

Flatbed Falls Hiking Trail (#2)

This trail was the first to be built in the Tumbler Ridge area, in the early 1980s. The large log shelter was added in 1990. It descends for one kilometer through mixed forest, past an attractive beaver dam, to a four metre high waterfall on Flatbed Creek. There is a good swimming hole below the falls. The Flatbed Falls trail forms part of the 27-kilometer-long TR Trail, which encircles three quarters of the community of Tumbler Ridge, and there are signs along the trail to indicate this. The parking lot is also one of five access points for the TR Trail.

Time/Distance: 1-2 hours/2 km return
Elevation Gain: 50 m (165 ft)
Rating: Moderate ■

Directions to the Trailhead

The starting point for this trail is the Flatbed Falls parking area. From the town, take Mackenzie Way and turn left onto Hwy 29. Drive 400 metres along the highway, and the parking lot is on the right.

Trail Directions

The trail to Flatbed Falls starts at the far right (west) end of the parking lot. It climbs briefly, then leads past a signboard at the junction with the Linking Trail. Turn to the left here. Soon after this there is a short side trail to the right, which leads to the edge of the Flatbed Valley. From here there are expansive views of the start of Flatbed Canyon, and the flat-topped summit of Mt Spieker in the far distance.

The bedrock in the bottom of the canyon (Cretaceous rocks) is a strong contrast with the thick layer of glacial till that forms the valley sides; its boulders and gravel are immediately below the level you are standing on. This till is a remnant of the ice ages (Pleistocene and recent). Flatbed Creek used to drain a much larger area, including Kinuseo Creek and Honeymoon Creek, but changes in river patterns about 22,000 years ago reduced its flow.

The main trail leads past an offshoot to the left (part of the TR trail), then passes a locked gate, designed to keep ATVs off the trail. The trail leaves the road 30 meters after the gate and crosses a south facing

grassy slope, leading down through the forest beside a beaver pond.

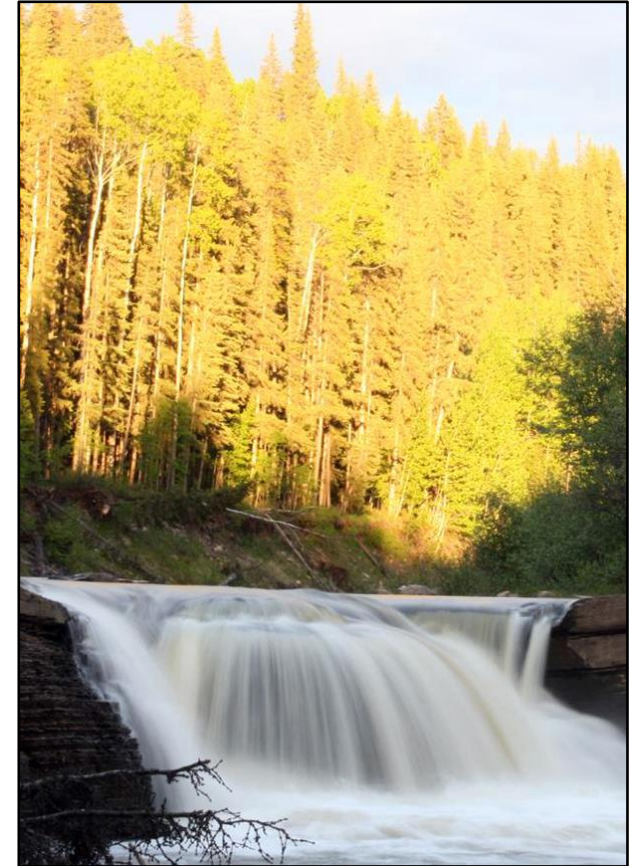
The forest is a good place to stop and listen for the bird songs in the mixed forest of White Spruce, Trembling Aspen and Lodgepole Pine. The most common birds to be heard here are Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Western Wood-Pewee, Warbling Vireo, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Dark-eyed Junco.

The trail descends a bit further, joining the road it left above, and approaches a beautiful log shelter with its picnic tables and outhouses, just above the beaver dams. Three or four successive dams create an interesting wetland habitat; the water comes from iron-rich springs at the bottom of the hill. Mallard, Canada Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Blue-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, flycatchers, Yellow Warbler, Northern Waterthrush and Song and Lincoln's Sparrows are commonly seen. A pair of Barred Owls inhabits this area, and Black-throated Green Warblers have been found nesting close to the log shelter, at the very western edge of their range.

The trail crosses the small creek below the bottom beaver dam, and Flatbed Falls can be heard just ahead. Here the waters of Flatbed Creek tumble over a resistant layer of sandstone. This and the overlying flat rock layers form a great place to bask in the sun, while the softer layers below the falls have been eroded into a deep swimming hole. A number of injuries have occurred here – please be careful and do NOT dive into the pool. Check its depth carefully before considering jumping into its deepest section. Kayakers have fun descending the falls in the spring flood.

Beyond the falls, the trail peters out just before a bog, where Black Spruce and Tamarack trees predominate. Return back to the trailhead the way you came.

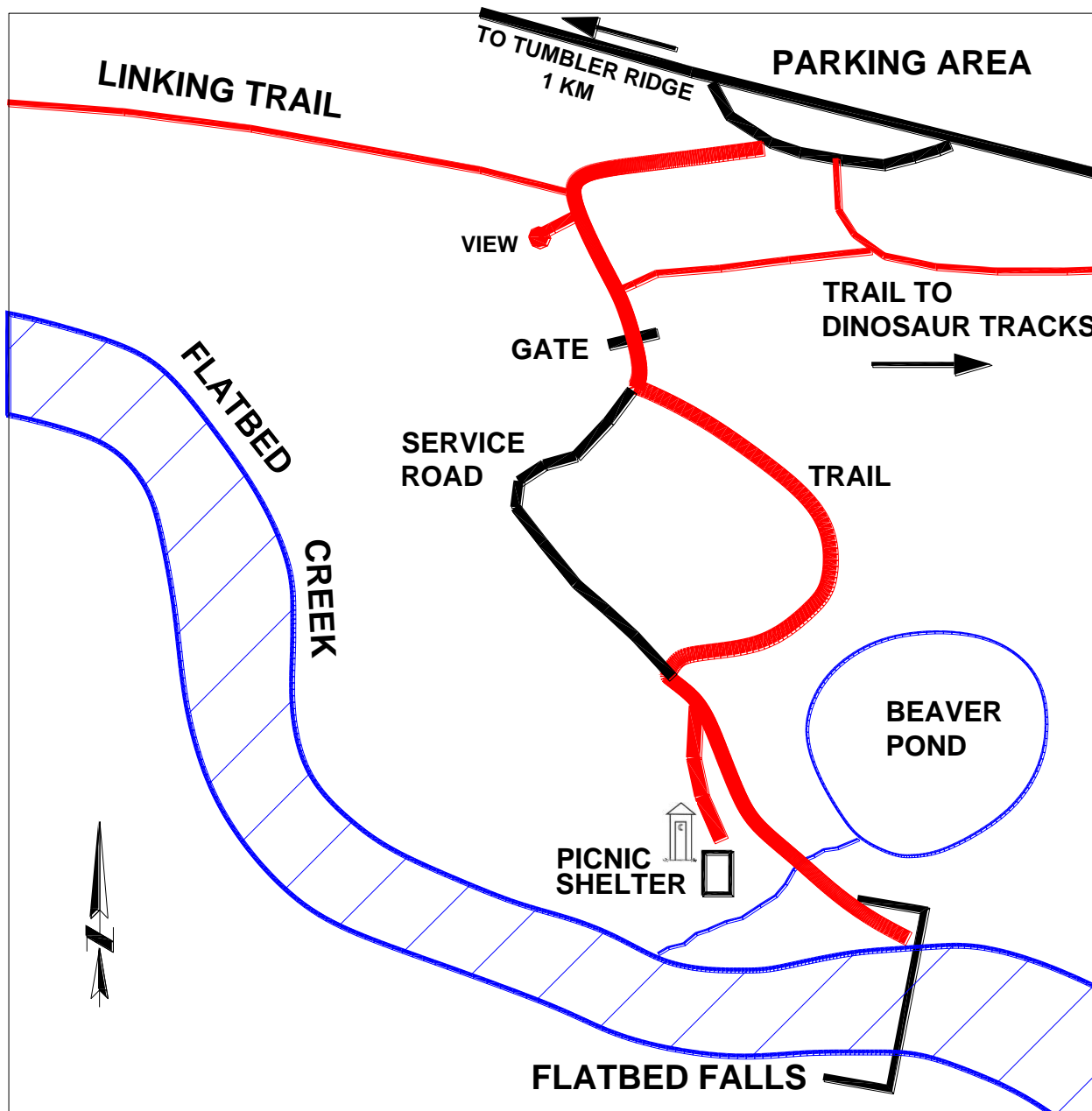
Flatbed Falls Hiking Trail



Rating: Moderate ■

Time: 1-2 hours





Flatbed Falls Trail



Picnic Shelter

- *These trails are in bear country; travel in groups and make noise*
- *Please pack out what you packed in*
- *Use caution when jumping off the falls*

For more information, contact:

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Photo Gallery website: www.wnms.ca

Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre
(250) 242-3123

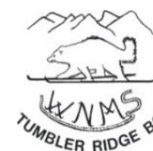
Tourism website: www.TumblerRidge.ca

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