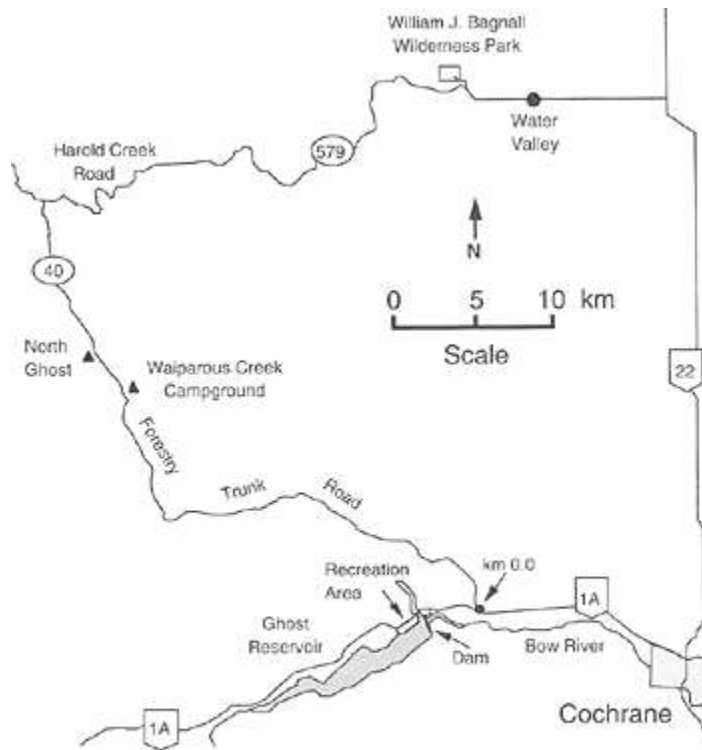


Forestry Trunk Road *by Doug Collister(1993)*

This driving route takes the birder from relatively open country into heavily forested rugged foothills. It is excellent for migrating raptors as well as foothills specialities such as Northern Pygmy-Owl and Rosy Finch. The route is most rewarding during March-April and again in October-November. Snowfall can be heavy in this area well into spring and early in the fall, so undertake this drive with some caution.



The Forestry Trunk Road

The distance one way to Water Valley from the junction with Hwy 1A is 90 km. Allow two hours plus to drive this, depending on what birds are encountered and how much time is spent on side trips.

The route begins (km 0.0) at the junction of Hwy 1A and the Forestry Trunk Road (S.R. 940), approximately 12.5 km west of the Hwy 22 intersection in Cochrane. Turn right (north). The first 30 km are paved but the road is narrow, twisting and rough in places; from then on to the Harold Creek turnoff it is a good gravel road. After 1.5 km Beaupre Lake will be seen on the left, behind the gas well (Caution: do not cross the fence here). This small foothills pond

is shallow and can be dry but usually provides a resting spot for migrating waterfowl, especially in spring. From this point through to the bridge over Waiparous Creek (17.0 km) watch for migrant raptors. At the Waiparous Creek bridge check for American Dipper and listen for Northern Pygmy-Owl. The road enters the Forest Reserve at 27.1 km. Another bridge over Waiparous Creek occurs at 37.2 km.

The North Ghost Recreation Area has two campgrounds. The first, Waiparous Creek, is reached at 35.3 km. The second, North Ghost, is on the left at 39.4 km. This campground is closed between October 8th and May 21st each year but it can be birded by walking in (check the snow depth before parking off the highway). The Waiparous Valley viewpoint occurs at 42 km. A

brehtaking view of peaks of the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains can be enjoyed here. The Harold Creek/Salisbury Road junction is reached at 46 km. Turn right (east) here. This gravel road can have bad sections, especially during the spring thaw - so undertake this part of the route with caution. The road leaves the Forest Reserve at 65.5 km and the foothills community of Water Valley appears at 87 km, about 5 km beyond the bridge over the Little Red Deer River. 10 km east of Water Valley is Hwy 22; turn south for a direct route back to Hwy 1A.

Gas and meals can be obtained in Water Valley. For a taste of western hospitality try the Water Valley Saloon.

OPTIONAL SECTION: Ghost Reservoir is a large, deep waterbody formed by the damming of the Bow immediately downstream of its confluence with the Ghost River. Large numbers of waterfowl, grebes and loons gather here during spring and fall migration. Depending on how much time you have at your disposal and the time of year, you may wish to visit this location before starting the route. There are two access points at the eastern end. From the junction with the Forestry Trunk Road you can either drive 2.8 km west to a minor gravel road on the left. Turn here and continue until the road divides. Keep to the right and park near the dam. This vantage point offers a good view of the Ghost River as it enters the reservoir. Or you can drive 4.5 km west from the Forestry Trunk Road junction to a small recreation area on the shoreline.