



# Fort Smith

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Unexpected **sights.**  
Unforgettable **beauty.**



# WELCOME

Unexpected **adventures.**

Unforgettable **stories.**

Living beside the rapids means living with adventure right at your fingertips. Residents and visitors experience the freedom to walk out of their backyard into a thick forest or to see Aurora Borealis from their front step.

Witness it all while nature's quiet lull of leaves blowing in the wind or river water rushing over granite boulders echoes through the community.

Whether the adventure is brief, or leads to establishing roots in the NWT, the Town of Fort Smith welcomes all with ample programs and facilities to be comfortable for the duration of the stay.

The Town of Fort Smith welcomes all and encourages visitors to take the unexpected journeys that lead to unforgettable memories.



**Fort Smith**  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES



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Map created for illustrative purposes and is not to scale.





# VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

## YOUR ONE STOP SHOP

The **Visitor Information Centre** is open 7 days a week from mid-May to Labour Day.

**Free Wi-Fi, washrooms and informative materials** are available for guests inside the centre. Spend a minute or an hour enjoying air conditioned seating and conversation with our kind and knowledgeable interpreters.

**Dive into the history of the region** with a small permanent exhibit showcasing local attractions, trails, wildlife and the Wood Buffalo National Park.

**Take home a memory of your trip** with local souvenirs available for purchase at the Visitor Information Centre.

## TOUR THE TOWN

**Walking tours of the Town of Fort Smith** are available on a reservation basis. Tours are free to attend on your own schedule. To set up a tour, visit the Visitor Information Centre.

## TOUR THE NATIONAL PARK

**Guided tours through the National Park** are available for a small fee. Trips are available for all abilities and interests.

**Fort Smith & Wood Buffalo National Park Visitor information Centre**

- ☎ (867) 872-7960
- ✉ [tourism@fortsmith.ca](mailto:tourism@fortsmith.ca)
- ✉ [woodbuffaloinfo-infowoodbuffalo@pc.gc.ca](mailto:woodbuffaloinfo-infowoodbuffalo@pc.gc.ca)

# OUR SURROUNDINGS

## WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK

**Minutes from town is the largest national park in Canada.**

The Wood Buffalo National Park is over 44,000km<sup>2</sup> and contains one of the largest free-roaming bison herds in the world.

**The Peace-Athabasca Delta**, in the southern region of the park, is one of the largest inland freshwater deltas in the world.

**The largest Dark-Sky Preserve in the world** shares borders with the park and makes it one of the best places to view the Aurora Borealis.

**With dozens of trail heads** and kilometers of maintained paths, there are hikes for all skill levels and views for all interests.

## LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

**The Northwest Territories is home to roughly 45,000 people.**

The remote nature of the territory paired with a low population density create the perfect environment for vast, untouched natural wonders.

**Over 60% of residents in the Town of Fort Smith are Indigenous Canadians.** First Nations, Inuit and Métis people have called this community home for centuries; a testament to the rich cultural landscape.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Wood Buffalo National Park is the only place in North America where the predator-prey relationship between wolves and wood bison has continued, unbroken, over time.







## WORLD-CLASS WHITEWATER RAPIDS

**The 24km stretch of water** from Fort Fitzgerald to Fort Smith contains 4 sets of world-class white water rapids. The water crashes against the granite boulders of the Canadian shield creating eddies and whirlpools that paddler's love.

**The Rapids of the Drowned are the closest** to Fort Smith, with various safe lookouts that don't require getting wet.

**Continuing upstream, the Mountain Portage Rapids** offers calm coves for swimming, midstream islands that host white pelicans and popular water features for canoes and kayaks.

**Pelican Rapids and Cassette Rapids follow afterwards** with additional hiking trails, viewing spots and whitewater fun.

## LOCAL WILDLIFE

**Every year we see the migration** of White Pelicans. These birds spend their winters in Texas before flying up to spend summers here.

The spring melts also reveal the northern most population of harmless red-sided garter snakes.

### More animals found around Fort Smith:

- Ravens
- Bison
- Owls
- Black Bears
- Beavers
- Lynx
- Bald Eagles
- Whooping Crane
- Sandhill Crane
- Pelicans
- Ptarmigans
- Minks
- Otters
- Coyotes

**Fort Smith & Wood Buffalo National Park Visitor information Centre**

☎ (867) 872-7960

✉ [tourism@fortsmith.ca](mailto:tourism@fortsmith.ca)

# OUR PAST AT A GLANCE

## 18th Century

Natural resources bring European fur traders into the region.

## 1874

Hudson's Bay Company establishes a trading post named Fort Smith.

## 1898

A gold rush in Yellowknife solidifies the Slave River as the main transportation network into the NWT.

## 1911

Fort Smith becomes the administrative center of the NWT.

RCMP & Medical Services set up locations in Fort Smith.

## 1922

Wood Buffalo National Park is established and the headquarters is built in Fort Smith.

## 1966

Fort Smith incorporates as a municipality.

An all-weather road is built between Fort Smith & Hay River.

## 1967

Yellowknife becomes the Capital of the Northwest Territories.

Fort Smith remains the administrative center for Parks Canada.

## 1974

Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre opens their doors for visitors.

## 1998

The Community and Recreation Centre is developed and opened to provide residents with new opportunities.

## 2021

The Town of Fort Smith commemorates 55+ years of incorporation.





# MORE HISTORY

## NORTHERN LIFE MUSEUM & CULTURAL CENTRE

The Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre is regarded as having the most extensive collection of Northern Canadian artifacts anywhere in the Country.

For an immersive experience of **early Indigenous life**, visit the outdoor Culture Centre where a life sized village showcases a traditional way of living.

To purchase **souvenirs made by local artisans**, the museum gift shop should be one of your first stops. The shop is continually stocked with beaded goods, tufted baskets, local books and various other handcrafted items.

Northern Life Museum & Cultural Centre

(867) 872-2859

info@nlmcc.ca

MUSEUM



## BRAND IDENTITY

The **Town of Fort Smith crest** was the first logo of the municipality. In 2012, a new brand logo was developed and then refreshed in 2023. Our current logo contains elements that represent the natural wonders surrounding the community.



## DID YOU KNOW?

CANUS, a whooping crane born in Wood Buffalo National Park, is proudly displayed in the museum. This bird has significant history and was responsible for assisting scientists in repopulating the whooping crane population.

# WINTER ACTIVITIES

## CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

**The Fort Smith Ski Club** has a network of well-maintained trails groomed for use throughout the winter months. The club's trails wind through the boreal forest and offer panoramic views of the river and surrounding landscape.

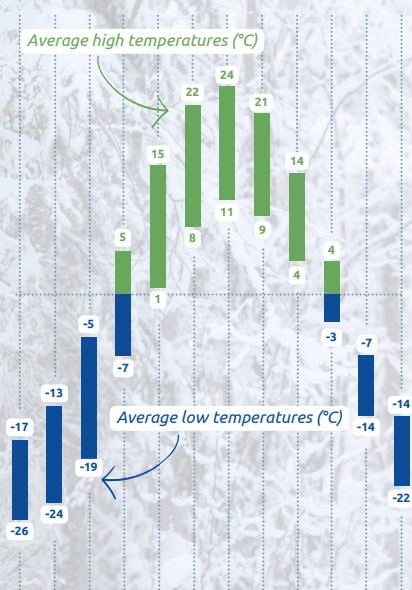
 [fortsmithnordic@gmail.com](mailto:fortsmithnordic@gmail.com)  
 **Fort Smith Ski Club**

## SNOWBOARDING

**The Fort Smith Snowboard Park** contains some of the best terrain parks in the Northwest Territories. From small rail features and gentle slopes, to a 20-foot big air jump, there is fun for all levels.

 [fortsmithsnowboarding@gmail.com](mailto:fortsmithsnowboarding@gmail.com)  
 **Slide Zone Shredderz**

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec



## WINTER





# THE DARKEST SKY

## A SKY ALIVE WITH LIGHT

**The night skies over Fort Smith** offer some of the most intense viewing of the Aurora Borealis in the world. The community is located under the auroral oval, a band of energy that encircles the North Pole. On clear nights, when the lights are active, the skies around Fort Smith glow with green, yellow, white and occasionally a fiery red.

## DARK SKY FESTIVAL

**In late August each year** a gathering takes place in Fort Smith and Wood Buffalo National Park to observe and celebrate space, science, stargazing and the night sky. Featured keynote speakers have included astronauts like Roberta Bondar and scientists from around North America.

## VIEWING THE PHENOMENON

**For a clear view, you don't need to leave Town.** While the aurora can be seen from your doorstep, the local astronomical society maintains an observatory for all to use. This public space has reclined seating to ensure an unobstructed view of the sky.

**Through a reservation,** the society also provides guided access to state of the art telescopes and star-gazing equipment.

Thebacha & Wood Buffalo  
Astronomical Society



(867) 872-0243



[info@tawbas.ca](mailto:info@tawbas.ca)



[tawbas.ca](http://tawbas.ca)

## DID YOU KNOW?

This background photograph taken by Fort Smith local, John McKinnon, was selected by the Bank of Canada to appear on the \$10 bill in celebration of Canada's 150th Anniversary!



# SUMMER ACTIVITIES

## HIKING

**Many popular walking & hiking** trails are part of the Trans Canada Trail and situated along the Slave River that have stunning lookout points along the way. Whether you're looking for an in-town evening jaunt, or a full day outing, there is a trail for you.

## LIVING IN THE WILD

**Expect to brush shoulders with wildlife** as you explore the Town of Fort Smith. Located near Wood Buffalo National Park and on the banks of the Slave River, the region is surrounded by natural wonders.

## CAMPING

**Looking to unplug while camping?** Check out the Pine Lake Campground for secluded plots ready for an RV or tent. Serviced campsites within town boundaries are available at Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park for a more accessible camping experience.

Hiking & Biking Trails

 [fortsmith.ca/hiking](https://fortsmith.ca/hiking)

Get Your Fishing Licenses

 <https://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/get-fishing-licence>



# THE PADDLER'S PARADISE

## MIDNIGHT SUN & ALL DAY ADVENTURES

**Four sets of world-class rapids** stretch between Fort Smith and Fort Fitzgerald. Once a traditional portage route, it's now a zone for adrenaline seeking kayakers and a home for the annual Slave River Paddlefest. Sandy beaches in the bays surrounding the rapids offer calm waters for a cooling summer swim or a flat dry spot for sunbathing on the rocks.

### SUMMER



## SLAVE RIVER PADDLEFEST

**The Slave River Paddlefest** is the largest event of its kind in Northern Canada. It attracts an international audience into the region to celebrate the beauty and power of the water. From flatwater canoeing to wild whitewater rafting, this festival offers adventure for all.

Register online for the premiere Northern paddling festival at the Slave River Paddlefest website.

A variety of passes are available depending on the participant's interests and abilities.

Slave River Paddlefest

 [slaveriverpaddlefest.ca](http://slaveriverpaddlefest.ca)




# OUR FACILITIES

## COMMUNITY & RECREATION CENTRE

**The Community & Recreation Centre** is the recreation hub of Fort Smith. Residents and visitors can enjoy free high-speed WIFI throughout the facility while engaging with one of our many amenities:

- Aquatic Facility
- Jacuzzi & Sauna
- Industry Standard Exercise Equipment
- Squash Court
- Curling Rink
- Library & Computers

**Community & Recreation Centre**

 (867) 872-4732

## WILLIAM SCHAEFER MEMORIAL POOL

**Swimmer's can enjoy the four-lane** 25 meter pool for a full body exercise or a low impact workout. Lane swimming is scheduled for mornings and afternoons while the evenings host public & family swims.

The shallow beach area is suitable for families, parents and toddlers and is an accessible entrance into the water.

The sauna provides a hot dry heat while the jacuzzi allows for a relaxing soak.

Visit the website for up to date Pool Scheduling.



## RECREATION



## CENTENNIAL ARENA

**The Fort Smith Centennial Arena** is an exciting hub of activity all year long. The arena is home to minor hockey, figure skating, adult recreational hockey and public skating during the winter months. In the summer, it becomes an event space for the community.

## CURLING RINK

**The Town of Fort Smith** has a thriving curling club that uses this rink throughout the winter.

## MARY KAESER LIBRARY

**The Mary Kaeser Library** provides patrons with a quiet space to read and work. Computers, printing and laminating services are available for use along with the books, movies and games available to borrow.

## PETE'S GYM

**Fort Smith's sole workout facility** is in the Community & Recreation Centre. Treadmills, stationary bikes, step machines, elliptical trainers, rowing machines, squat racks, press benches and other fitness equipment are available for patrons.

## OUTDOOR SOCCER & WALKING TRACK

**This soft rubber running track** is available 24/7 for fitness enthusiasts to use. Soccer clubs frequent the inner field along with school organizations.

## SQUASH COURT

**All equipment is provided** for patrons looking to utilize the Squash court. This facility is rentable at the front desk of the CRC.



# ANNUAL EVENTS

March

## WOOD BUFFALO FROLICS

**The Frolics are the community's celebration** of spring's impending arrival. Expect to see free-to-attend events like dog racing & traditional Dene games.

## THEBACHA LOPPET

**Participants journey along** the extensive Trans Canada Trail between Fort Fitzgerald and Fort Smith. This event is hosted by the Fort Smith Ski Club.

## ICE FISHING DERBY

**Fly or ski-doo to a nearby lake** to test your luck at ice fishing. Many attendees camp the weekend to compete in friendly competition.

## BIG FUN SNOWBOARDING

**The biggest snowboarding event** takes place mid-march to commemorate a solid snowboarding season. Adults & kids are welcome to strap on a board and hit the slopes.

June

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

**Expect a full day of activities**, a free community BBQ and local entertainment. This event is partnered with local indigenous governments to celebrate cultural diversity.



## EVENTS



June Continued

## AURORA OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

**This event kicks off the golfing season** with a 36-hole event at the Pelican Rapids Gold and Country Club. It offers prizes in a number of categories.

July

## CANADA DAY

**July 1st is a grand event** in the Town of Fort Smith. Partnerships between local organizations and small businesses create an event area with games, crafts and snacks. A decorative parade journey's through town, ending at Conibear Park to continue the day with live music and citizen awards.

August

## SLAVE RIVER PADDLEFEST

**World-class big water paddling** draws an international crowd to participate in instructional clinics, river trips and friendly competition. This event welcomes all skill-levels and finishes off weekend with an evening party.

## THEBACHA & WOOD BUFFALO DARK SKY FESTIVAL

**This event is hosted in the largest Dark Sky Preserve in the world.** For a weekend, experience science based workshops and an evening star party to celebrate all things space.

August Continued

## FIREWEED FESTIVAL

**The Fireweed Festival provides local musicians and artists** a stage to perform in front of the community. This festival brings together musicians, vendors and community members for an evening of top-tier entertainment.

September

## NORTHERN WHOOPING CRANE FESTIVAL

**The Northern Whooping Crane Festival** celebrates the only wild migratory population of Whooping Cranes in the world. The elusive bird is rarely seen but nests and lives in the Fort Smith region.

December

## SANTA CLAUS PARADE

**A long time tradition** of Fort Smith are the annual Santa Claus parade. A decorated float makes rounds of the community waving to all the families as they look out the window. Fun for all.

## NEW YEARS FIREWORKS

**Hosted at Riverside Park**, this event overlooks the Slave River and includes a spectacular firework display along with a hot-drink to keep warm.



# GETTING TO FORT SMITH

GETTING HERE



## OUR ROADS

The community is connected year-round to the NWT highway system.

## RUBBER TIRE TRAVEL

Travelling by car, truck or RV is ideal if you want to see the northern landscape and wildlife. Highway 5 will lead you through the boreal forest, marshlands and Wood Buffalo National Park on your way to the Town of Fort Smith.

- From **Hay River, NT**
  - 272km or 169mi
- From **High Level, AB**
  - 583km or 362mi
- From **Yellowknife, NT**
  - 740km or 560mi
- From **Edmonton, AB**
  - 1,350km or 838mi

## AIR TRAVEL

Direct flights into and from Fort Smith are provided by Air Tindi. Their aircraft service many communities in the Northwest Territories and fly through Fort Chipewyan to Edmonton!

### Air Tindi



+1 (888) 545-6794



[www.airtindi.com](http://www.airtindi.com)

## WINTER ROAD

During the winter, when rivers freeze, an ice road from Fort McMurray, through Fort Chipewyan, into Fort Smith is accessible.

- From **Fort McMurray, AB**
  - 499km or 310mi
- From **Fort Chipewyan, AB**
  - 583km or 362mi





# EXPLORING THE AREA SAFELY

## SAFETY



## HIGHWAY SAFETY

- **Avoid parking on the side** or in the middle of the road. Use designated pull-off spots when rest is required.
- **NWT roads are used** by large commercial vehicles. Give these vehicles plenty of room.
- **Cell-service can be weak** or entirely un-available. Share your travel plans with friends and family.

## WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

**Depending on when you travel,** make sure you dress for the weather. The cold temperatures can be dangerous, and if you have vehicle issues you may need to wait for help to arrive.

## WILDLIFE AWARENESS

**Animals have right-of-way.** Yield to approaching animals and use caution when continuing past them.

**Never approach or try to feed wildlife.** It is extremely dangerous and often results in the animal having to be terminated by Wildlife Officers.

**It is a good idea to carry bear spray,** bear bangers or other noisemakers if you expect to leave your vehicle during transit.

**Animals spotted during travel are wild.** They can be unpredictable and potentially dangerous.

## 911 SERVICE

**In an emergency,** 911 service is available across the territory.



## WHERE TO STAY

### PELICAN RAPIDS INN

152 MCDUGAL ROAD



(867) 872-2789



pelicanrapidsinn.com



manager@pelicanrapidsinn.com

### WHISPERING PINES COTTAGES

85 PINE CRESCENT



(867) 621-0254



sandralee.robichaud@gmail.com

### WOOD BUFFALO INN

123 SIMPSON ST



(867) 872-3222



woodbuffaloinn.com

### QUEEN ELIZABETH TERRITORIAL PARK

TEEPEE TRAIL



(867) 872-2607

### WHOOPING CRANE GUEST HOUSE

13 CASSETTE CRESCENT



(867) 872-3426



whoopingcraneguesthouse.com

### PINE LAKE CAMPGROUND

PINE LAKE ROAD



(867) 872-7960



parks.canada.ca





## WHERE TO EAT

### BERRO'S PIZZERIA

195 MCDOUGAL ROAD

☎ (867) 872-3332

### ANNA'S RESTAURANT

338 CALDER AVE

☎ (867) 872-2582

### PELICAN RESTAURANT

152 MCDOUGAL ROAD

☎ (867) 872-2729

### KFC & PIZZA HUT QUICK SERVICE

41 BREYNAT ST

☎ (867) 872-2568

### NSIXTY TRADING COMAPNY

101 KING STREET

☎ (800) 660-9019

### AUNTY'S KORNER STORE

75 KING STREET

### TIM HORTONS

50 TROUT STREET

☎ (867) 872-5411

### ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

72 BREYNAT STREET

☎ (867) 872-2132



# Fort Smith

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

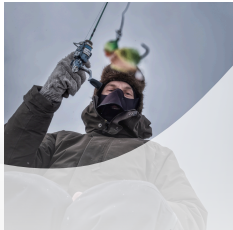
Unexpected **sights.**  
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**SOCIALS**



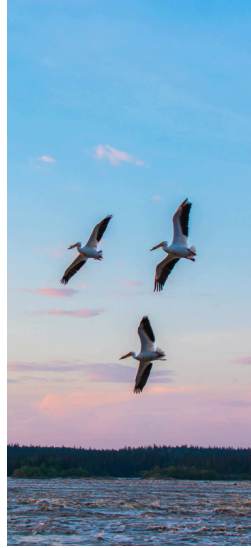
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## CONTACT US

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174 McDougal Road  
Fort Smith, NT X0E 0P0

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