

YOHO NATIONAL PARK

BRITISH COLUMBIA

LOCATION

Yoho National Park lies along the west slope of the Canadian Rockies in British Columbia. The Continental Divide marks the eastern boundary bordering Banff National Park.

Concentrated in the 507 square miles of the Park are many spectacular waterfalls, towering peaks, and beautiful lakes. Alpine and subalpine plant communities are a prominent and colourful aspect of the park landscape and offer an incredible variety of wild beauty.

The information in this folder and on the map on the reverse side is provided to help the visitor and answer general inquiries about the Park. Additional information may be obtained from the park information offices or the administration office in Field.

PURPOSE

Yoho National Park is one of Canada's 18 National Parks which form a chain of nature sanctuaries extending from Mount Revelstoke in British Columbia to Terra Nova in Newfoundland. These Parks have been established for the preservation of selected areas in their natural state for the benefit, education and enjoyment of present and future generations of Canadians.

This vast area of more than 29,000 square miles is administered by the National and Historic Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

NATURAL FEATURES

GEOLOGICAL

The surface of the land in the Park presents an extremely rugged and varied scenic picture. Mountains of many different shapes and elevations stand high above deeply cut valleys. The highest point is the south tower of Mount Goodsir, in the south-east corner of the Park, at an altitude of 11,686 feet. The lowest point, 3,300 feet, is in the bottom of the valley of the Kicking Horse River at the west boundary near Leancoil, thus making a relief of 8,386 feet within the Park.

Yoho National Park is essentially the drainage basin of the Kicking Horse River and its tributaries from Lake Wapta near the east entrance to beyond Leancoil. The principal tributary rivers include the Yoho, Amiskwi, and Otterhead Rivers and Porcupine Creek from the north and west, and the Ottertail and Beaverfoot Rivers and Cataract Brook from the east and south. These waters flow westward out of the Park to join the Columbia River and thence to the Pacific Ocean.

The valley of the Yoho River, in the northern end of the Park, provides a breathtaking panorama of canyons and gorges, cliffs and waterfalls. The meltwater from Daly Glacier plunges a vertical distance of 1,248 feet in its short course which culminates in Takakkaw Falls just above the turbulent Yoho River. Twin Falls, in the upper Yoho Valley, rivals Takakkaw Falls in beauty and Laughing Falls adds its curtain of mist to the wonders of this scenic valley.

Wapta Falls, the largest in the Park, occurs where the Kicking Horse River changes its course from the original preglacial southerly flow down what is now the Beaverfoot Valley, to the present northwesterly flow. The Falls, which are 200 feet wide and more than 90 feet high are formed in steeply dipping rock formations and are unusual in that the falling waters have a natural limestone screen. If the sun is shining one is sure to see brilliant rainbow colours in the swirling veils of spray. Another unusual falls on the Kicking Horse River is about two miles southwest of the village of Field. Here eroding waters have cut underneath the rock, which at one time made the lip of the falls, to form a "Natural Bridge".

There are many small lakes in the area but what they lack in size is compensated for by exquisite beauty of colour and setting. Emerald Lake and Lake O'Hara with their translucent green waters and magnificent mountain bowls are classed with the most beautiful lakes of the world.

An extensive ice-field covers much of the Waputik Mountains, northeast of Takakkaw, and sends many large tongues far down bordering valleys. Yoho Glacier, part of the large Wapta Icefields at the north end of the park, can be seen from many parts of the Yoho Valley. Many of the summit areas of the President, Van Horne, and Ottertail Ranges are ornamented by cliff glaciers. The work of former glaciers is evidenced by the deeply sculptured landforms for which the Park is celebrated. These include high rugged peaks, ice-carved passes or cols, cirques or amphitheatre-like depressions, rock basins which contain vividly coloured lakes or tarns and endless cataracts and waterfalls in the rushing meltwater streams.

The moving glaciers of an earlier day formed moraines between Wapta Lake and Sherbrooke Creek, near the eastern entrance to the Park, which still contain permanently frozen gravel and masses of ice not many feet below the surface.

The mountainous scenery of the Park has been hewn from sandstone, shale and limestone which were deposited in seas which covered this area in lower, middle and upper Cambrian times. These rocks, which have a total thickness within the Park of over 10,000 feet, have been bowed into a series of northwesterly-southeasterly trending folds. In addition they have been broken by numerous faults and uplifted many thousands of feet. From the road you can see the faulted crest of a broad anticline or upfold, capped by middle Cambrian rocks, between Mount Stephen and Cathedral Mountain. The mountains of the Chancellor group and the towers of the Goodsirs are composed of rocks which lie in shallow synclines or down-folds.

In the valley of the Ice River in the southern tip of the Park there is the largest outcropping of igneous rock in the Rockies. This geologically interesting extrusion, known as the Ice River Complex, contains blue sodalite veins.

Hoodoo Valley, near Leancoil, is widely known for the unusual erosional forms which are cut into partly cemented boulders and clay. These tall spires on the side of a very steep valley commonly have large boulder caps balanced on the tops of them and present a most interesting sight.

Detailed information on the geological points of interest in Yoho is found in the geological guidebook to the Park sold at the park information offices and administration building at \$1.30.

PLANTLIFE

The plantlife of the Park is rich and varied. About 600 kinds of plants have already been recognized in the area. Both the alpine and subalpine vegetational zones, each with its characteristic plants, are intensely interesting and in the flowering season exhibit patterns of vivid colours which enhance the beauty of the mountains.

Some of the many alpine areas are easily accessible. Here one may wander among the brilliantly coloured flowers of the alpine meadows or tundra instead of admiring their mosaic effect from a distance. Both experiences are rewarding.

The forests, which clothe the valleys and shoulders of the mountains are largely evergreen. Lodgepole pine, white-bark pine, blue Douglas fir, alpine fir, white spruce and Engelmann spruce are the common trees, but limber pine and alpine larch are frequently found near timberline.

Trees usually ascend the mountains to about 7,000 feet altitude. Above treeline are the alplands with their dwarfed but highly coloured flowers and bushes.

Although the forest trees are the most conspicuous plants, there are many other kinds including shrubs and small herbaceous plants which are attractive and form part of the many interesting plant communities. White mountain rhododendron, willows, dwarf birch, rusty menziesia, common bearberry, alpine bearberry and white mountain-heath are just a few of the shrubs.

The herbaceous plants or wildflowers include many lilies and orchids, some of which grow in tremendous numbers. There are also many kinds of anemones, saxifrages, violets, louseworts, arnicas, asters, fleabanes, golden-rods, buttercups and thistles.

WILDLIFE

As in all National Parks, the area is a wildlife sanctuary where nature is left undisturbed. Among the larger animals of the Park which are usually seen are wapiti or American elk, black bear, moose, mule deer, whitetailed deer and Rocky Mountain goat. Some of the smaller animals are the hoary marmot, pika, golden-mantled and Columbian ground squirrels and beaver. There are also cougar, coyotes, wolverine, lynx, grizzly bears and marten.

BIRDLIFE

The Park also supports a considerable variety of bird-life. Although no adequate study has been made, there are probably 170 kinds of birds evident in the Park at various times of the year, particularly during summer. Some of the more interesting birds are the Canada goose, golden eagle, white-tailed ptarmigan, pileated woodpecker, Clarke's nutcracker and gray jay or "camp-robber". For those particularly interested in birds, the book "Birds of the Mountain National Parks" is sold at \$2.00 at the information offices.

FISH

Trout are found in most of the lakes. Rainbow, Dolly Varden, cutthroat, brook, lake, splake and Marstoni red trout are all caught. The best fishing lakes are Emerald, Wapta, O'Hara, McArthur, Linda, Yoho and Marpole.

Stream fishing is best where there is no glacial silt in the water. Emerald, Amiskwi, Ottortail and Ice Rivers are usually the best bets and there are some nice holes in the Kicking Horse River above its junction with the Yoho.

In a high mountainous area like Yoho, most of the soil is eroded thus depriving the fish of the conditions which would allow them to grow large and multiply. For this reason, Yoho is not a park for large catches or record fish.

If you are over 16, you must obtain a park fishing licence from a park office or park warden at a cost of \$2. National Park fishing regulations change annually so you should obtain a summary of the regulations (available free) or inquire at any park office or from a park warden for information on the regulations.

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION

Because of the large number of visitors, it is impossible to provide a personal guiding and trip planning service. You will be on your own while you are in the park and much of the enjoyment you will gain from your visit will come from organizing your schedule of activities to coincide with your particular interests.

This folder provides all the general information on the park a visitor needs so read it thoroughly and keep it for frequent reference. Many times you will find an answer to a question, a suggestion for a trip to a point of interest, or other useful information.

If you wish additional information and advice, call at one of the information offices where an attendant will help you or suggest something different to do or see. Publications on the geology, birds, and other natural features of this part of the mountains are also on sale and will help your understanding and appreciation of the park.

Try to find time to take part in the program of activities directed by the park naturalist. Information on the times of conducted hikes and film and slide programs is posted in the campgrounds, information offices, and other places in the park. You will find the naturalist and his assistants eager to answer any questions you have about the natural history of the park.

HOW TO SEE THE INTERESTING FEATURES

Since the early days of the Park when the horse-drawn "tally-ho" transported guests from Field to Emerald Lake, a network of roads has been constructed to make most of the Park's interesting features accessible to visitors.

A highway up the scenic Yoho Valley reaches Takakkaw Falls. Trails continue from there into the high country of the Little Yoho. Another highway brings the visitor to the

Natural Bridge and Emerald Lake. From the Natural Bridge there is a road to the salt-lick, where you can usually see animals feeding, and to the mouths of the Emerald and Amiskwi Rivers.

The extensive system of trails shown on the map totals over 250 miles. One network of circuit trails radiates from Lake O'Hara offering convenient access to alpine environment. Another trail system provides access throughout the Yoho Valley to major points of interest and such geological phenomena as Laughing Falls, Twin Falls, Yoho Glacier and to small lakes and tarns, cataracts, and canyons. This trail system connects with the Emerald Lake circuit which includes trails over Burgess Pass and to Hamilton Falls and Hamilton Lake.

The Amiskwi Valley is accessible by trail through its entire length, as are the Ottortail and Otterhead Valleys. The "hoodoos" are reached by a short trail up Hoodoo Creek. Trails lead to Wapta Falls and to the Ice River Valley. Trails ascend to three look-outs, Mount Hunter, Mount King and Mount Paget, the latter branching off to Sherbrooke Lake.

PARK ADMINISTRATION

A resident Superintendent at the Park office in Field is in charge of the Park. Park Wardens and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police enforce the law and park regulations and protect the park and its visitors.

SEASON

The Park is open all year, but facilities such as campgrounds and picnic areas are in use from May until October, depending on weather conditions.

CAMPING

Kicking Horse and Hoodoo Creek are the main campgrounds, providing space for tents, campers and trailers although very large trailers cannot be accommodated. Other campgrounds are at Chancellor Peak and Takakkaw Falls but trailers cannot be taken to the latter campground due to the restriction against use of trailers on the Yoho Valley road. Camping fees are \$1 a day when no electrical, water or sewer connections are installed on a campsite. A small undeveloped campground, which may be used at no charge, is located at Lake O'Hara but is not accessible by car. Campers and their equipment can be taken to this campground by a commercial bus service operating from Wapta Lodge.

Visitors wishing to camp overnight away from an established campground must register with the District Warden before departure and upon returning. A fire permit should also be obtained.

Picnic areas are also provided at convenient locations near travelled routes.

ACCOMMODATION

Yoho has a number of privately operated lodges, located at Lake O'Hara, in the Yoho Valley, and Emerald Lake, as well as near Wapta Lake and east of Field. Arrangements for reservations and accommodation should be made directly with the operators; the National Parks Service does not provide an accommodation service.

PRESERVATION

National Parks are selected areas set apart as nature sanctuaries and special care is taken to maintain them in their natural state. For this reason all birds, animals, wildlife, trees, rocks and fossils are to remain undisturbed. Even the wildflowers are not to be picked; they are to be left for others to enjoy. Feeding, touching or molesting wild animals is not permitted. This is in the interests of the animals, as well as the human who could receive serious injury.

Please help protect your own park for future enjoyment. It is part of your national inheritance.

PREVENT FIRE

Campfires near the highway may be kindled only in fireplaces provided for this purpose, and must be completely extinguished before campers leave the site. Fire permits must be obtained from the District Warden for any open fires during trail travel. Visitors observing an unattended fire should attempt to extinguish it if possible, and promptly report it to the nearest Park employee.

Fire in a National Park can cause damage which cannot be repaired in a hundred years.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

For the protection of mountain climbers, all travel off the Park trails must be registered with the District Warden, before and after the climb. Inexperienced climbers should obtain the services of a qualified guide and full information concerning the necessary equipment.

PETS

Dogs or cats may accompany visitors into the Park. For the protection of Park animals, however, dogs must be kept on leash.

MOTOR LICENCE

All motor vehicles entering the park are required to have the \$2 park vehicle licence. This licence is valid in all National Parks for the entire fiscal year.

MOTOR BOATS

Because motor boats disrupt the serenity and are also harmful to aquatic life in the small lakes of Yoho National Park they are prohibited. However, rowboats can be used and may be rented at Emerald Lake and Lake O'Hara.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

As shown on the accompanying map, the Park is easily accessible by highway and rail. The nearest airport is at Calgary 130 miles southeast of the Park.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PARK

"YOHO!" is an exclamation of wonder and astonishment in the Cree Indian tongue. The Park was first established as a scenic reserve by Order-In-Council on October 10, 1886, at that time comprising only 10 square miles near Mount Stephen. This area has been changed on several occasions and now totals 507 square miles.

The Kicking Horse Pass was discovered by Dr. James Hector, geologist of the Palliser Expedition of 1857-60. Near the junction of the Beaverfoot and Kicking Horse Rivers, he was kicked by a pack-horse and laid up for a day. This incident gave the name "Kicking Horse" to the pass and the river flowing from Lake Wapta.

The Canadian Pacific Railway chose this route for its transcontinental line and more recently it has become part of the route for the Trans-Canada Highway.

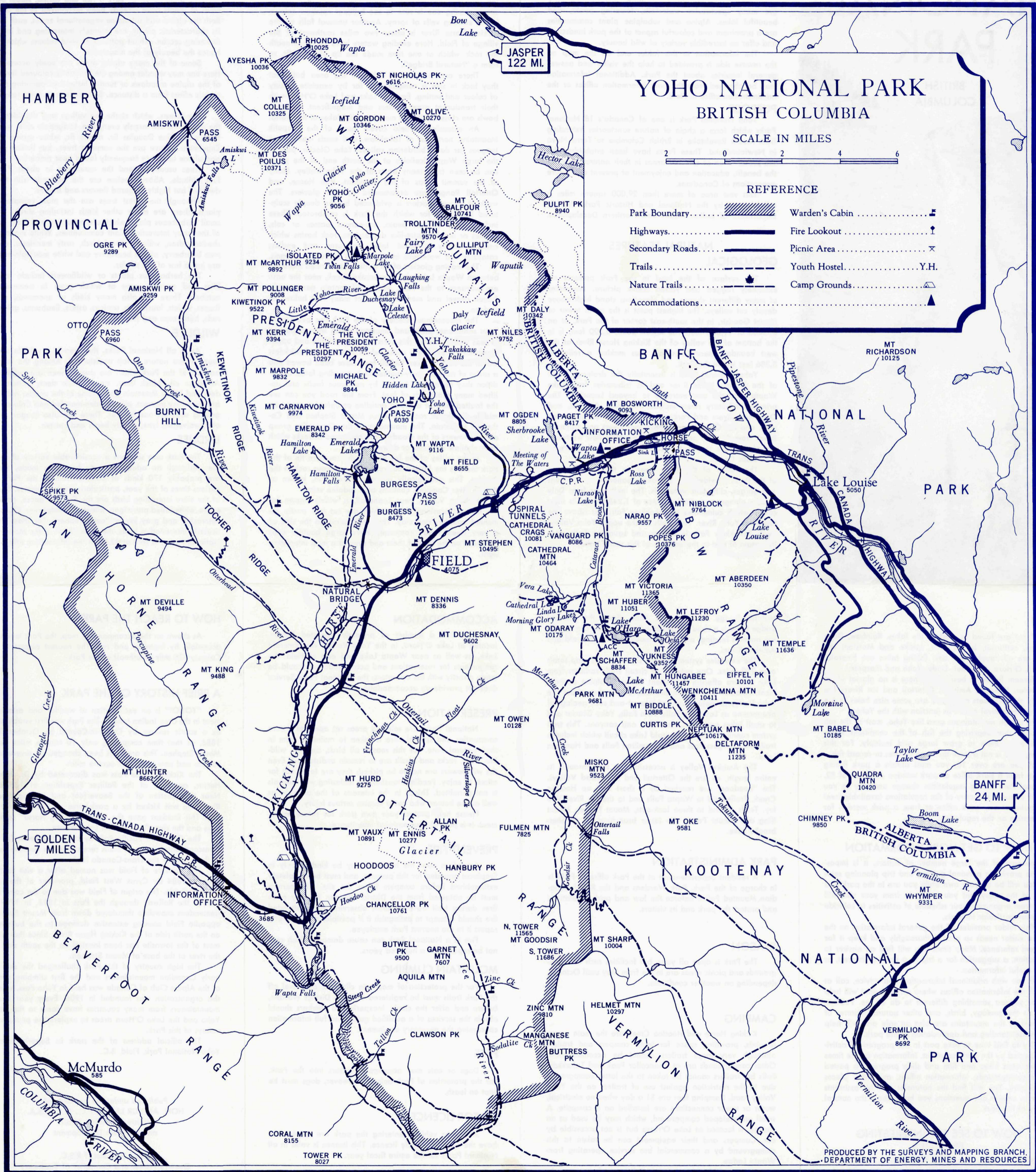
The townsite of Field was named after a visit to the area in 1884 by Cyrus West Field, promoter of the first Atlantic Cable. The origin of Field was due to the construction of the Railway through the Pass in 1884. In 1909 a tremendous snowslide thundered down from Mount Burgess opposite Field causing extensive damage to the buildings on the north side of the Kicking Horse River. Since that time most of the townsite has been located on the south side of the river at the base of Mount Stephen.

The high country of this Park challenged the skill of early Canadian mountaineers and the first climbing camp of the Alpine Club of Canada was held in Yoho Pass, where this organization was founded in 1906. Every year since, mountaineers from many countries have come to the Little Yoho and the Lake O'Hara areas to explore the peaks and valleys of this Park.

The official address of the park is: Superintendent, Yoho National Park, Field, B.C.

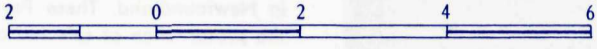
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YOHO NATIONAL PARK BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCALE IN MILES



REFERENCE

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--|----------------|--|
| Park Boundary | | Warden's Cabin | |
| Highways | | Fire Lookout | |
| Secondary Roads | | Picnic Area | |
| Trails | | Youth Hostel | |
| Nature Trails | | Camp Grounds | |
| Accommodations | | | |

JASPER
122 MI.

BANFF
24 MI.

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