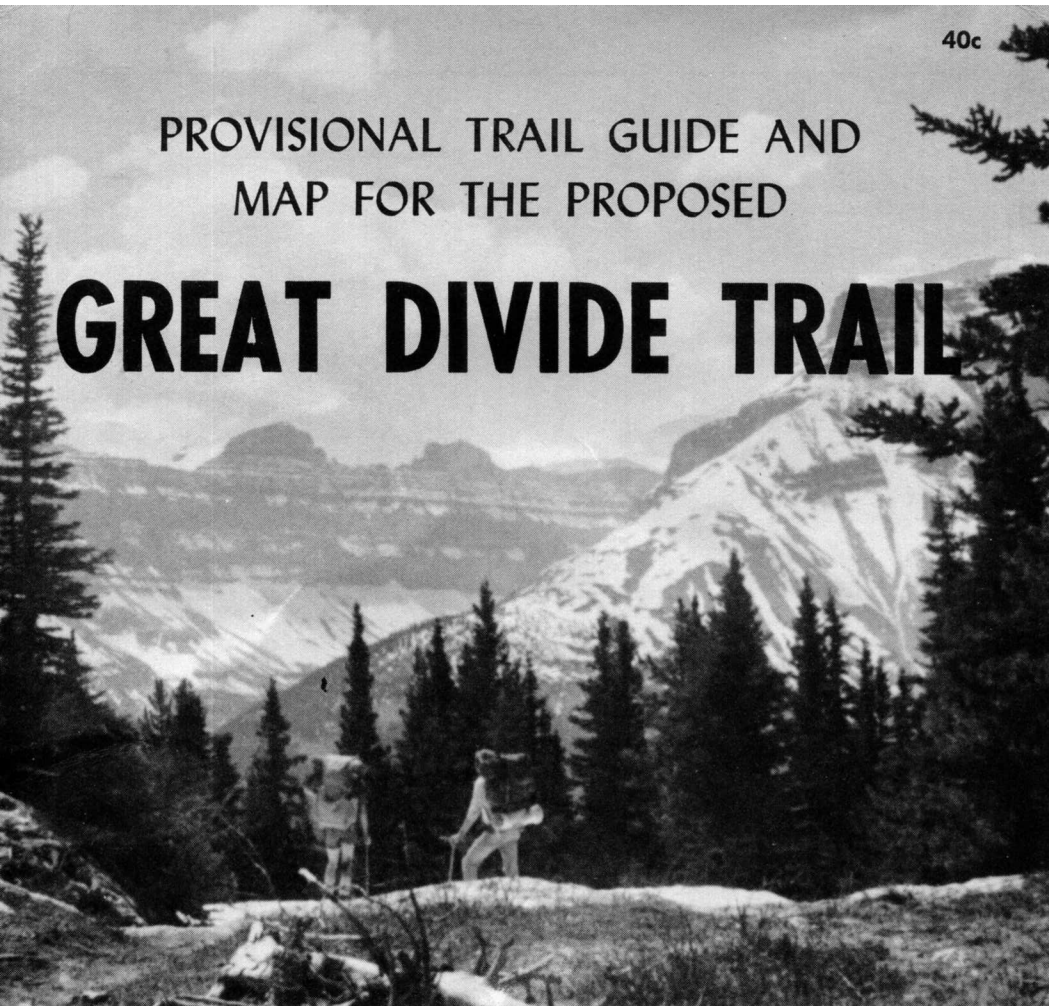


40c

PROVISIONAL TRAIL GUIDE AND
MAP FOR THE PROPOSED

GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL

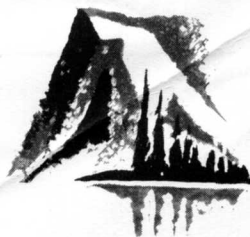


Sunset Pass

A Cross Country Wilderness Footpath through Banff,
Kootenay, Yoho, Jasper, Mt. Assiniboine and Mt. Robson
Parks.

Produced by Jim Thorsell for

THE
NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL PARKS
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA



GTD THE GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL

CONCEPT

The Continental Divide which forms the border between Alberta and British Columbia is the backbone of one of the world's most spectacular alpine areas. The Canadian Rockies, for a great portion of their length, are buffered by a 9,000 square mile complex of National and Provincial Parks and Reserves dedicated to preservation and public enjoyment of the natural environment.

There is interest in establishing through this area a long distance trail similar in concept to the Bruce Trail in Ontario and the Appalachian Trail in the U.S. The National Parks Branch of the Federal Government has sponsored several summers of research on the feasibility of such a trail and planning for its proper use and development.

A 350 mile route has been selected from the south end of Banff Park through Assiniboine, Kootenay, Yoho, Jasper, and Robson Parks and the White Goat Wilderness. Except for 20 miles of connecting links and 80 miles of very poor but mostly passable trail the route for the GDT already exists. Eventually primitive shelters may be constructed every ten or so miles apart, a guidebook prepared, and the route extended south to meet the American Continental Divide Trail at Waterton Lakes.

The GDT is intended for use by both hikers and horsemen. It follows, when possible, the high ridges near and above timberline. Altitude varies from 4,075 feet at Field to 8,747 feet at Duchesnay Pass. No special equipment is required outside of normal backpacking gear. It is not necessarily the shortest route between two points but the most interesting. Total hiking time for the 350 miles would be about one full month. Most people will prefer selected trips along its length of anywhere from three to ten days duration.

PURPOSE

Here are some of the objectives behind the establishment of the GDT:

- to stimulate wilderness travel in the Canadian Rockies by providing visitors with the opportunity to hike as well as drive through the mountains.
- to enable a year round, reasonably accessible, educational, and economical outdoor recreational experience in a high alpine environment.
- to aid in the portraying of the parks as wilderness hiking and natural areas consistent with their stated purposes.
- to provide a functional backbone linking the many separate trail systems of the mountain parks, and
- to provide impetus for a nationwide system of scenic long distance trails.

The purpose of this limited edition provisional guide and map is to introduce the concept of the GDT to the public and hopefully gain support for its establishment. It is not the intention here to give a mile by mile description of the route or to extol the joys and virtues of wilderness travel — the mountains will speak for themselves. Rather this is but a general introduction to the potential of the GDT to suffice until an interpretive guidebook is made available.

When using this guide remember the advice of Renny Russell: "Adventure is not in the guidebook and Beauty is not on the map. Seek and ye shall find."

CAUTIONS

Remember that this trail has not yet been formally established. Few directional signs have been placed to help guide the traveller and trail conditions in many sections are poor. Rivers will present special problems for hikers where there are not footbridges. This is a wilderness trail — all forms of motorised travel are prohibited. Although there are many primitive campsites along the route only one shelter is now open for public use. It is important to have good lightweight equipment and be prepared for all weather conditions. Secondly, remember that this brochure is an introductory guide only — before starting refer to the topographic map reference provided. Mileages and most elevations here are approximate. Finally, National Park regulations require that you REGISTER OUT with Park Wardens for overnight and off-trail trips. Check with wardens before and after your trip.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

First be a considerate and sensitive wilderness user — especially burn and carry out garbage and be careful with fire.

Secondly you can support the establishment of the GDT and other related park and conservation issues by belonging to The National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada at 43 Victoria St., Toronto, Ontario. Order other copies of this guide from this address. If you feel strongly about particular aspects of the project offer your opinions to us or to the Park offices.

For general information write: The Director, National and Historic Parks Branch, Ottawa, Ontario. For more detailed local information write the Park Superintendent of the particular park you are interested in. Then, as John Muir said many years ago: "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as the sunshine into the trees. The winds will blow their freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

GTD "MEADOW" SECTION - Palliser Pass to Vermillion Road - 55 Miles

GENERAL

Palliser Pass (named after the leader of the Palliser Expedition) is at the very southerly tip of Banff Park. The GDT begins here until such time as a connection south to the U.S. border at Waterton Lakes can be explored. Closely following the Divide for 55 miles, the GDT utilises trails of the upper Spray River through the Mt. Assiniboine area to the Sunshine-Egypt Lake complex and out to the Vermillion Road in Kootenay Park.

The nickname "Meadow" is given to this section because of the almost continual above timberline



Whistling Valley

location of the route. The entire section has good existing trails that are marked and well maintained except for a long abandoned six mile stretch along Currie Creek to Marvel Pass. Even this portion is not difficult as the forest is open and the creek can be followed easily up to the meadows of Currie and Marvel Passes where the trail again resumes.

Mt. Assiniboine itself is the dominant peak of the section and can be seen from Currie Pass all the way to Healy Pass. Prepare to be distracted by many side trips in Mt. Assiniboine Park and around Egypt Lakes, both prime hiking areas and usually offering good trout fishing. Profuse alpine flowers in early July and golden larch trees in mid-September make these the most colorful periods for travel.

MILEAGES AND ELEVATIONS

	Miles
Palliser Pass (6850 Ft.) to Currie Ck. Jct.	5
Currie Ck. Jct. to Currie Pass (7850 Ft.)	5
Currie Pass to Marvel Pass (7050 Ft.)	2
Marvel Pass to Wonder Pass (7800 Ft.)	2
Wonder Pass to L. Magog (7100 Ft.)	2
L. Magog to Citadel Pass (7750 Ft.)	13
Citadel Pass to Sunshine Village (7200 Ft.)	8
Sunshine to Simpson Pass (6954 Ft.)	3
Simpson Pass to Healy Pass (7650 Ft.)	2
Healy Pass to Egypt L. shelter	2
Egypt L. to Whistling Valley (7550 Ft.)	2
Whistling Valley to Ball Pass Jct.	4
Ball Pass Jct. to Ball Pass (7770 Ft.)	2
Ball Pass to Vermillion Road	5

ACCESS AND SUGGESTED TRIPS

Access to or from the GDT is gained at five points. Palliser Pass can be reached from the Kananaskis Forestry Road and by bushwacking from the Upper Kananaskis Lake. An easier way is to take the Spray Reservoir Road from Canmore which leads to the take-off point for Mt. Assiniboine via the Bryant Creek trail. Outfitters gain access from Banff over Fatigue and Allenby Passes and the Brewster Creek Fireroad. A good starting point for trips north and south is the Sunshine Village ski area which can be reached in summer by leaving your car at the Bourgeau parking lot and hitching a ride the remaining four miles up the restricted access road. Another road leads up Redearth Creek but is open to public traffic only in the Fall. Trails lead from here to the main GDT route via Pharoah Creek and Shadow Lake.

Within the "Meadow" Section at least three trips can be suggested:

A seldom travelled route is a circuit trip around the Upper Spray watershed. Drive to the parking lot at the end of the Spray Reservoir. Follow a marked trail south towards Palliser Pass and the Belgium Lakes. Good campsites and fishing are found around Leman Lake. Next day bushwack up Currie Creek and camp in the sylvan Marvel Pass meadows. Follow the Marvel Lake and Bryant Creek trails back to your car. Approximately 30 miles.

A second suggestion is to begin at Sunshine Village and hike or ride on good trails through to Assiniboine Park and return to Banff via the Spray Reservoir road, or, if more ambitious, over the Allenby Pass route. About five days travel time is required for this trip.

A third trip can be made north from Sunshine over Healy Pass to the Egypt Lakes country. There is a public shelter at Egypt Lake and many side trips can be taken using it as a base camp. Return to your car at Bourgeau parking lot

via the Healy Creek trail or proceed to Redearth Creek via Haiduk and Shadow Lake. Hiking time to Egypt Lake is one day from Sunshine.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP REFERENCES

Banff Park — 1:190,080
 Kananaskis L. — 1:50,000 82J/11
 Spray L. — 1:50,000 82J/14W
 Mt. Assiniboine — 1:50,000 82J/13W
 Banff — 1:50,000 82O/4W

**GTD "LARCH" SECTION - Floe Creek to Mt. Stephen
 60 Miles**

GENERAL

The 46 miles of trail from Floe Creek to Lake O'Hara via the Wolverine, Goodsir and McArthur Passes is one of the finest wilderness trips in the Rockies. With great differences in elevation it is also one of the most rigorous. Highlights of the trip include Floe Lake, where a glacier directly feeds the Lake, the Tumbling Glacier, the Rock Wall, the 1200 foot Helmut Falls, the Goodsir Towers, and the extensive views from the Goodsir and Numa Passes. Wildlife includes goats, elk, and even wolverine is relatively plentiful. Larches reach their northern limits and their most impressive fall coloration along this section of the GDT. Few other places have wildflowers to match those in the Wolverine Pass meadows.

The trip should present no problems for those in reasonable physical condition. It is well marked and maintained with footbridges throughout. However, for most of the stretch between Lake O'Hara and Field there is no recognized trail. Only experienced hikers should attempt the Duchesnay — Dennis Pass route as both sides of the pass are very steep and rocky and there is heavy bushwacking to reach the fossil bed trail on Mt. Stephen.

MILEAGES AND ELEVATIONS

	Miles
Vermillion Road to Floe L. (6700 Ft.)	8
Floe L. to Numa Pass (7720 Ft.)	3
Numa Pass to Tumbling Pass (6800 Ft.)	5
Tumbling Pass to Wolverine Pass (7200 Ft.)	4
Wolverine Pass to Helmut Warden Cabin (5800 Ft.)	8
Helmut cabin to Goodsir Pass (7250 Ft.)	3
Goodsir Pass to Ottertail Jct. (4850 Ft.)	7
Ottertail Jct. to McArthur Pass (7250 Ft.)	6
McArthur Pass to L. O'Hara (6880 Ft.)	2
L. O'Hara to Duchesnay Pass (8747 Ft.)	5
Duchesnay Pass to Dennis Pass (7418 Ft.)	2
Dennis Pass via Fossil Beds to Field (4075 Ft.)	3

ACCESS AND SUGGESTED TRIPS

The trail extends between the Vermillion Pass Road and the Trans-Canada Highway. Access to the GDT can be gained by bus on the O'Hara Road or from the Ottertail River Fireroad (restricted travel). Five days are required to hike the full route from Lake O'Hara to Floe Creek. This may be shortened by entering or exiting to the Vermillion Highway via the Helmut Creek trail.

A day trip from O'Hara to Field over Duchesnay Pass (highest point on the GDT) and Dennis Pass may be made by experienced hikers. Horse travel here is not possible. Remember to register out for this section.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP REFERENCES

Kootenay Park — 1:126,720
 Yoho Park — 1:126,720
 Mt. Goodsir — 1:50,000 82N/1 E&W
 Lake Louise — 1:50,000 82N/8W

Numa Pass



GTD "GLACIER SECTION" - Mt. Burgess to Saskatchewan River 65 Miles

GENERAL

Few people, if any, have made this trail connection from the Trans-Canada Highway at Field to the Banff-Jasper Highway at the Saskatchewan River Crossing. At the present time, because of the poor trail conditions mid-way few will likely want to try it. Travel now is limited to trails within the national park boundaries. Are there any volunteer groups wishing to find and re-open the 17 miles of trail on the provincial land between the Amiskwi and Howse Passes?

A trail link between the Little Yoho and Amiskwi Valleys over Kiwetinok Pass also will have to be constructed before this section is complete. Other than this gap the area presents some very exciting travel with a profusion of waterfalls, glaciers and wild rivers. The National Park information offices provide a few trail guides for trails in the Emerald Lake - Yoho Valley complex.

MILEAGES AND ELEVATIONS

	Miles
Field (4075 Ft.) to Burgess Pass (7160 Ft.)	4
Burgess Pass to Yoho Pass (6030 Ft.)	4
Yoho Pass via High Line to Kiwetinok Pass (8037 Ft.)	8
Kiwetinok Pass to Amiskwi Pass (6545 Ft.)	8
Amiskwi Pass to Howse Pass (5100 Ft.)	17
Howse Pass to Forbes Ck. Jct. (5000 Ft.)	4
Forbes Ck. Jct. to Sask. Crossing (4700 Ft.)	18

ACCESS AND SUGGESTED TRIPS

Until the centre portion of the "Glacier" Section is re-opened trail use will be limited to the Howse/Freshfield area at the north end and to the Field to Kiwetinok portion in Yoho. Access to the Howse is directly from the Banff-Jasper Highway. It is also possible to drive from the west up the Blaeberry forestry road to within about eight miles of Howse Pass. Side trips up Forbes Creek and up Glacier Lake take you to the heart of glacier country but watch river crossings.

For the section of the GDT in Yoho Park you may gain access from the Emerald Lake or Takakkaw Falls roads. See the Trail Guide for the many circuit trips possible here, notably to Twin Falls.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP REFERENCES

Yoho Park — 1:126,720	Blaeberry R. — 1:50,000 82N/10E
Banff Park — 1:190,080	Mistaya — 1:50,000 82N/15W
Lake Louise — 1:50,000 82N/8W	

Yoho Valley High Trail



GTD "CARIBOU" SECTION - Norman Creek to Signal Mountain - 115 Miles

GENERAL

From the Banff-Jasper Highway at Norman Creek to Maligne Lake is the longest continuous stretch of wilderness on the GDT — 85 miles. If your choice is for a very wild and extended backcountry trip uninterrupted by any evidence of man's activity, this is it. Wildlife is plentiful here including the Woodland Caribou which can easily be seen in the Alplands near Amber Mt. and in Maligne Pass. The six passes of this section are all high with extensive alpine meadows and encompassing views. The trail, except for a few miles through Cataract Pass is good but lacks directional signs and footbridges. Those on foot will have definite trouble crossing the Poboktan, Cline, and Brazeau Rivers at high water levels.

MILEAGES AND ELEVATIONS

	Miles
BJ Hwy. (5000 Ft.) to Sunset Pass (6750 Ft.)	7
Sunset Pass to Cataract Ck. Jct. (5600 Ft.)	5
Cataract Jct. to Cataract Pass (8000 Ft.)	10
Cataract Pass to Nigel Pass Jct. (7225 Ft.)	4
Nigel Pass to Brazeau Jct. (6200 Ft.)	4
Brazeau Jct. to Jonas Pass (7500 Ft.)	7
Jonas Pass to Poboktan Pass Jct. (7400 Ft.)	6
Poboktan Pass to Maligne Jct. (5800 Ft.)	10
Maligne Jct. to Maligne Pass (7300 Ft.)	6
Maligne Pass to north end Maligne L. (4750 Ft.)	20
Maligne L. to Shovel Pass (7400 Ft.)	12
Shovel Pass to Signal Mt. fireroad (7000 Ft.)	12
Signal Fireroad to Maligne Hwy. (3600 Ft.)	8

ACCESS AND SUGGESTED TRIPS

The "Caribou" Section of the GDT is reached by car at both ends of the trail and also from the new Maligne Lake road. Feeder trails from the Banff-Jasper Highway lead in along Nigel and Poboktan Creeks and conveniently divide this section into four roughly equal portions.

The Skyline Trail is a well-known and well-used trail taking about three days to walk. It is best to leave your car at Maligne Lake and try to hitch a ride up to Signal Mt. lookout to save over 3000 feet of vertical and eight miles of gravel road.

It will take you three or four days to travel the circuit from Maligne Lake to the Banff-Jasper Highway at Poboktan Creek Warden Station. Most of this trip except over Maligne Pass is heavily forested and views restricted. Likewise another four day trip paralleling the Banff-Jasper Highway can be made between Poboktan and Nigel Creeks over Jonas Pass or, alternatively, to the Brazeau over Poboktan Pass.

From Nigel Pass south to Sunset Pass are found some of the steepest grades on the GDT. There is no trail over Cataract Pass but it is open country and the route should present no problems for hikers. Those on horseback are advised to skip this section and follow the Cline Pass trail instead. No 1:50,000 map sheets are yet available for the Nigel/Cataract area.

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP REFERENCES

Banff Park — 1:190,080
 Jasper Park S. — 1:190,080
 Cline R. — 1:50,000 83C/2W
 Sunwapta — 1:50,000 83C/6
 Athabasca Falls — 1:50,000 83C/12
 Medicine L. — 1:50,000 83C/13W
 Jasper — 1:50,000 83D/16E



Cataract Pass

GTD "MT. ROBSON SECTION" - Yellowhead Pass to Mt. Robson - 55 Miles

GENERAL

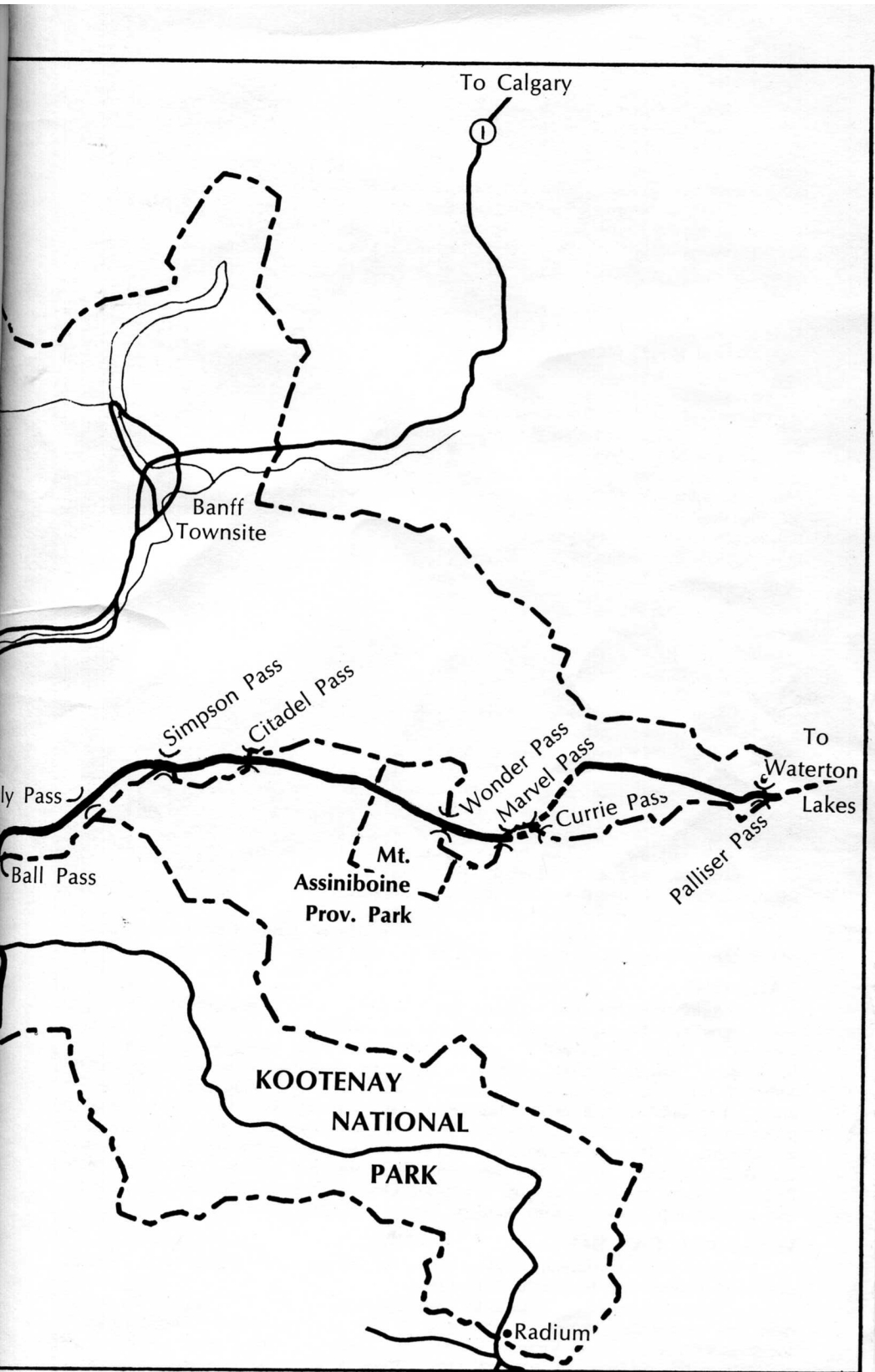
Mt. Robson, at 12,972 Feet, is the highest point in the Canadian Rockies and will likely be the northern limit of the GDT. As yet the location of the route through the Miette, Moose, and Smokey River watersheds has not been studied or exactly determined. Trails do exist but are reported swampy and overgrown. Foot travel is discouraged along this route due to lack of bridges. Alternate routes to Mt. Robson are the 100 mile North Boundary trail through Jasper Park and the normal 12 mile Berg Lake route from the Yellowhead Highway.

MILEAGES AND ELEVATIONS

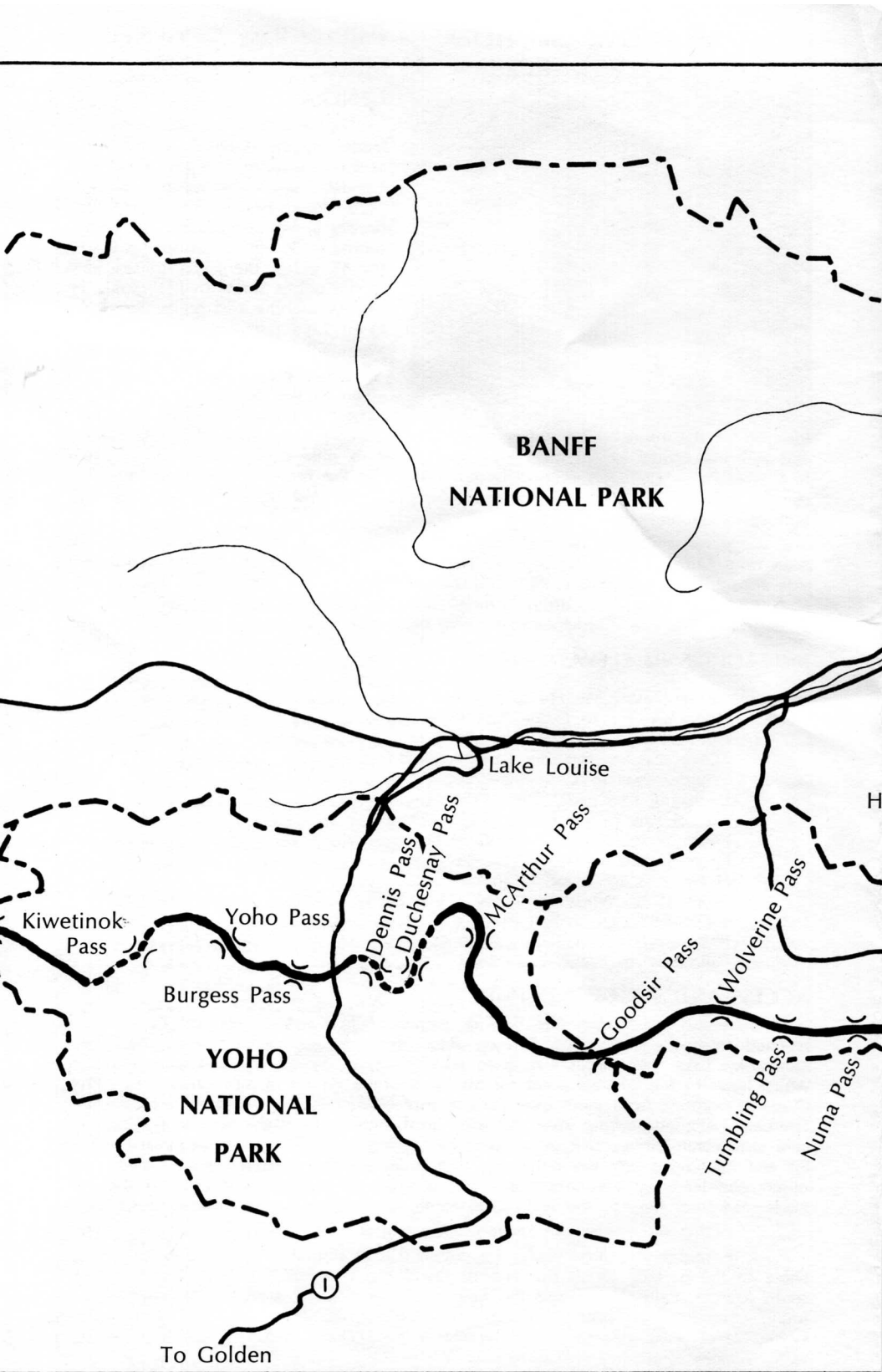
	Miles
Yellowhead Pass (3720 Ft.) to Centre Pass (6450 Ft.)	16
Centre Pass to Grant Pass (6355 Ft.)	5
Grant Pass to Colonel Pass (6135 Ft.)	3
Colonel Pass to Moose Pass (6570 Ft.)	18
Moose Pass to Robson Pass (5420 Ft.)	11
Robson Pass to Berg Lake (5375 Ft.)	2

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP REFERENCES

Jasper N. — 1:190,080 Resplendent Ck. — 1:50,000 82E/2E&W
 Mt. Robson Park — Two miles to the Inch (B.C. Dept. of Lands)



"MEADOW" SECTION

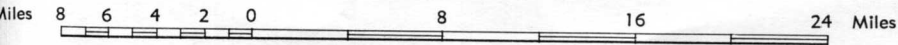


SECTION "LARCH" SECTION

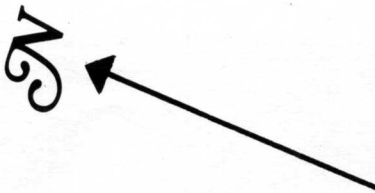
Route of Proposed

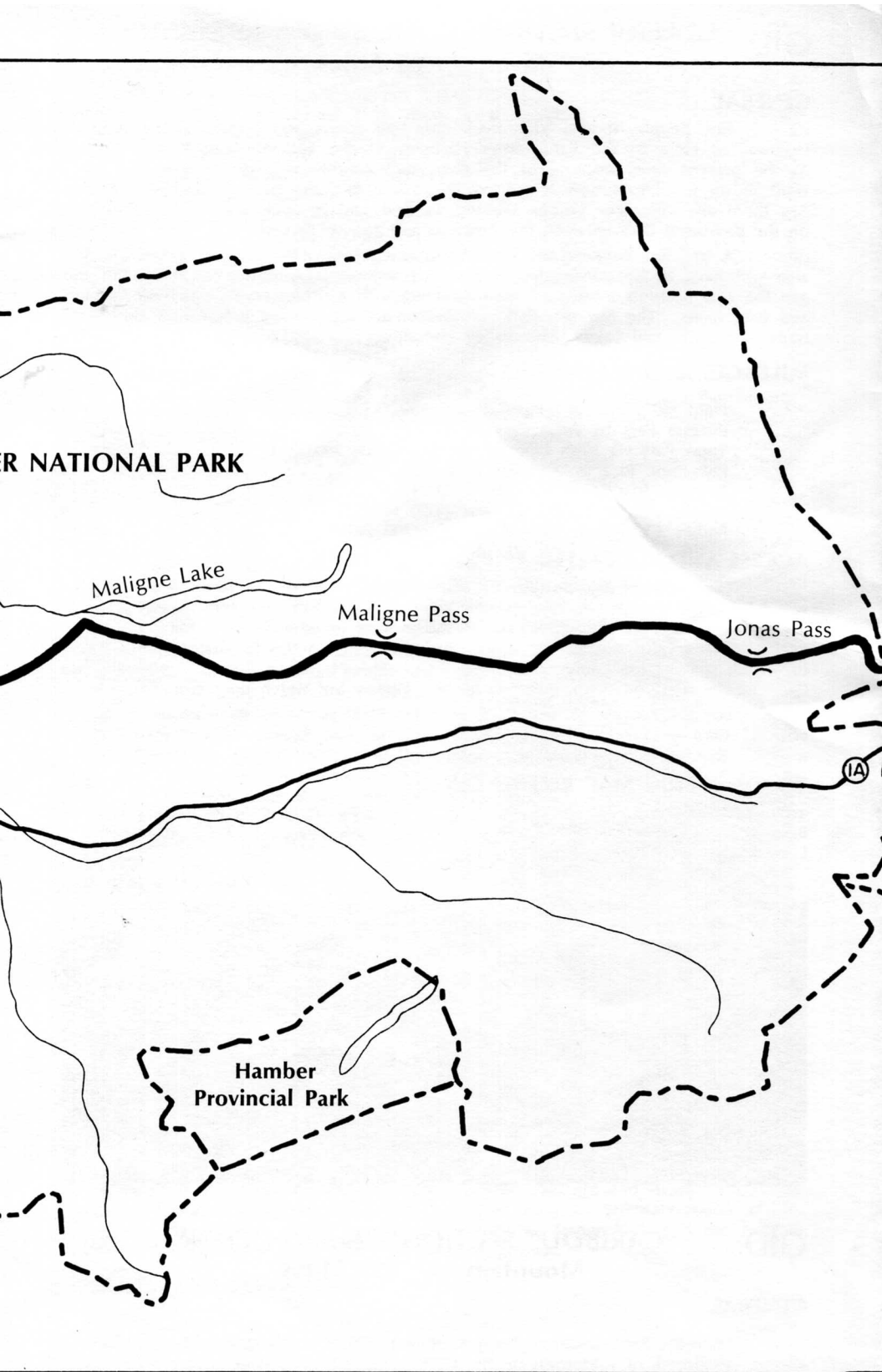
GREAT DIVIDE TRAIL

Through the Canadian Rockies



- Trail Route
- - - No Trail
-) Pass





R NATIONAL PARK

Maligne Lake

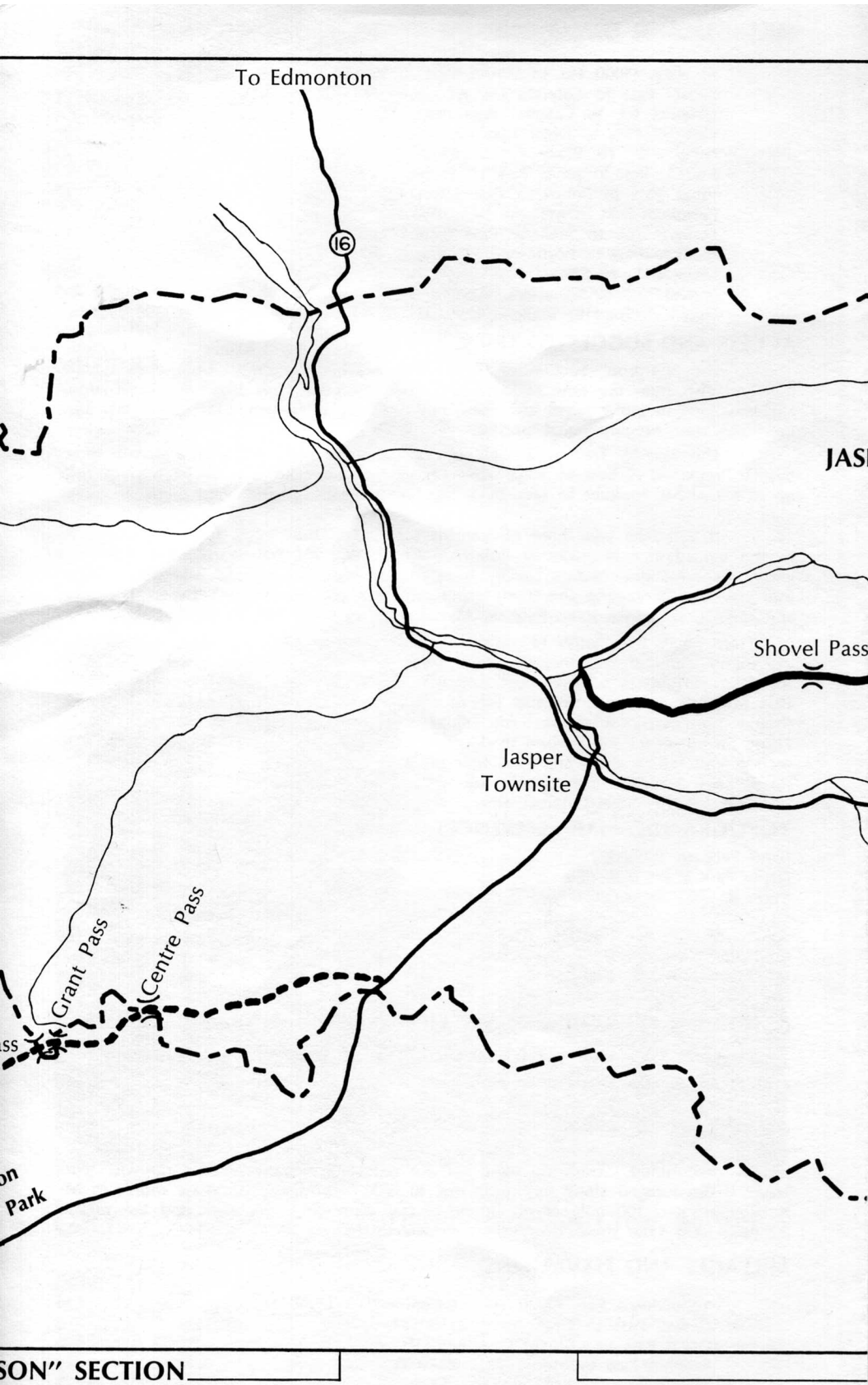
Maligne Pass

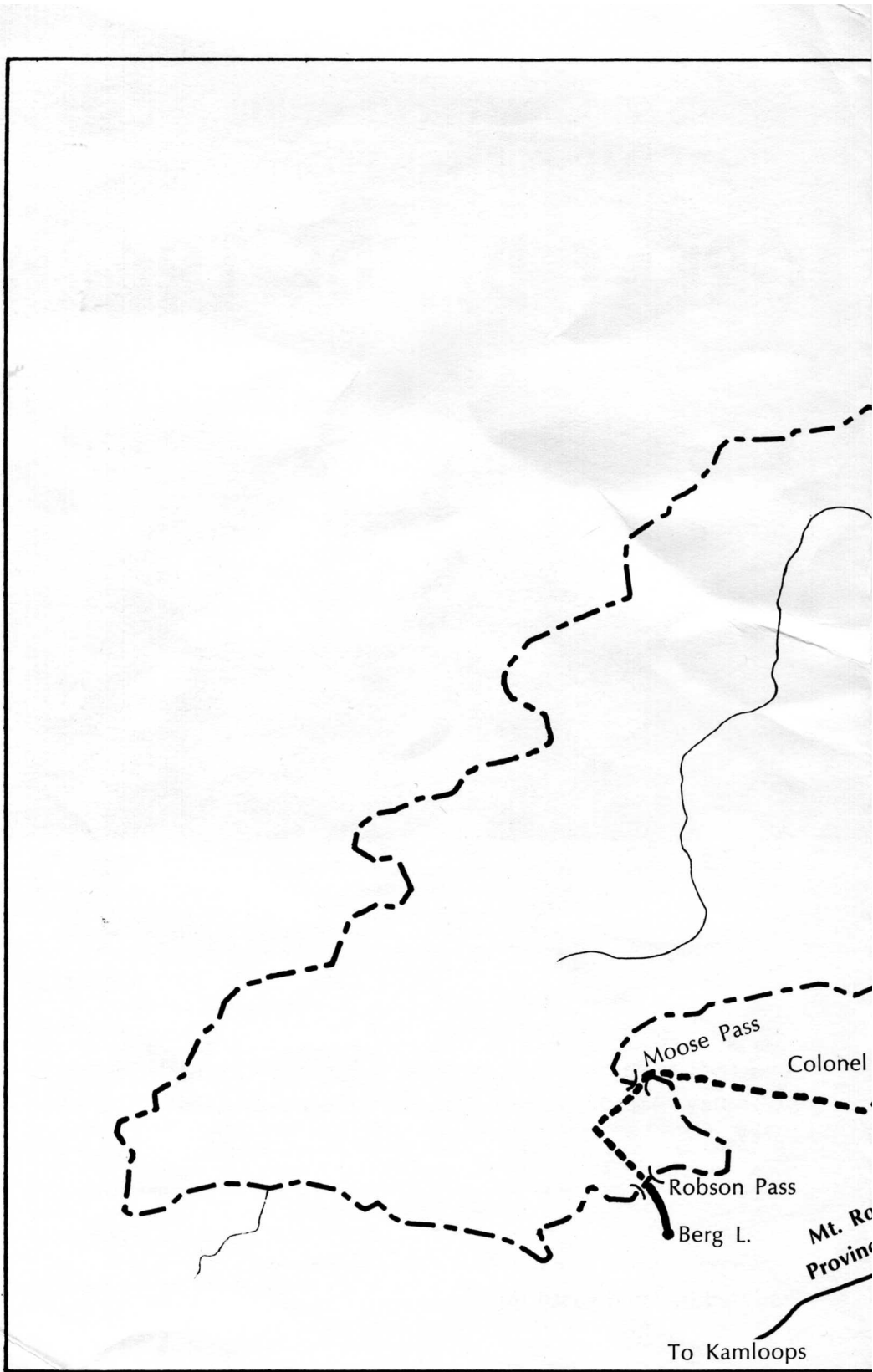
Jonas Pass

Hamber
Provincial Park

IA

"CARIBOU" SECTION





_____ "MT. RC