



TONGASS
NATIONAL FOREST
RECREATION

TRAILS ON PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND

Cavern Lake Cave Trail and Viewing Deck. Length: 250 feet. Access: off forest road #27.

Information: The trail leads to a viewing deck which provides excellent views of the mouth of Cavern Lake Cave and the stream gushing from the cavern. Visitors are cautioned not to enter the cave.

Conditions/Needs: Due for replacement through RAC funds in 2017.

El Capitan Cave Access Trail. Length and location: 1,300 feet, climbs about 300 feet from the parking lot to the cave entrance. Difficulty: More difficult.

Information: This trail features a combination of tread types which include gravel, boardwalk, wooden stairways, and natural tread. A gate has been installed inside the cave about 200 feet from the mouth to protect the cave resource and ensure the safety of visitors. The Forest Service conducts guided walks into the cave throughout the summer.

Conditions/Needs: Maintained adequately but the wooden infrastructure will be hitting its life expectancy soon and will need replacement.

Honker Divide Canoe Route. Length and location: 63-mile canoe route from the Hatchery Creek Bridge on forest road #30 to the town of Thorne Bay.

Information: The route can be very strenuous and, when water levels are low, dragging of the canoe through a number of sections is required. The portages are brushed and marked but otherwise undeveloped. Additional access is possible by float plane to Hatchery Lake. This route also provides access to the Honker Lake Forest Service Cabin. It follows the very scenic Thorne River.

Conditions/Needs: Poorly maintained; one portage trail was replaced in 2014; the rest of the trail needs work cutting blowdown out and improving some boardwalk sections.

Karta River Trail. Length and location: Moderate 4.8 mile hike from the mouth of Karta River at Karta Bay to Salmon Lake Cabin.

Information: Access is provided to Karta River, Karta Lake, and Salmon Lake cabins. This area lies within the heart of the Karta Wilderness Area. It is the most heavily used trail on Thorne Bay Ranger District.

Conditions/Needs: Overall it is in good shape, though some of the boardwalk may need replacement in near future (particularly towards Karta Falls).

Lake Ellen/Salt Chuck Trail. Length: 1 mile. Access: follow Kasaan Road to a parking area just south of Lake No. 3. Difficulty: more difficult due to deep mud.

Information: Salt Chuck Trail begins in an old clear-cut at the edge of the gravel. For most of the way the trail closely follows the banks of Ellen Creek. It passes the historic site of the old Salt Chuck mine. The Salt Chuck ruins are extensive and includes interpretive signs and numerous pieces of machinery.

Conditions/Needs: Fair condition.

Red Bay Lake Trail. Length: 3/4 mile. Access: From trailhead on forest road #20 to a row boat at the north end of Red Bay Lake. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Trail follows Red Bay Lake Creek. The trail has been upgraded to a mostly boardwalk trail. The row boat can be used to access the Red Bay Lake Cabin.

Conditions/Needs: Good shape, requires annual maintenance.

Salmon Bay Lake Trail. Length: 1.5 miles. Difficulty: More difficult.

Information: Trail extends from the saltwater flats of Salmon Bay to a skiff located on Salmon Bay Lake. The skiff can then be used to access the cabin. There are areas of mud and bad footing on the trail. At the north end there is some moderate climbing.

Conditions/Needs: Poor condition, and a missing bridge makes it impassable at high water (and difficult at low water).

Sarkar Canoe Route. Length: 15-mile loop canoe route. Access: by forest road #2050 approximately 35 miles northwest of Thorne Bay.

Information: Route includes five major lakes: Sarkar, Upper Sarkar, Finger, Raven and Long. There is a small parking area which the Forest Service provides for access to the lake and the Sarkar Cabin. A series of boardwalk canoe portages was completed in 1992 connecting each of the lakes to form a canoe trail which has been classified as easy.

Conditions/Needs: Adequate condition, though the boardwalk needs attention in some places.

Shiple Bay Trail. Length: 3/4 mile. Access: from Shiple Bay Cabin to Shiple Lake. Difficulty: More difficult.

Information: Trail leads past the cabin along the north shore of Shiple Creek, crosses over a bridge to the south shore, then follows a moderate to fairly steep (for short distances) incline along this shore to the banks of Shiple Bay.

Conditions/Needs: Trail is grown in and needs work getting cut out; there is no longer a skiff at the lake (there used to be one for better access around the lake).

Canoe Point Trail. Length: 1/4 mile one-way trail. Access: by boat or float plane. Difficulty: More difficult.

Information: Trailhead is located at the Canoe Point Picnic Area in Trocadero Bay (approximately 8 water miles from Craig). The trail has a gravel and natural tread that leads to a spectacular 130-foot waterfall. The picnic area and trail are a popular destination for recreational boaters and kayakers.

Conditions/Needs: Fair condition but needs stair and boardwalk replacement; in the picnic area, the picnic table is rotten.

Kegan Lake Trail. Length: 1/2 mile. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Trail is from saltwater at head of Kegan Cove in Moira Sound to Kegan Lake, along Kegan Creek, between Keegan Creek and Keegan Cove Forest Service cabins.

Conditions/Needs: Very poor condition, well used trail. Needs extensive improvement.

One Duck Trail. Length: 1 1/4 mile. Access: off the Hydaburg road 2 miles south of the intersection with the Hollis-Klawock Highway. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Trail accesses a 3-sided Adirondack type shelter located at the edge of the alpine vegetation zone. Trail climbs 1,400 feet, making for a steep climb.

Conditions/Needs: Recently rebuilt; good condition.

Trocadero Trail. Length: 1.3 miles. Access: off the Hydaburg Road 9.0 miles south of the intersection with the Hollis-Klawock Highway. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Trail descends to the west and ends at Snipe Creek. After fording the creek (no bridge), an unmaintained path can be followed to the estuary at Trocadero Bay.

Conditions/Needs: Fair condition with low maintenance.

Harris River Interpretive Trail. Length: 1/2 mile. Access: located off Hollis-Klawock Highway. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Interpretive loop trail descends to the south side of the road and ends along the Harris River.

Conditions/Needs: Excellent condition.

Harris River Trail. Access: located off Hydaburg Road. Difficulty: Easy.

Information: Hiking trail with access to Harris River. Trail is on the east side of the road and ends along the Harris River.

Conditions/Needs: Excellent condition.

Twenty-Mile Spur Trail. Length: 1.3 mile one-way. Access: at the end of forest road #2025 off of State Hwy 924 between Hollis and Klawock.

Information: The trail has natural tread and parallels the Upper Harris River before it ends at a set of beaver ponds. It is characterized as a nice walk through a second growth spruce and hemlock forest. This trail is also a popular destination for wintertime activities such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Transitions from an old closed road to a hiking trail.

Conditions/Needs: Good condition.

Sunnahae. Length: 2 miles one-way. Access: from trailhead on Craig-Klawock Highway just outside of Craig. Difficulty: Strenuous.

Information: This steep hiking trail follows a stream to Sunnahae Peak, with about 2,500 feet gain in elevation.

Conditions/Needs: New trail up to the logging road part way up in excellent condition; beyond that, trail is in poor condition with reconstruction proposed in multiple phases to the summit.

Beaver Falls Karst Trail. Length: 1.5 miles round-trip. Access: trailhead is located at milepost 100.5 on forest road #2000 on the north end of the island.

Information: This accessible trail is boardwalk for the entire length and highlights geologic karst features in a variety of habitats.

Conditions/Needs: Good condition with no issues to note.

Balls Lake Trail. Length: 2.2 miles around Balls Lake. Access: from the Thorne Bay highway approximately 15 miles west of Thorne Bay at the Balls Lake Picnic Site.

Information: This interpretive trail is a mix of natural surface trail and boardwalk and is also accessible from the nearby Eagle's Nest Campground via a 0.5 mile spur trail.

Conditions/Needs: Variable conditions on the existing trail/boardwalk; completion of boardwalk around the lake is currently scheduled as part of the Big Thorne Stewardship Contract.