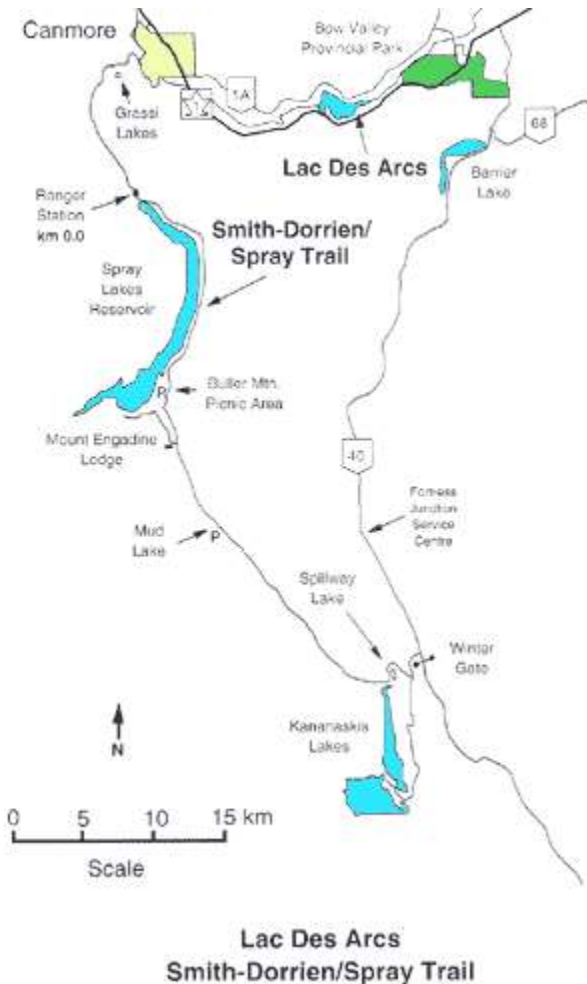


Lac des Arcs by Joan McDonald(1993); revised 2012

Lac Des Arcs is a large, shallow lake adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway within the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, on the Bow River just west of Bow Valley Provincial Park. Despite the presence of a large cement works and the resulting degradation of the environment, it nevertheless is an important staging area for waterfowl and gulls in spring and fall, and is worth a stop on the way to Banff.



During migration large numbers of Tundra Swans and surface-feeding ducks may be seen, together with smaller numbers of diving ducks such as Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead and Hooded Merganser.

American Wigeon can be particularly abundant and these should be checked for the occasional Eurasian Wigeon, which has been recorded here in fall. Osprey and Bald Eagle are regularly seen.

The first access point is reached by driving west on the Trans-Canada Highway (Hwy 1) for about 8 km from the Seebe Interchange (Hwy 1X), then exiting to the right onto the access road to the Lac Des Arcs Campground. The eastern end of the lake can be scoped from the canoe launching area or from a vacant campsite. The Trans-Canada Highway parallels the southern shore of the lake, with three vehicle pull-outs

offering further viewing opportunities for westbound traffic only. These occur at 0.6 km, 0.9 km, and 1.6 km from the campground exit. At the third pullout, close to a tiny island adorned with a picnic table, walk off the highway to the right and pick up a trail. This short trail, built by the Friends of Kananaskis Country, leads to viewing blinds from which you can watch the skittish swans on the western part of the lake.