (the South Nahanni River) is a wild river like no other. On-demand guided hikes lasting approximately two hours are offered daily to both day visitors and river trippers.

Campfire programs

Bring your mug and savour warm tea as you deepen your awareness of the landscape and people of Nah̄ʔ̄a Dehé. Campfire programs are offered nightly in the campground, based on availability and demand.



Fort Simpson Main park office

We recommend you visit the Fort Simpson park office before embarking on your river trip or day visit. Knowledgeable staff can answer questions and enrich your experience in the park. We will also be happy to tell you more about the local area and nearby attractions.

Nahanni Butte Park office

De-register at the park office in Nahanni Butte at the end of your river trip and ask local staff about interpretive walks, cultural programs and community activities. Make sure you allow time to experience these new opportunities!

Important Safety Information

River Hazards

Water Temperature

The water temperature of Nahʔá Dehé (the South Nahanni River) and its principal tributaries is very low. Typically, during the summer months the water temperature varies between 5°C and 10°C.

Water Levels

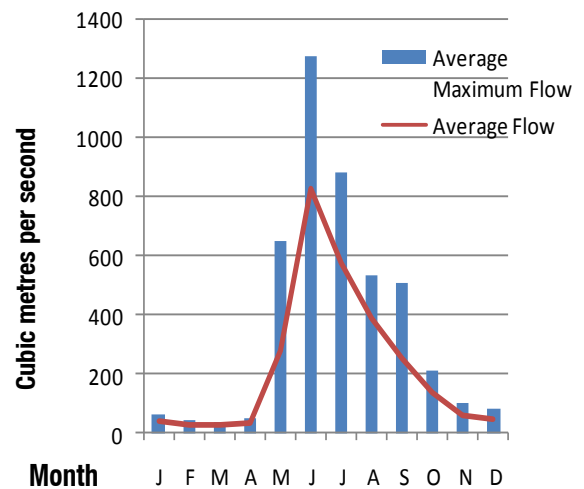
The water level of Nahʔá Dehé (the South Nahanni River) changes rapidly in response to snow melt and precipitation. Periods of maximum flow usually occur in mid-June, and safely navigating the river at this time is difficult.

Water levels can rise and fall rapidly throughout the summer months and changes are often generated by rain storms and surface run-off. In an average year, there may be several flood events during the spring melt.

Do not camp on low ground near tributary mouths or close to the bank of the main river during periods of wet weather. Rising water levels can also make travel on the river more difficult; it may be advisable to wait out periods of high water. August is typically the month with the most stable water levels.

South Nahanni River (above Virginia Falls) Monthly Runoff

Station Number: 10EB001 Period: 1962 to 2009



Flash Floods



A water level that rises and falls rapidly with little or no advanced warning is called a flash flood. Flash floods usually result from intense rainfall over a relatively small area, such as an intense thunderstorm at high elevations. Generally, precipitation increases with elevation. Rainfall and thunderstorms are most common in July, yet can occur anytime between June and September.

The topography of the land can increase the intensity (energy) of a flood. Steep and narrow drainages such as mountain valleys and canyons have a high potential to flash flood.

This rapid runoff can wash an area clean of soil and vegetation, often leaving behind slumped areas and a valley floor of rocks and boulders. Nahanni National Park Reserve has many such valleys and canyons such as Dry Canyon Creek, Prairie Creek, and Lafferty Creek.

Flash floods can be fatal. The following safety precautions may help to ensure a safe hike:

- Never hike alone.
- Each group should carry a rope or throw bag.
- Be watchful of localized weather systems.
- In high energy stream beds look for the high water mark. Erosion and lack of vegetation will define these areas.
- Valleys with a steep gradient and narrow cross section are prone to flash floods.
- Be aware of possible escape routes.
- Don't camp in areas of flash flood potential.

Areas of High Flash Flood Potential

Clearwater Creek, located approximately 11 kilometers downstream from Náijicho (Virginia Falls), has been identified as an area with extreme flash flood potential. Between August 1996 and March 1997, there were five recorded seismic events in the area. Perhaps as a result of these earthquakes, during the winter of 1996-97, a large landslide occurred at the confluence of Clearwater and Cathedral creeks, approximately 17 km upstream of Nah?á Dehé (the South Nahanni River). The landslide effectively blocked both creeks, and two lakes began to form behind this large earthen and rock dam.

In July 1997, portions of the natural dam collapsed, and the new 5 km-long lake on Clearwater Creek dropped by more than 15 meters. This incredible volume of water surged downstream to Nah?á Dehé (the South Nahanni River) resulting in a brief yet extreme flood event. No injuries were reported, although, groups camped downstream had to pack up quickly in the night, and get into their canoes to ride out the flood, which saw water levels on Nah?á Dehé and in Dahtaehth'i (Deadmen Valley) rise by more than four meters overnight.

The stability of the dam remains uncertain. Do not camp or hike on the Clearwater Creek delta or immediately downstream.



Photo: J. Zinger/Parks Canada

Climate and Other Weather



The climate of Nahᑭᑦ Dehé Ts'ᑭ Tu Zhánijī (the South Nahanni River watershed) is primarily cold continental. Because the park is in a mountainous region, weather patterns can fluctuate widely. Visitors should be prepared for extremes in temperatures and conditions.

At the start of the visitor season in June, temperatures may vary from below 0°C to 25°C. July and August are usually the warmest months, with temperatures ranging from 0°C to 30°C. Autumn conditions

approach as August advances, and by late August frost may occur during the night. September frequently witnesses freezing temperatures, and ice begins to form on the river in early October.

Temperatures generally decrease with elevation, while precipitation tends to increase with elevation. Summer precipitation is usually convective in nature, occurring in late afternoons or evenings in the form of showers or thundershowers. Precipitation totals in July and August can range from 60 to 90 mm. Severe thunderstorms and periods of intense rain can occur throughout the summer, with peak storm activity in July. Total precipitation from a severe storm event can range from 100 to 150 mm. Heavy thunderstorms may result in flash flooding, especially in narrow confines.

Snowfall can occur anytime, even during the summer months, with amounts of up to 10 cm.

Low cloud cover can often delay air traffic in the park at anytime.

AVERAGE CLIMATE DATA

	June	July	August
Average monthly precipitation at Fort Simpson	69 mm	91 mm	73 mm
Mean Maximum Temperatures at Tungsten	16°C	17°C	15°C
Mean Minimum Temperatures at Tungsten	4°C	6°C	4°C

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a significant risk in the event of a capsized canoe or other unplanned swim. During immersion, the onset of hypothermia will be very rapid and represents a considerable threat to life. Even after rescue, a victim may continue to cool and unconsciousness and death can follow. Heat from an external source such as a campfire, warm fluids (not alcohol) or another person's body heat is essential. Simply covering the victim is not sufficient to replace body heat. **Wearing a wet suit or dry suit will increase the amount of time you are able to stay in cold water without developing hypothermia and is a good precaution for whitewater paddling.**

Learn more about hypothermia before your trip.

Bears and Other Wildlife



Nahanni is home to both black and grizzly bears. Instances of bear-human conflicts have been rare at Nahanni. On other occasions bears have damaged property in an attempt to obtain food. All wilderness travellers are reminded of the risks of being in bear country and to be aware of bear safety, including appropriate responses with aggressive bears.

**Please report any wildlife encounters
Report sightings, tracks, and signs to Parks
Canada staff as soon as possible.**

Proper storage of food, garbage, and scented products in hard-sided lockable containers is essential. Bear caches must be used where available. All park visitors should consult Parks Canada's bear safety information brochure **You Are in Bear Country** to minimize the risk of a negative encounter with a bear.

Wolves and wolverines can carry rabies. Do not allow them to approach you. Be especially suspicious if wildlife appears 'friendly' or 'tame'.

Birds and other wildlife are inquisitive and opportunistic. They will scavenge food left out and caches that are not securely stashed. Make sure food and garbage is securely stored.

As a general rule keep a safe distance away from all wildlife and remember that it is illegal to touch, feed or entice wildlife with food items in a National Park.



Minimizing Risk

Nahanni National Park Reserve is a remote wilderness environment. The more information you have and the more prepared you are for any eventuality, the more likely you will be to have a safe and enjoyable trip. You should be able to assess your own abilities, skill level and equipment against your planned activities, and always be prepared for emergencies. Familiarize yourself with the public safety and search and rescue programs in Nahanni. Know the equipment and topographic maps that you will need and be aware how you and your group can minimize risks.

Solo Paddlers

People planning to travel the river solo should carefully assess their skills and equipment, and should speak to park staff extensively to understand the risks of travelling alone.

Before planning a trip

Key questions to ask yourself:

- What level of experience, skill and equipment do I and other group members have? Are my skill levels and equipment suitable for the intended trip?
- What type of trip should it be (canoe, white-water raft)? What information, equipment or training do I still need? What are the hazards?
- What are the legal requirements for my own safety?
- What typical and extreme conditions (climate, water levels) can I expect at the time of year I intend to go? Is this suitable for my level of experience?
- How long will the trip take? How long will it take to get to the starting point, and home again once the trip is complete? How long a buffer period should I allow to deal with poor weather, travel delays, etc?
- Can I do this trip safely on my own? Should I consider going with a licensed commercial outfitter?

Safety is Your Responsibility

Due to the remote nature of the park you must be self-sufficient. If you require assistance, the Gahn̄hthah M̄je (Rabbitkettle Lake) and Náj̄l̄icho (Virginia Falls) staff cabins are staffed during July and August. Commercial river guides may also be able to assist you to contact park staff. It is also possible to call for assistance from Nahanni Butte, the closest community to the park.

We highly recommend that all non-guided visitors who plan to travel on rivers in Nahanni National Park Reserve have:

- Highly developed whitewater paddling and/or rafting skills, with multiple years of experience;
- Well-practised and highly developed self-rescue skills;
- Extensive experience travelling and camping in a remote wilderness environment.

If you do not meet all three criteria, we strongly recommend that you travel with a park-licensed outfitting/guiding company or obtain the necessary skills and experience before visiting.

Rating River Difficulty

River difficulty is rated using the American version of the International Scale of River Difficulty. Individual rapids are rated by class, ranging from Class I to Class VI of river difficulty. Relative to Nahanni, physical isolation, cold water temperatures and the distance from help in an emergency are all factors that can affect the rating.

River conditions and the location of navigable channels can change quickly due to a number of variables including seasonal water levels. As a result, the ratings of river difficulty used in the South Nahanni River Touring Guide may vary in accuracy. The guide does not show every rapid on the South Nahanni River.

Equipment

Proper equipment is very important for people travelling in the Nahanni. Aluminum canoes are difficult to repair and don't easily slide off rocks, and are therefore not recommended. Canoes made of ABS plastic are a good alternative. Whitewater rafts should have multiple air chambers, and if possible, inflatable floors as well.

It is strongly recommended that you bring one spare paddle, spray deck and bailing device for each canoe or a spare oar for each raft, a sound signalling device, and each person should have a water-resistant whistle permanently attached to his or her lifejacket.

Make sure you comply with Transport Canada's minimum safety equipment required for human-powered pleasure craft (including canoes and kayaks), found at www.tc.gc.ca.

Wetsuits or dry suits are highly recommended. During periods of prolonged immersion in water, wetsuits and / or dry suits will reduce the risks of suffering from severe hypothermia. Brightly coloured equipment is recommended.

A first-aid kit is essential and should contain supplies to deal with the types of injuries you could expect for the activities you will be undertaking.

Open fires are not permitted in the park. They must be contained within a portable stove such as a fire-box or fire-pan.

Carry a portable cooking stove, with appropriate fuel, or a barbeque with briquettes in case of a fire ban during a high fire hazard period.

Drinking water should be filtered, boiled, or treated, keeping in mind that silt levels and cold temperatures may reduce the effectiveness of certain treatment methods.

Emergency survival gear, such as high-energy food, survival blanket, first-aid supplies, fire starter, waterproof matches, and a sound or visual signalling device are very important items. Should you become separated from your boat, these items will help you survive. Always keep your emergency survival kit attached to your body when travelling on the water, preferably in a waterproof bag.



Communications

Please be aware that all of these recommended modes of communication can be unreliable and at times you will be unable to make contact with anyone. If you are having difficulty receiving a signal it may be possible to get to higher ground to improve signal strength. This can be very time consuming and in some cases dangerous, please use caution. As always with technology, be aware of the weaknesses of your system.

Satellite phones are the preferred method of making contact. Your phone can put you in touch with emergency assistance 24 hours a day. We recommend obtaining a satellite phone prior to your trip.

The iridium system currently provides the most reliable coverage over Nahanni but other options are available. Make sure to bring extra batteries and keep your device dry. Portable solar chargers for batteries are also recommended. Be sure to write down emergency phone numbers and program them into the phone.

Please Note: there are area of the park, especially at Glacier Lake, where satellite phone coverage is unreliable.

Emergency radio are provided in all emergency shelters and staff cabins. Instructions for use, call signs, and phone numbers are at these locations. Radios are monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by the duty officer in the Fort Simpson office. You will be provided with details during your in-park briefing.

SPOT devices can be used to allow family and friends to track your progress on your trip as well as to initiate a distress signal. This signal is non-reversible and is to be used in a life-threatening situation only. **Visitors should be aware that the SPOT satellite network has poor coverage at high latitudes and that signals can be obstructed in canyons and valleys such as First canyon or the Cirque of Unclimbables. They are NOT considered a reliable method of communication.** Make sure that you have advised your family and friends who may be tracking your “okay” messages that the absence of a message does not necessarily mean you are having problems. It most likely means you are temporarily not transmitting. During your registration we will collect information about your unit in the event that there is a need to check activity from it.

Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) can also be carried into remote areas. When activated, they send a distress signal to the Canadian Forces in Trenton, Ontario who will initiate a rescue from there. Once activated, the signal is non-reversible; these are to be used in a life-threatening situation only. Make sure your PLB is properly registered by calling the Canadian Personal Emergency Beacon Registry in Ottawa at (613) 992-0079 or online at www.canadianbeaconregistry.forces.gc.ca. Only PLB's that transmit a distress signal at 406 MHz are permitted in Canada.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

USE EMERGENCY SHELTER RADIOS TO CONTACT THE PARK OFFICE DURING OFFICE HOURS

OR

CALL THE DUTY OFFICER LINE

(867) 695-3732

THIS NUMBER IS MONITORED 24 HOURS A DAY

June 1—September 30

Search and Recue

Nahanni National Park Reserve is one of the most remote parks in Canada, and rescue services and facilities are very limited. Our public safety staff are trained in swift water rescue, first aid, patient stabilization and evacuation in non-technical terrain. Park search and rescue operations may be delayed by poor weather conditions, geography, aircraft or staff availability. For high-angle technical evacuations, assistance from outside the Northwest Territories is required.

TO HELP US AND YOURSELF. PLEASE:

- Be self-reliant and responsible for your own safety;
- Have the required equipment, knowledge, skills and physical fitness;
- Consider the public safety information and advice provided by Parks Canada;
- Seek out additional advice from our staff if you are uncertain about what you may encounter;
- Follow the public safety registration and de-registration program;
- Be prepared for emergencies (medical, wild-life or weather related).

A SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE WILL BE INITIATED WHEN:

- **a group has failed to de-register and initial investigation suggests a group is overdue, or**
- **a distress signal is reported.**

In the case of an overdue group, a physical search will not occur before 24 hours has elapsed, and may occur as late as 48 hours after the de-registration date has passed (dependent on weather conditions and availability of aircraft). The detailed information that you are required to give park staff during the registration process, such as the number and colour of your tents and canoes/rafts, and details of your itinerary will become very important in the event a search has to be initiated. A search for a missing group can take several days.

In an emergency, visitors are encouraged to break into the following park staff cabins: Rabbitkettle, Sunblood, Virginia Falls, Flat River and Deadmen Valley (locations marked on river guides) to get assistance. Personal Locator Beacons (with instructions), park radios (operational from June 01 - September 30 only), food supplies and first-aid are located in each cabin.



Park Infrastructure & Facilities

Log books and Check-In Stations

If you are in need of assistance or you are behind schedule, keep to the main river channels, especially in the Splits. There are logbooks at the following locations:

- Moore's Cabin (river left, near km 130)
- Northwest end of Glacier Lake near the private cabin on the shale bar;
- Gahn̓hthah (Rabbitkettle Lake) portage landing on South Nahanni River (river right side – km 225);
- Ná̓l̓i̓cho (Virginia Falls) (adjacent to the docking area –km 343);
- Dahtaehth'ì (Deadmen Valley) staff cabin – km 456
- Tu̓lets̓e̓q̓ (Kraus Hotsprings) – km 486.



These logbooks are not mandatory, but could assist rescuers in locating missing parties. Providing information such as planned off-river hiking routes will allow a search party to narrow the focus of a search if your group fails to de-register as scheduled.

Emergency Shelter Regulations

- Do not sleep in the shelters or in front of them
- Do not cook in them
- Do not leave your garbage behind
- Do not store your food, fuel or equipment

Outhouses

There are outhouses and composting toilets available at various locations in the park. Please use these where available. There are outhouses and composting toilets located at the following locations:

- Rabbitkettle Lake campground and staff cabin
- Rabbitkettle Island campground
- Virginia Falls campground
- The Gate
- Kraus Hotsprings

Where outhouses are not provided please dig cat holes 100 m away from water source and/or use Leave No Trace Ethics. Please do not throw any garbage or non-organics. It takes a long time for non-organic matter to break down in this environment. Please provide any comments or concerns about the status of these outhouse or composting toilets to the park staff.

Environmental Conservation Practices

- Choose hiking routes on durable terrain.
- Select campsites in durable surfaces where signs of your occupation will be minimal, especially when travelling in a large group.
- Minimize the use of soaps and, when necessary, use biodegradable soap.
- Dish and excess cooking water should be poured into a shallow sump hole away from campsite and 50 meters away from water sources.
- Pack out everything that you packed in. Do not leave garbage in the outhouses or composting toilets.
- Dig cat holes for human waste disposal
- Disperse ashes in moving water and leave your campsite in a natural state.



Fees

Entry fees are charged at most national parks and national historic sites. Most of the money raised through admission fees remains in the particular park or site where it is collected. This means that every time you visit a park or site you are investing in its future — and in a legacy for future generations.

An annual northern park backcountry excursion fee of \$147.20 (Cdn) per person (used for multi-day trips) will be applied at the time of registration. Daily fees of \$24.50 (Cdn) per person per day are also available to those only travelling in the park for the day.

*All fees listed include applicable taxes and are subject to change. Effective as of January 2011

The Parks Canada Discovery Passes covering entry fees are not valid in National Parks in the Northwest Territories. However, the northern backcountry excursion fees are valid in any national park or national park reserve in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories as well as in Ivvavik National Park in the Yukon Territory.

FISHING PERMIT FEE

Annual \$ 34.30

valid only in Nahanni National Park Reserve

Fishing permits can be purchased from the Fort Simpson office as well as at Virginia Falls and Rabbitkettle Lake. The Government of the Northwest Territories fishing license does not cover fishing in Nahanni National Park Reserve.

PARK REGULATIONS

The primary objective of national parks is to protect for all time representative natural areas of Canadian significance in a system of national parks, and to encourage public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of this unique heritage so as to leave it unimpaired for future generations. In order to ensure that national parks remain unimpaired, rules and regulations apply to users of national parks. The National Parks Act gives Parks Canada the authority to establish and enforce regulations.

The following regulations are of particular importance for all users of Nahanni National Park Reserve. They are provided as brief information statements for convenience only. For a complete listing of park regulations, and up to date park Superintendent Notices please contact the park office.

SUMMARY OF RIGHTS, RESTRICTIONS & REGULATIONS

- All Day use, overnight and multiday visitors must pay a park user fee which can be purchased through the park office. Day use fees may also be paid upon arrival at (Náǰlǰcho) Virginia Falls.
- All overnight and multiday visitors must register in person or by phone with the park office, prior to entering the park. When leaving the park all visitors must deregister within 24 hours of the de-registration date indicated on your registration form. Deregistration can be done by contacting the Park Office by phone or in person.
- Park visitors must obey all posted campground and day use closures. Closures are often put in place to restore impacted areas or due to bear activity in the area.
- Open fires for cooking or heat are not permitted in Nahanni National Park Reserve. All fires must be contained within a portable stove such as fire-box or fire-pan.
- No person shall dispose of garbage in the park. All garbage and waste must be packed out.
- No person shall feed, attempt to feed, bait or attract, or touch wildlife in the park.
- Park visitors planning to sport fish in the park must be in possession of a valid Nahanni National Park Reserve fishing permit, and they must fish within accordance of the National Parks of Canada Fishing Regulations.
- Commercial production of still photography, film and video require a valid filming permit.
- Businesses wishing to operate in the park must be in possession of a valid business license.



Photo: C. Blyth/Parks Canada

- Aircraft access into the park is allowed by permit only, and is restricted to designated landing sites. The following sites are designated as landing areas within Nahanni:
 1. Náìlìcho (Virginia Falls)
 2. Gahn̄hthah M̄je (Rabbitkettle Lake)
 3. Bunny Bar
 4. Island Lake
 5. Honeymoon Lake
 6. Glacier Lake
 7. Seaplane Lake
 - No person shall remove, deface, damage, or destroy any cultural artifact or structure within the park.
 - A permit is required for any Natural, Archaeological, or Social Science Research.
 - No person shall remove, deface, damage, or destroy any building, structure or facility within the park.
 - All Custodial Groups (institutional group where at least one person is less than 18 years of age and that minor is not in the company of his/her parent) require a valid custodial permit.
 - No person shall remove, deface, damage, or destroy any flora or natural objects within the park. Examples include antlers, fossils, rocks, feathers, flowers, and berries.
 - No person shall enter a cave in the park.
 - Zone 1 Special Preservation Areas are closed off to all Park Visitors. No person shall enter a Zone 1 area in the park unless authorized by permit or when accompanied by a park employee. There are seven locations within Nahanni National Park Reserve which have been designated Zone 1 - Special Preservation Area.
- These are:
- Gahn̄hthah (Rabbitkettle Hotsprings)
 - Wildmint Hotsprings
 - Old Pots Hotsprings
 - Grotte Valerie
 - Chitú (Yohin Lake)
 - Nintsí Daheda (Sand Blowouts)
 - Deadmen Valley Sheep Licks
- Aboriginal people are allowed to hunt, trap, fish, and harvest within the park in support of their traditional harvesting rights.
 - Non Aboriginal people are not permitted to hunt in the park unless they are a client with one of the three Licensed Hunting Guide Outfitters that currently operate within the expansion area of Nahanni National Park Reserve.
 - No other person is allowed to discharge a firearm in the park.
 - Motorized use access in the park is restricted to Aboriginal people who are pursuing their traditional harvesting rights.
 - No other person shall operate a motor boat, all-terrain vehicle, over snow vehicle, or motorized vehicle in the park.
 - Existing roads in Nahanni National Park Reserve are restricted access only, and are not open to the public for motorized use.