

WILDLIFE

The Loop passes through sensitive migratory bird and animal sanctuaries as well as important salmon and herring marine ecosystems. Precautions must be taken to avoid their disturbance.

- Be aware of all animals on the water, below the surface and on the shoreline.
- Observe from a distance – do not approach wildlife or disturb their natural behaviour.
- Avoid approaches that cause a panic reaction among animals – talk softly or tap lightly on the side of your boat to gently warn of your presence.
- Avoid stream estuaries and small inlets during spawning or nesting times.
- Avoid shallows where sensitive mud feeding areas can be disturbed.
- Constantly assess wildlife. If you see signs of disturbance move away quietly.

BEFORE YOU GO

The Victoria Waterways Loop covers a distance of 15.5 kms (8.4 nautical miles) with a 950 m (1000 yards) portage. Winds, currents, and your paddling ability strongly influence how long it will take to paddle the complete loop.

The Victoria Waterways Loop offers recreational opportunities for those seeking either the challenge of exposed water or a smooth paddling experience through sheltered inlets and protected bays. But before you embark on your choice of saltwater adventure be sure you're prepared.

- Check ahead for weather and tides.
- Dress appropriately and always consider the possibility of capsizing or getting wet.
- Let someone know where you are going and what time you plan to return.
- Review *Transport Canada Safe Boating Guide*: www.tc.gc.ca/boating/safety.

Note: Esquimalt Harbour is a controlled military access zone open to the public. All vessels entering or departing are required to contact the Queen's Harbour Master (QHM) Operations on VHF Channel 10 or by cell phone at 250 363-2160.

Visit our website www.vicwaterloop.ca



THE VICTORIA WATERWAYS LOOP

A whole new paddle and portage experience!

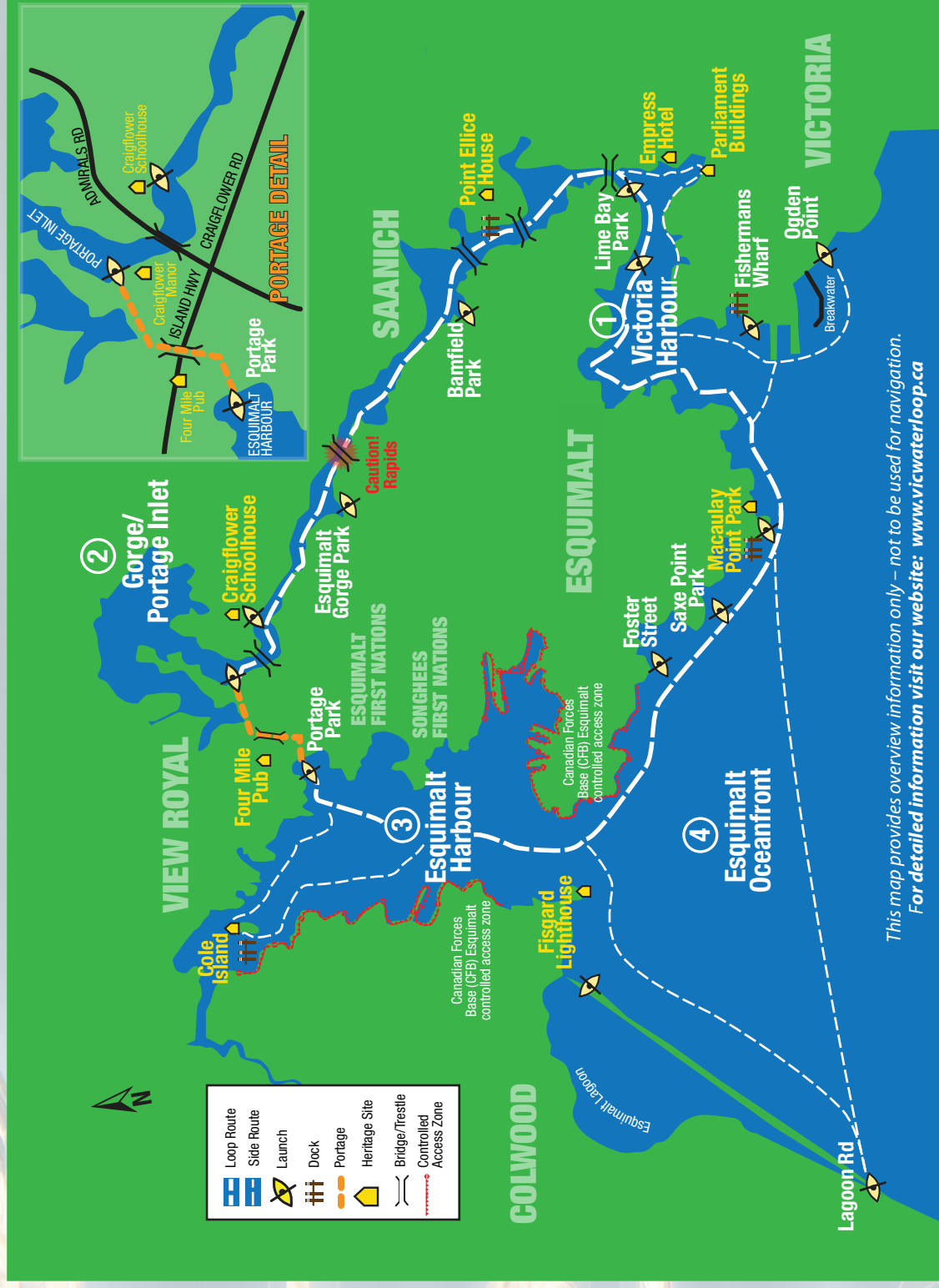
The Victoria Waterways Loop is a beautiful inland and open water passage that winds its way through some of the most spectacular and varied scenery on the south coast.

With numerous access points you can choose to paddle just a section of the loop or the entire loop in only a few hours.

Stop to explore a heritage site, have lunch in a local eatery or just enjoy the variety of wildlife that you'll see along the way.

Whether you're a seasoned paddler or novice there's a stretch of blue for you!

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1. VICTORIA HARBOUR

- Heritage Sites:
 - * The Empress Hotel
 - * Parliament Buildings
- Places to eat
- Views of downtown
- Working harbour
- Accommodation
- Boat rentals

Cautions

- High traffic area
- Float plane activity
- Large sea going vessels

2. GORGE/PORTAGE INLET

- Migratory Bird sanctuary
- Heritage sites:
 - * Point Ellice House
 - * Craigflower Schoolhouse
 - * First Nations midden
- Places to eat
- Sheltered waters
- Low traffic area
- Portage route

Cautions

- Mud flats
- Tidal rapids
- Active racing lanes
- Stream estuaries – avoid

3. ESQUIMALT HARBOUR

- Migratory Bird sanctuary
- Heritage sites:
 - * Four Mile Pub
 - * Cole Island
 - * Six Mile Pub
 - * Fisgard Lighthouse
- Portage route
- Calm areas

Cautions

- CFB Esquimalt
- Large sea going vessels
- Controlled access zone
- First Nations areas
- Sailing race traffic

4. ESQUIMALT OCEANFRONT

- Migratory Bird sanctuary
- Heritage site:
 - * Fort Rodd Hill
- Breakwater

Cautions

- Exposed water
- Large sea going vessels
- Fishing boat activity
- Harbour traffic area