

Monkman Cascades and Monkman Lake Hiking Route (#31 & #32)

The hike past the Cascades to Monkman Lake is an excellent multi-day backpacking trip with incredible scenery. Tony Greenfield, author of *“Waterfalls of British Columbia, A Guide to BC’s 100 Best Falls”* wrote *“If I die tomorrow, I will die happy, for I have visited the Monkman Cascades”*.

Note: This trail is only suitable for experienced hikers with good routefinding skills.

Time/Distance: 3-4 days/50 km return to Lake
Elevation Gain: 465 m (1500 ft) for return trip
Rating: Challenging ◆

Directions to the Trailhead

From Tumbler Ridge, drive south on Hwy 52 for 12.8 km. Turn right onto the Kinuseo Road, which becomes gravel after 3.5 km. This road is often quite rough with washboard sections. Follow this road and the signs to Monkman Provincial Park, and drive to the campground at km 50. Park in the day use area. A recommended side trip in the park is to drive to iconic Kinuseo Falls, a one km diversion.

Route Directions

The trail, created and maintained by BC Parks, begins at the back of the Kinuseo Falls campground. The first 7 km are fairly flat, as the trail follows the east bank of the Murray River until it reaches a suspension bridge. The first campsite, Murray River Camp, is on a short side trail downstream of the bridge.

For the next 7 km the trail gains, follows, and then descends off a long limestone ridge. Although well below treeline, the ridge has open cliff-top sections with nice views of the Monkman Creek valley and the surrounding peaks, dominated by Castle Mountain. Across the valley you can also see Horsetail Falls. The second campsite, Trot Camp,

is reached after descending from the ridge, just beyond km 14.

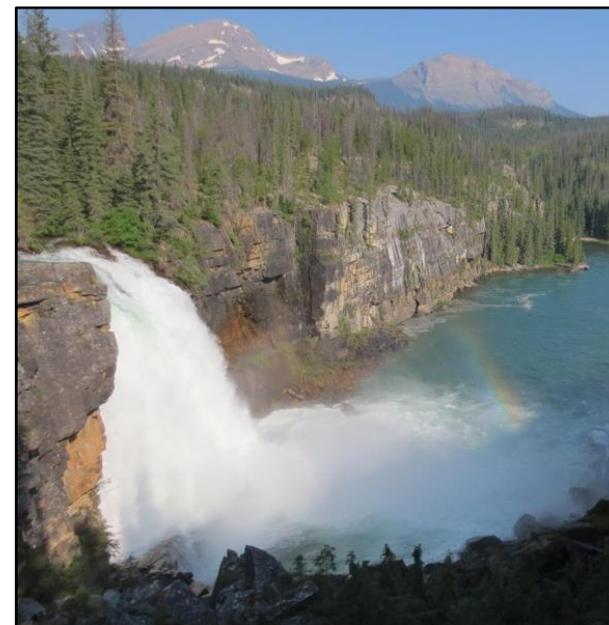
The next few kilometres are through fairly enclosed forest, until you hear the roar below of the Cascades. Here the waters of Monkman Creek, after leaving Monkman Lake, fall in a series of eight spectacular waterfalls, separated by placid pools. Most of the falls are the result of Monkman Creek passing over a hard band of quartzite which is resistant to erosion.

There are three points of access: the first is at km 18, the second at km 21, and the third is from the Devil’s Creek crossing at km 22. Two campsites have been built; one opposite Shire Falls and the other where Devil’s Creek joins the river. Trails are being improved; currently six of the Cascades are easily accessible, but there are areas where route-finding skills are needed. A side trail leads into and around an enormous sinkhole feature with a tiny pool of water at the bottom. If you have the time, plan to spend a whole day exploring this world of falling water and the grandeur of the surrounding scenery.

Cascades Two through Five are officially named for the members of the Monkman Trailblazer Crew: Chambers Falls, McGinnis Falls, Monkman Falls and Brooks Falls (cover photo). Downstream are Upper and Lower Moore Falls, named after another dedicated pioneer, Guy Moore. Cascades One and Eight are unnamed. Across from the campsite above Brooks Falls there is an attractive tributary falls, Shire Falls. Each of the Cascades is uniquely wonderful; together they are magnificent.

From here it is 2.5 km on the main trail to Monkman Lake. The next feature is Hell’s Half Acre, where the trail passes through an assemblage of huge chunks of quartzite rock, the product of an ancient slide off Mt Watts, whose slopes rise to the east. From here it is a pleasant, fairly level walk to the serene shores of Monkman Lake, where there is a substantial campsite. Monkman Lake is a beautiful lake, surrounded by mountains, and is a welcome sight after 25 km of hiking.

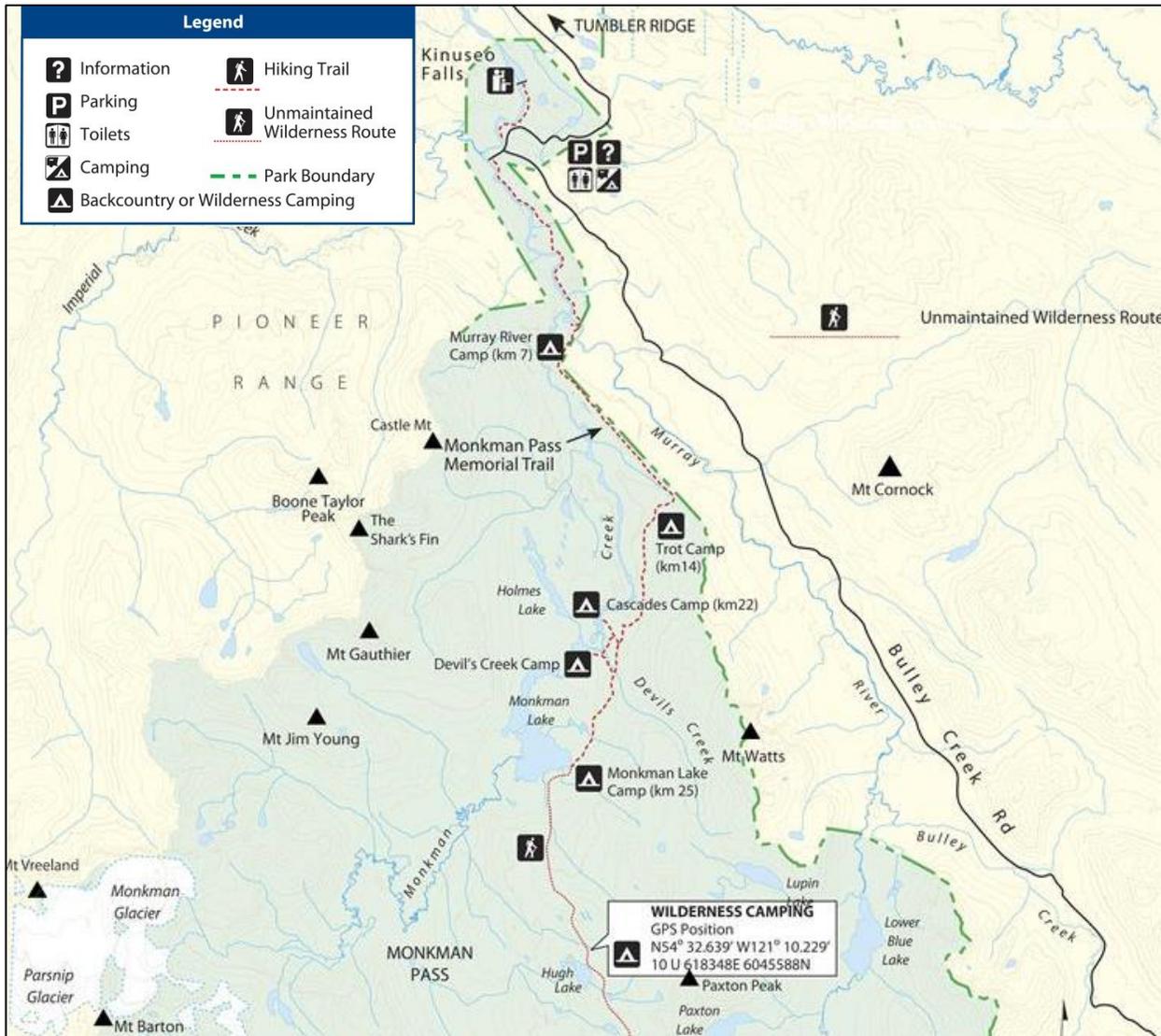
Monkman Provincial Park Monkman Cascades and Monkman Lake Hiking Route



Rating: Challenging ◆

Time: 3 - 4 days

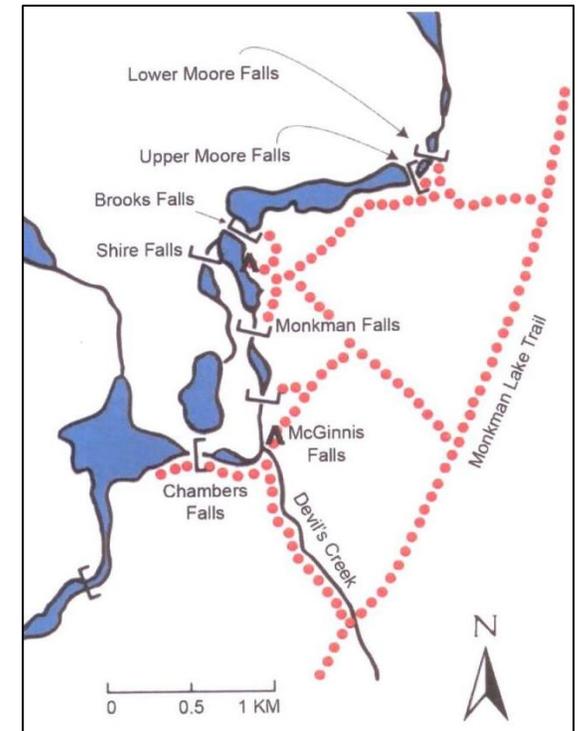




Monkman Lake Hiking Route

- *This route is in bear country – travel in groups and make noise*
- *Please pack out what you packed in*
- *Alpine weather can change suddenly – carry appropriate clothing and a map and compass or gps*

Beyond Monkman Lake, the Monkman Pass Memorial Trail climbs into the subalpine, where it becomes a wilderness route and is for experienced hikers only. Hikers beyond this point should have advanced wilderness navigation skills and equipment, and be prepared for route finding, inclement weather, and wilderness camping (no fuel wood is available). Please practice 'leave no trace' principles.



Monkman Cascades Map

For more information, contact:

BC Parks

www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/monkman

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Photo Gallery website: www.wnms.ca

Tumbler Ridge Visitor Centre

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Tourism website: www.TumblerRidge.ca

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