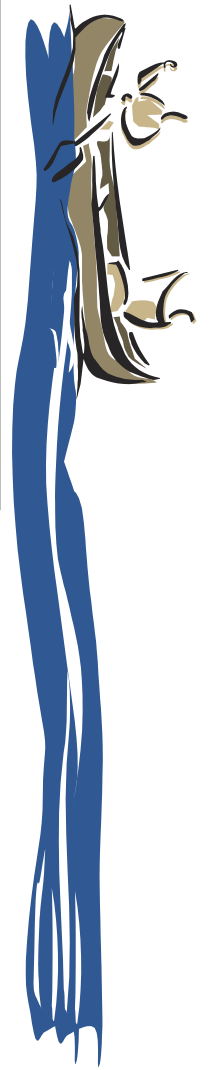
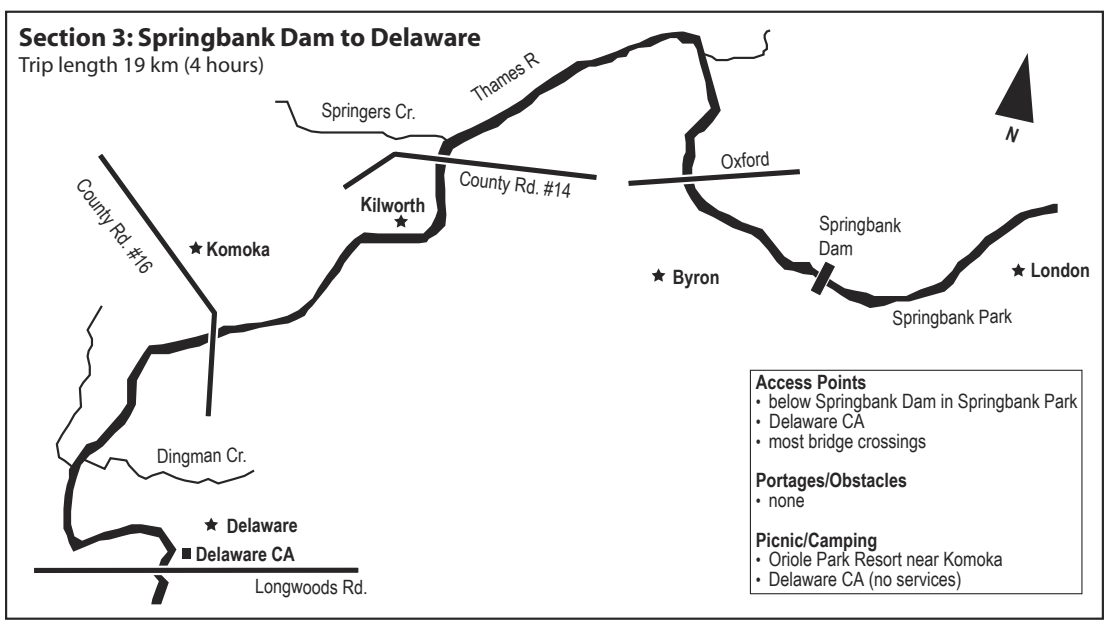
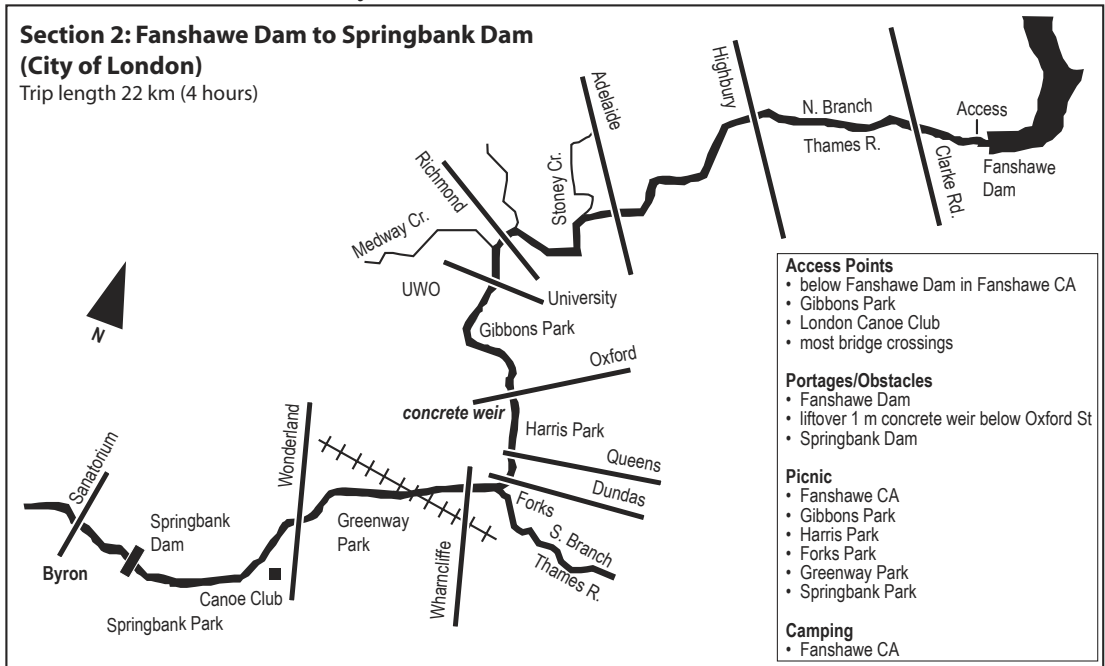
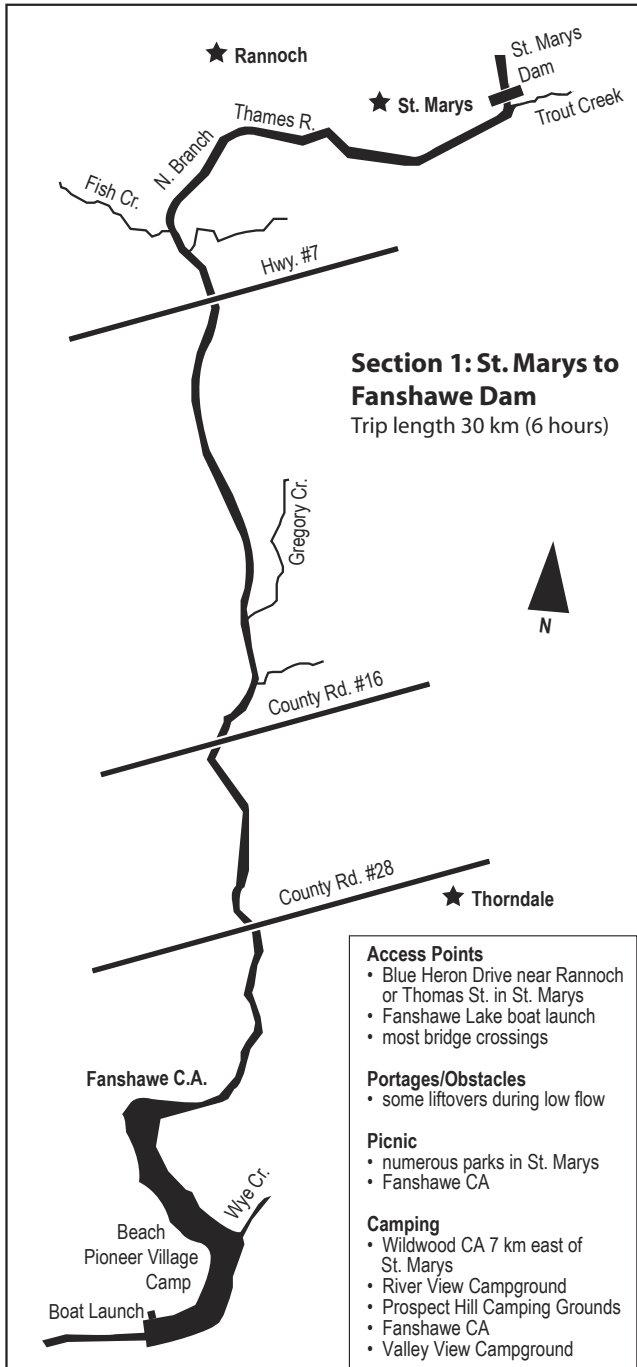


North Thames River *Canoe Route* St. Marys to Delaware



This brochure is a general guide only. Canoe at your own risk.

The St. Marys to Delaware canoe route is very scenic and diverse, passing through farm fields, pastures, forests, city neighbourhoods and parkland. It is suitable for the novice to intermediate canoeist as there are no difficult rapids. There are, however, rocks and boulders to avoid especially in low water conditions. This 71 km route can be paddled as a series of day trips or as a two day trip, camping overnight at Fanshawe Conservation Area (open April - October) or at private campgrounds in the area.

Canoeing the Upper Thames

The maps on the reverse side show the route, major roads, parks and obstacles. The trip length in hours does not include driving time (e.g. car shuffle). The river can be accessed from most bridge crossings throughout, but popular access points are noted.

Section 1: St. Marys to Fanshawe Dam

St. Marys, the “Stonetown”, is a picturesque start to your trip. Canoe access is best from the west side of the river, below the weir (e.g. Thomas Street or Blue Heron Drive).

As you paddle down the North Thames, the river meanders through rolling agricultural fields and narrow forests. The river bank is high and steep on one side and more gentle on the other.

The water slows as you enter Fanshawe Reservoir. The reservoir is about 6 km long and used by other boaters, so be aware. Fanshawe CA has many attractions including a day use and beach area, campground and the Fanshawe Pioneer Village. For more information and permits, call 519-451-2800 or go to www.thamesriver.on.ca.

Take your canoe out at the public docks/launch on the north side of the reservoir just before Fanshawe Dam. Follow the gravel roads to the launch site and parking lot below the dam. A portable toilet is provided. In the off-season (October - April), there is no car access into the park past the dam on weekends or evenings.

Section 2: Fanshawe Dam to Springbank Dam

Entering London you wind past bluffs, forests and city neighbourhoods. Several small rapids are encountered. You can stretch your legs at any of the public parks on the river (Harris, Gibbons, Forks, Springbank). Most have washrooms and port-a-johns, open in summer.

The river widens a bit as you enter the main channel of the Thames at the Forks in downtown London. About 5 km downstream, you'll see the docks of the London Canoe Club (no canoe rentals). You can take your canoe out here at the parking lot or continue 3 km downstream to Springbank

Dam. It is a short portage around the dam on the Springbank Park side of the river (left or south side). The dam gates are closed from mid-May to mid-October, creating flat water conditions from the dam to the Forks.

Section 3: Springbank Dam to Delaware

Downstream of Springbank Dam, the river meanders through larger forests and steeper river bluffs. There are several small islands in the middle of the river to negotiate around. The landscape becomes flatter as you approach Delaware. Just before the Longwoods Road bridge, look for a narrow foot trail on the east (left) bank that leads to the public access parking lot of Delaware CA (Gideon Drive and Wellington Street).

Drinking Water

Thames River water is NOT suitable for drinking, even with the use of purification tablets. Carry drinking water with you.

Private Lands

Respect the rights of private landowners. Take nothing but pictures, leave only ripples on the water from your paddle. This will help to ensure future goodwill for other canoeists.

Plants and Animals

A variety of tree species are adapted to life near the water's edge including Manitoba maple, basswood, poplar, willow, ash, sycamore, hackberry and black walnut. Some of the animals canoeists may encounter include muskrat, beaver, mink and racoon. Painted and spiny softshell turtles can often be seen basking on logs on sunny days. Common birds include great blue heron, Canada goose, mallard, belted kingfisher, bank swallow and gray catbird.

Fishing

Along this route it is possible to catch rainbow trout, common carp, brown bullhead, white sucker, bluegill, yellow perch, pickerel, smallmouth and largemouth bass, rock bass and northern pike. All anglers must hold a valid fishing license.

Canoe Safety

The law requires life jackets be worn when canoeing. Canoe in groups for safety. Be alert and use your judgement. If in doubt of a rapid, portage around it. It is best to learn canoeing from professionals. For more information on canoeing, contact the Ontario Recreational Canoe Association (www.orca.on.ca) or the London Canoe Club (www.londoncanoeclub.ca).

Canoe Rentals

Check the yellow pages of your phone book under “canoes” for a listing of places to rent or buy a canoe or kayak.

Maps

The maps on this brochure, combined with a road or county map (Perth, Middlesex), should provide enough detail for canoeing this route. For additional maps and air photos, go to the UTRCA web site at www.thamesriver.on.ca. For topographic maps, go to the Natural Resources Canada web site at www.maps.nrcan.gc.ca/topographic.html.

Flow Variability

Flow in the North Thames and Thames River varies significantly throughout the year, ranging from 2 cubic metres per second (cms) in a dry August to over 50 cms during spring flood conditions. Flows downstream of the Forks in London are generally more reliable for canoeing, while Section 1 may only be canoeable in early spring. Never canoe during a flood event or when boating bans or advisories are in effect. Check river conditions at www.thamesriver.on.ca. Levels of 6-20 cms upstream of the Forks are generally suitable for canoeing.

Other Canoe Routes on the Thames

1. Thames River from Delaware to Lake St. Clair (for brochure call Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority at 519-354-7310 or email ltvca@mnsi.net).
 2. South Thames from Putnam to Dorchester*
 3. Middle Thames from Thamesford to Putnam*
 4. North Thames from Fullarton to St. Marys*
- * no brochure available; water level dependent

This brochure was produced by:
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