

Overview

This is a bicycle touring trip in Prince Edward County. The Venturers will camp with their leaders at the starting point on Friday night. On Saturday morning the Venturers will depart on the bicycle trip as a group without the leaders. During the day, the leaders will drop the Venturer's camping gear and food at a second campground. The leaders will then return to Friday night's campground. When the Venturers reach the second campground they will camp by themselves for the night. On Sunday morning they will pack up the gear and depart on the second leg of their trip. During the day, the leaders will visit the campsite to pickup all the gear and will then meet the Venturers at the destination on Sunday afternoon.

Participants

Name	Type	Bicycle	Bicycle Type	Qualifications	In Command
Beelich, Andreas	Youth	Own	Mountain	First Aid, Bronze Cross	
Catton, Sam	Youth	Own	Mountain		
Dionne, Nick	Youth	Own	Mountain		
Gale, Calvin	Youth	Own	Mountain	First Aid	1 st
Savage, Lochlan	Youth	Own	Mountain		
Yates, Laura	Youth	Own	Mountain	First Aid, Bronze Medallion	2 nd
Yates, Allan	Adult	Own	Mountain	First Aid	

Financial Budget

Item	Budget	Actual	Notes
Mileage Truck & Trailer - Allan, 2 x 191km + 2 x 41km @ \$0.25/km	\$116	\$146	582km
Foster's Fishing Centre camping fee (\$23.50/night + tax)	\$53	\$96	
West Willows Lake Resort camping fee	\$56	\$55	
Copper Kettle Chocolate Company gift certificate	\$25	\$25	
Slickers County Ice Cream gift certificate	\$25	\$25	
Food - (\$10/person/day), 2 days, 7 people	\$140	\$140	
Contingency	\$100		
Map printing (colour)		\$13	
Showers @ Foster's Fishing Centre		\$4	\$0.25/2min
Propane		\$13	
Total	\$500	\$517	
Total per Venturer (6)	\$83	\$103	5 Venturers
Advertised total fee per Venturer	\$85		

Safety Precautions

- Helmets will be worn at all times while Venturers are bicycling.
- Group will stay together at all times.
- Prior to camp, bicycles will be checked for roadworthiness including tire inflation.
- Basic repair tools will be carried including spare inner tubes and pumps.
- All bicycling will be during daylight hours.

Schedule**Friday April 29th**

Meet with bicycles and personal gear at the tractor trailer 5:30 PM. County Road 15 South to Highway 401. Highway 401 West to County Road 49 (exit 566). County Road 49 South, cross over bridge (Bay of Quinte), then right (west) on County Road 15 (Northport Road). Foster's Fishing Centre is on the right. A drive of 191 km, 2 ½ hours. Arrive at Foster's Fishing Centre (campground) in Prince Edward County at 9:00pm.

Saturday April 30th

Wake up at 7:30am with bicycle departure by 9:00am. All gear to be packed and stowed in cargo trailer. Lunches to be made and taken on bicycles.

Total bicycling distance 49 km. 3:30pm expected arrival time at West Lake Willows Resort. Record departure and arrival times for future planning.

Checkpoint in Bloomfield at Slickers County Ice Cream. A gift certificate for an ice cream each will be provided.

Present thank you letter and group crest at the Bloomfield Bicycle Company in recognition for all their help in route planning.

Venturers to camp at West Lake Willows Resort. Single available campsite is reserved (#6), and will be paid for when the leaders drop off the camping gear.

The Venturers are to ask if there is any chore / good turn they can do for the owner of the campground.

Leaders will remain at Foster's Fishing Centre for Saturday night.

Sunday May 1st

Wake up at 7:30am, pack all gear as it was found (including washing the dishes!), and depart by 9:00am.

Ensure campsite is left cleaner than upon arrival.

Total bicycling distance 46 km plus the mountain bike trails at the Macaulay Mountain Conservation Area. 3:30pm expected arrival time in Glenora. Record departure and arrival times for future planning.

Checkpoint in Picton at Copper Kettle Chocolate Company. \$25 gift certificate provided.

Leaders to pick up the camping gear from West Lake Willows Resort during the day.

Take the Glenora ferry and head home. County Road 33 East to County Road 6. County Road 6 North to Highway 401. Highway 401 East to County Road 15 (exit 705). County Road 15 North to Merrickville. A drive of 189km, 3 hours. Arrive in Merrickville at approximately 8:00pm.

Wet and dirty equipment distributed for cleaning and drying. Pickup at tractor trailer. Venturers will call with exact time.

Equipment

All the camping equipment, food, and the majority of the Venturer's personal kit will be transported by vehicle to the Saturday night campground, and picked up on the Sunday.

During the bicycle rides the Venturers will bring with them only a rain suit, a first aid kit, lunch, water, money for emergency use, a compass, a map each, a bicycle pump, a bicycle repair kit, a notepad and pencil, \$200 in emergency money (split between two people), and two copies of the trip plan. Need to ensure the pumps will fit the valves on all the tires.

In Case of Emergency

While the Venturers will be expected to handle any unexpected challenges themselves, as a very last step they will be able to contact the leaders at Friday night's campground.

The Venturers will carry a sealed package containing a copy of their physical fitness forms.

The Venturer's map will include the location of the hospital, the local OPP detachment, and bicycle repair shops.

Pre-Trip Training

A 20km bicycle ride will be done before the trip and a bicycle repair training session will be held, specifically including the repair of flat tires.

Two overall plan review sessions will be held with the Venturers to ensure they are all aware of the trip details and their options for various issues that may arise. The first is a high level overview, and the second will include a multitude of scenarios that might be encountered.

Route

The route has been developed in conjunction with the Bloomfield Bicycle Company. The route avoids main roads where ever possible, or roads without paved shoulders.

A bicycling speed of 15 km/hour has been assumed, plus breaks.

The Venturers are to record their start and end times each day for future planning.

Two bicycle repair shops are enroute, one in Bloomfield on the Saturday and one in Picton on the Sunday.

Available on Google Maps:

<http://maps.google.ca/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=211748135732540701743.0004a0950bf933778dacad&ll=44.013065,-77.164536&spn=0.324935,0.449066&z=11>

Checkpoints

A checkpoint approximately at the midpoint of each day has been identified. The Venturers will be stopping at these two locations for a snack, and thus these can be used if it is necessary to back track their route.

- The Saturday checkpoint is Slickers County Ice Cream in Bloomfield. The Venturers will be supplied with gift certificates for an ice cream each (total cost of \$25 for six).
- The Sunday checkpoint is the Copper Kettle Chocolate Company in Picton. The Venturers will be supplied with a \$25 gift certificate.

Photographs

Venturers will be strongly encouraged to take photographs throughout their tour.

West Lake Willows Resort (Saturday night campsite)
 2028 County Road 12 (West Lake Road)
 Picton, Ontario
 (613) 393-3213



Ontario Provincial Police

576 County Road #1 (Schoharie Road) @ Loyalist Parkway (County Road #33)
 Picton, Ontario
 (613) 476-2151

Bloomfield Bicycle Company

225 Main Street
 Bloomfield, Ontario
 (613) 393-1060
www.bloomfieldbicycle.ca

Ideal Bike

252 Main Street, Unit #6 (in basement; enter through big yellow doors in Canada Post parking lot)
 Picton, Ontario
 (613) 476-1913
 (800) 301-3981
www.idealbike.com

Picton Skatepark

Picton Fairgrounds
 375 Main Street East
 Picton, Ontario

Copper Kettle Chocolate Company (checkpoint)

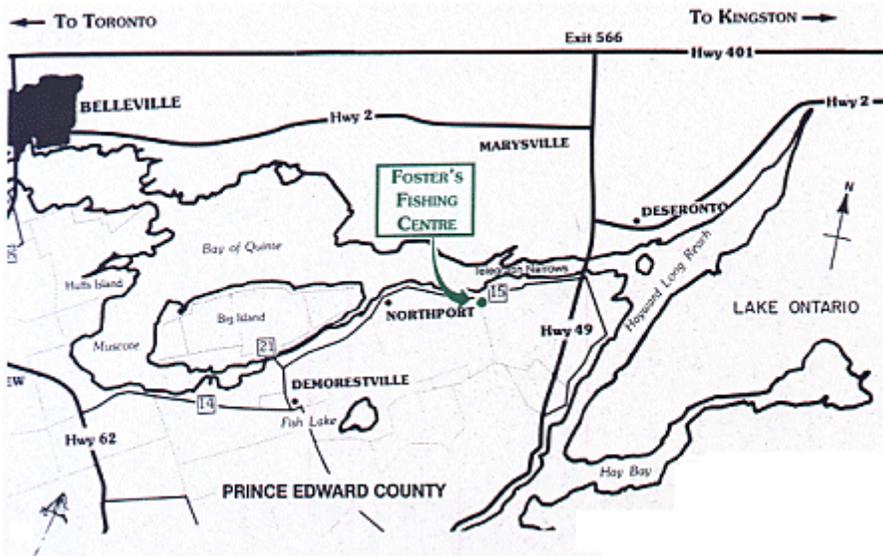
78 Main Street
 Picton, Ontario
 (613) 476-6058
 (877) 394-4364
www.copperkettlechocolate.ca

Slickers Ice Cream (checkpoint)

271 Main Stet (corner of Main Street and Mill Street)
 Bloomfield, Ontario
 (613) 393-5433
www.slickersicecream.ca

Foster's Fishing Centre (Friday night campsite for everybody, and Saturday night for leaders)

Located on the Bay of Quinte at Telegraph Narrows.
 County Road 15 near Northport.
 (613) 476-7290
www.fostersfishing.com

**Hospital**

Quinte Health Care Prince Edward County Memorial
 403 Main Street East
 Picton, Ontario
 (613) 476-2181 or (613) 476-1008

Vehicle

Manufacturer: GMC
 Model: Yukon XL Denali
 Colour: Pewter
 License plate: AKFA 929

White cargo trailer (6' x 12'), license plate: C3529H

Don & Anne Williams (Lochlan's aunt & uncle)
254 County Road 32
Picton, Ontario
(613) 393-2691

Bob & Helen Williams (Lochlan's grand parents)
183 County Road 32
Picton, Ontario
(613) 393-5630

Swimming

While the Saturday night campground is a waterfront site, it will probably be too cold for swimming. However, Andreas meets the Scouts Canada requirements for a youth lifeguard (16 to 18 years of age and holding the Bronze Cross).

Other Camping Locations Considered

Accommodating Bay (near Black Creek): www3.sympatico.ca/anthonyl/index.html
Quinte Isle (near Sandbanks): www.qicampark.com
Hideaway (near Sandbanks): www.hideawaytrailerpark.com
Smugglers Cove (South Bay): www.smugglerscove.ca
Log Cabin Point (near Sandbanks): www.logcabinpoint.com
West Lake Willows (near Sandbanks): www.westlakewillows.com
Fairfield's Resort (near Sandbanks): www.fairfieldsresort.ca
Wesley Acres (near Sandbanks, other side of lake): www.wesleyacres.com
East Shore Campark (Melville): www.eastshorecampark.ca
Edgewater Park (Picton): edgewatertrailerpark.com
Cherry Lane (Cherry Valley): www.cherrylanecampground.ca
Sandbanks Beach Resort (near Sandbanks): www.sandbanksbeachresort.com
Sandbanks Provincial Park (kids not allowed to camp without adult supervision)

No Camping Permitted (locations considered)

Merland Park: www.merlandpark.com
Bayside Cottages: www.baysidecottages.com

Questions for Plan Review Session

1. Where are you camping?
2. What do you do if a bicycle breaks?
3. What do you need to do on Sunday?
4. What do you do if a bicycle breaks and you can't fix it?
5. When do you need to be at the finish?
6. What do you do if somebody breaks their wrist?
7. What do you do if somebody scrapes their leg?
8. What do you need to do in Bloomfield?
9. What do you do at the campsite?
10. What do you need to do in Picton?
11. Can you have a campfire at the campsite?
12. What do you need to do on Saturday?
13. Where are you departing from?
14. How long can you spend at Macaulay Mountain?
15. What do you do if you notice one person from the group is missing?
16. What do you do with your dishes at the campsite?
17. What do you need to do at the campsite?
18. What do you do with the equipment at the campsite on Sunday morning?
19. How long can you ride on the off road trails?
20. Where is the chocolate shop?
21. Where is the ice cream store?
22. Can you stop for snacks?
23. What do you do if it rains?
24. What is in the first aid kit?
25. How can you fix a dangling part on a bicycle?
26. Where is the first aid kit?
27. Who has the bicycle repair kit?
28. Who has the water bottle?
29. What are the routes?
30. Do you have to stay on the route?
31. Where are the maps and schedules?
32. Who has the bicycle pump?
33. Who has the spare inner tube?
34. When do you call for leaders for help?
35. When do you not call leaders for help?
36. Who can you ask for help?
37. How can you get help?
38. Where do you go for help?
39. What do you do if involved in an automobile collision and nobody is hurt?
40. What do you do if involved in an automobile collision and somebody is hurt?
41. What do you do if you are attacked by somebody?
42. What do you do if somebody gets lost?
43. What do you do if the group is lost?
44. What do you do if you are behind schedule for the destination on Saturday?
45. What do you do if it gets dark and you haven't made it to the campsite yet?
46. What do you do if you are behind schedule for the destination on Sunday?
47. When do you spend the emergency money?
48. Which is preferred, spending the emergency money or calling leaders for help?
49. Who has first aid qualifications?
50. Who takes charge of a medical situation?
51. Who is in charge?

Questions for Plan Review Session (continued)

52. Who is second in command?
53. What do you do if chased by a dog while on your bicycle?
54. What do you do if bitten by a dog?
55. What does the group do if a person is lost?
56. What does a person do if they are lost?
57. What does the group do if a person is lost on Macaulay Mountain?
58. What does a person do if they are lost on Macaulay Mountain?
59. Where is your meeting point after the off road trails?
60. When can you take shortcuts on the road route?
61. What type of truck did we bring and the license plate number?
62. How many groups do you split into while bicycling?

Personal Kit List

Sleeping bag
Sleeping pad (optional)
Torch
Headlamp (optional)
Change of clothes
Change of footwear
Trousers
Long sleeved shirt
Shorts
Towel
Sweater or sweat shirt
Track pants (optional)
Rain jacket
Rain pants (optional)
Pyjamas
Pillow (optional)
Wash kit: tooth brush, tooth paste, soap, shampoo, chapstick, etc.
Mess kit: plate, bowl, cup, knife, fork, spoon in mesh bag
Water bottles
Sunscreen
Kleenex (optional)
Toilet paper (optional)
Bicycle, mountain
Bicycle helmet
Knapsack or panniers
Bicycle lock
OHIP card
Bicycle gloves (optional)
Sunglasses (optional)
Pocket knife (optional)
Sheath knife (optional)
Camera (optional)
Multi-tool (optional)
Compass (optional)
Pocket money (optional)
Camelback (optional)
Bike rack (optional)
Panniers (optional)

No electronic devices.

While bicycling, Venturers will need to carry their water, lunch, a map, and rain gear. All the rest of their personal equipment, and the camping equipment, will be transported to and from the campsite by vehicle.

Menu**Friday**

Supper

Eat before departure of brown bag from home

Saturday

Breakfast

Cereal, milk, oatmeal

Lunch

Tortillas, turkey, ham, lettuce

Supper

Venturers: Hamburgers, hamburger buns, cheese, onions

Leaders: Restaurant

Sunday

Breakfast

Venturers: Cereal, milk, oatmeal

Leaders: English muffins, peanut butter

Lunch

Tortillas, turkey, ham, lettuce

Supper

Leftovers

Beverages

Juice crystals

Orange juice

Hot chocolate

Leaders: Coffee (w/cream)

Condiments & Seasonings

Mayonnaise

Ketchup

Mustard

Pickles, Dill

Horse radish

Montreal Steak Spice

Vegetable oil

Salt

Pepper

Snacks

Granola bars

Apples, red & green

Two bite brownies

Cookies

Sesame snacks

Grocery List

Item	Quantity	Status	Store	Notes
Frosted Flakes	1 large box (680g)			
Cheerios	1 large box (525g)			
Milk, 3.5%	2 x 2 litre carton			
Orange juice, Tropicana, no pulp	2 x 1.89 litre carton		Costco	
Tortillas	28		Costco	2/person/meal
Lettuce, iceberg	1 head			
Turkey	1 double pkg (800g)		Costco	
Ham	1 double pkg (1000g)		Costco	
Apples, red	1 bag (8)			
Apples, green	1 bag (8)			
Horse radish	1 jar			
Granola bars, sweet & salty	1 large box (32)		Costco	
Hamburgers	12		Costco	2/person
Montreal Steak Spice	1 jar	Have		
Hamburger buns	12		Costco	2/person
Ketchup	1 squeeze bottle		Costco	
Mustard	1 squeeze bottle		Costco	
Mayonnaise	1 squeeze bottle			
Marshmallows	1 large bag	Have		
Juice crystals	1 large container			
Pickles, dill, sliced	1 jar			
Onions	4	Have		
Fudgeeos, double stuff	2 bags			
Hot chocolate	20 packets	Have		2/person/night
Cheese, cheddar	1 large block (907g)		Costco	
Sesame snacks	1 box	Have	Costco	
Vegetable oil	1 bottle	Have		
Two bite brownies	1 container		Costco	
English muffins	4			
Peanut butter, crunchy, Kraft	1 container	Have		
Coffee, decaffeinated	1 small can	Have		
Creamers	20			
Oatmeal	10 packages	Have		

Camping Equipment (tractor trailer - Venturers)

Tent, MEC Apollo (3 man), w/poles & pegs, 3
 Tent Footprint, MEC Apollo, 3
 Tarp, medium, 2
 Tarp, large
 Pot set, MSR, large
 Frying pan, 2
 Stove, MSR SimmerLite
 Stove, MSR DragonFly
 Fuel bottle, MSR, 590ml, 2
 Fuel pump, MSR SimmerLite
 Fuel pump, MSR DragonFly
 Water container
 Cooler, large
 Ice packs, 3
 Basin, washing, 2
 Garbage bag holder
 Marshmallow sticks

Camping Equipment (tractor trailer - Base Camp)

Lantern, propane, 2
 Spare mantles, 8
 Stove, propane
 Cargo trailer
 Ice packs, 3
 Pot set, MSR, large
 Dining shelter w/poles & pegs

Camping Equipment (Allan - Base Camp)

Matches, 1 box
 Chair, folding
 Single cup coffee maker
 Coffee filters, #2, 10
 Spark lighter
 Cooler
 Toaster, stove top
 Kindling
 Firewood
 Newspaper
 Propane, 1 lb, 4
 Bungee cords (to hold bikes in trailer)
 Air compressor, 12V
 Water container
 Garbage bags

Camping Equipment (Allan - Venturers)

Matches, 1 box
 Toilet paper
 First aid kit, expedition
 Kleenex
 Kindling
 Firewood
 Newspaper
 Dish soap
 Paper towel
 Scrubbing pad, nylon
 Chairs, folding, 2
 Paracord, 100' hanks, 3
 Repair kit
 Garbage bag, extra large, 2
 Utensil roll-up
 Spoon, serving, nylon, 2
 Spoon, serving, slotted, nylon
 Spatula, nylon, 2
 Can opener
 Knife, sharp, 2
 Spoon, wooden
 Ladle, nylon
 Whisk, small
 Ziploc bags, large (for lunch wraps)
 Cheese slicer/grater
 Cutting board
 Tea towel, 2
 Propane, 1 lb, 4
 Dish cloths, 2
 Clipboard (for menu)
 White gas
 Salt & pepper shaker
 Frisbee
 Soccer ball
 Spare bike helmet

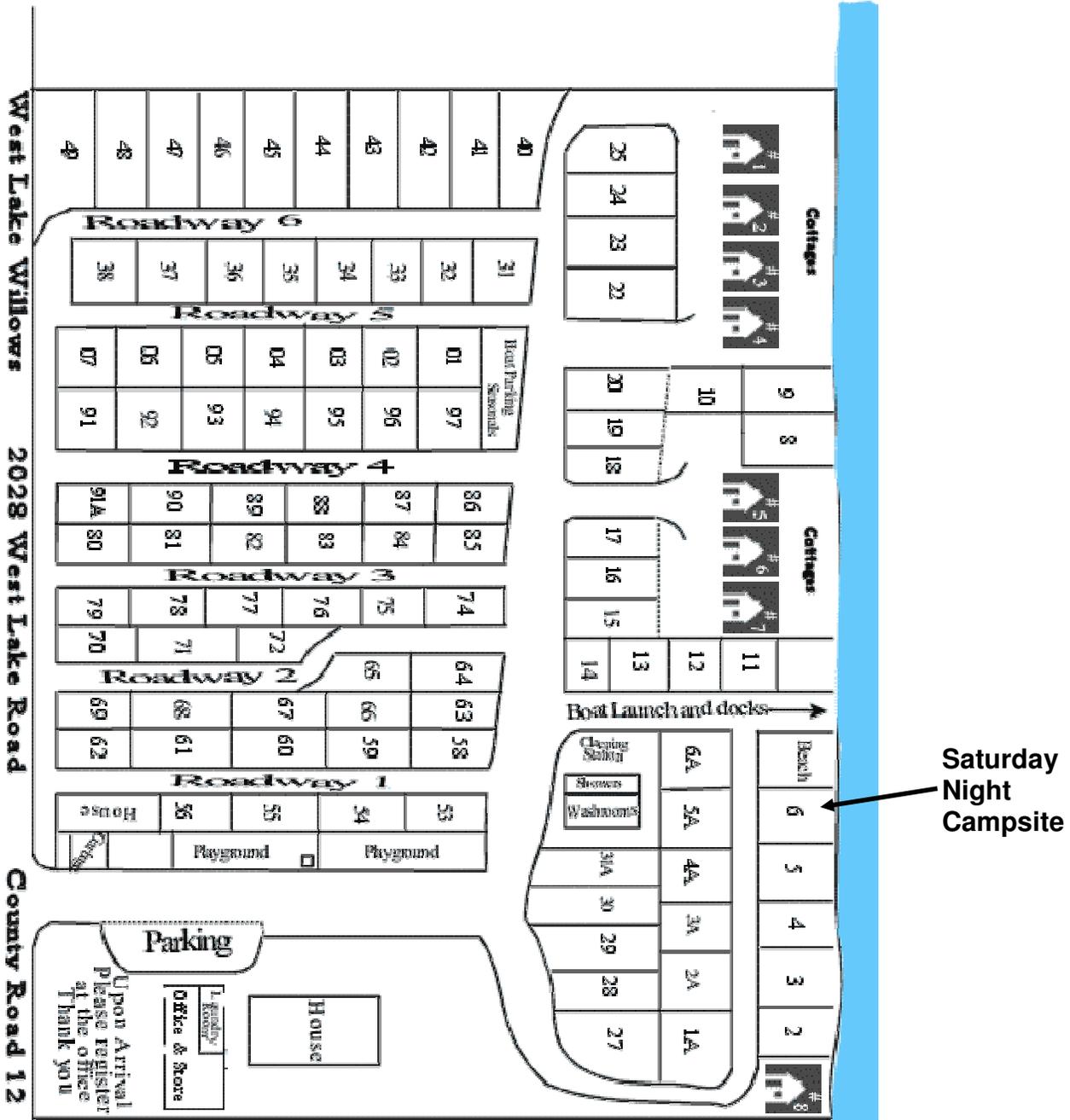
Allan's Extra Kit

Sheath knife
Thermometer
CDs (travel pack)
Trip plan
Watch
Camera
Camera spare batteries (charged)
Camera battery charger
Inverter
Books
DVDs
Laptop
Laptop power supply
Earphones
Extension cord, long
Physical fitness forms
Tent, 4 man (poles, pegs, ground sheet)
Lantern, battery
Truck garbage container w/bags
Briefcase
Weather forecast
Shaver
Contact lens solution
Spare contact lenses
Notebook & pencil
Kleenex
First aid kit
GPS, automotive

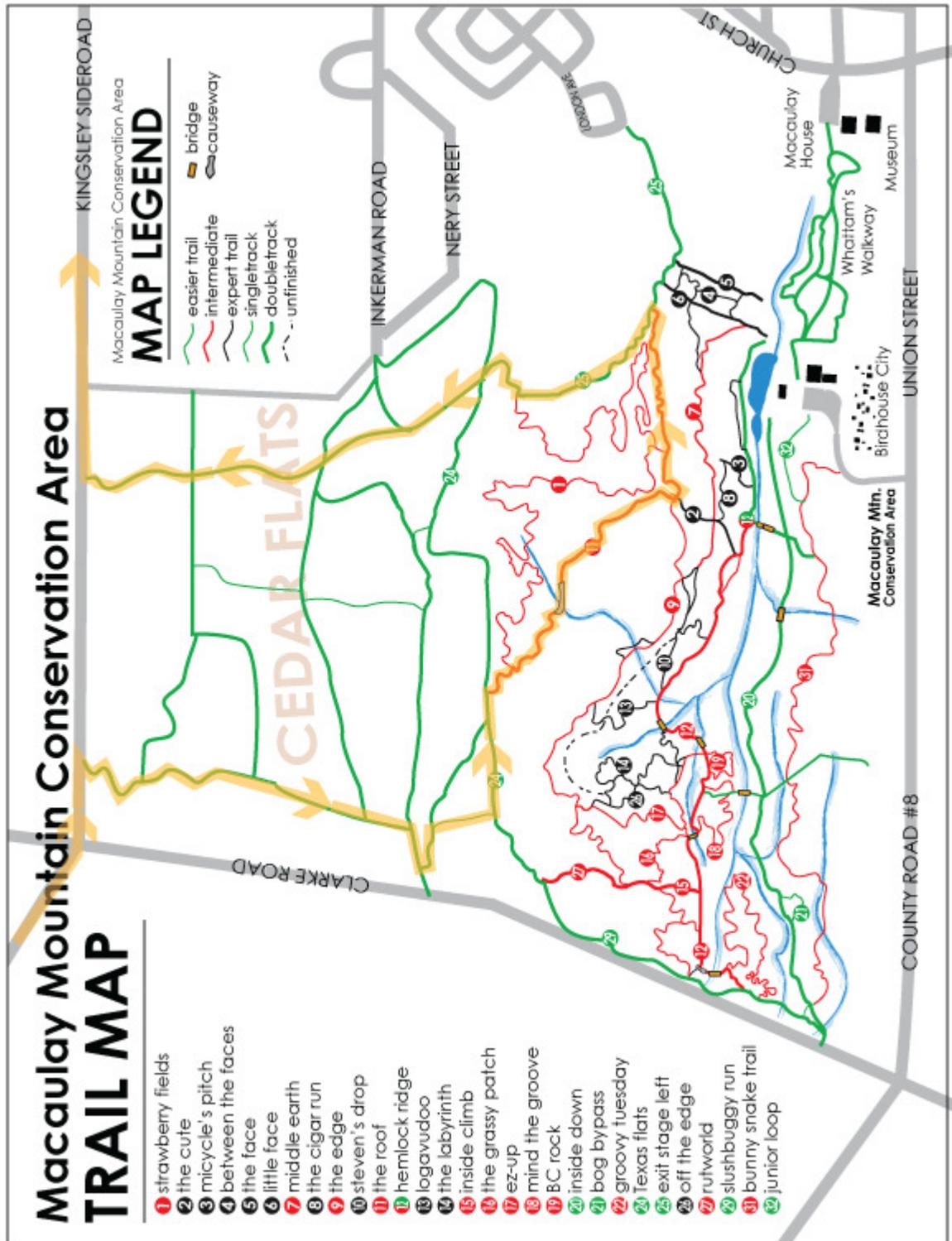
Equipment to Carry During Ride

Bicycle multi-tool (Andreas)
Tire pump, presto valve (Andreas)
Tire pump, schrader valve (Sam)
Spare inner tube, 26" (Andreas)
Spare inner tube, 26" (Sam)
First aid kit, Wilderness Medical Dash+
Wrench, adjustable, small, 2
Allen keys, metric
Compass
Wire
Cable ties
Duct tape
Multi-tool
Notebook
Pencil
Physical fitness forms
Quarters for emergency telephone calls
Toilet paper

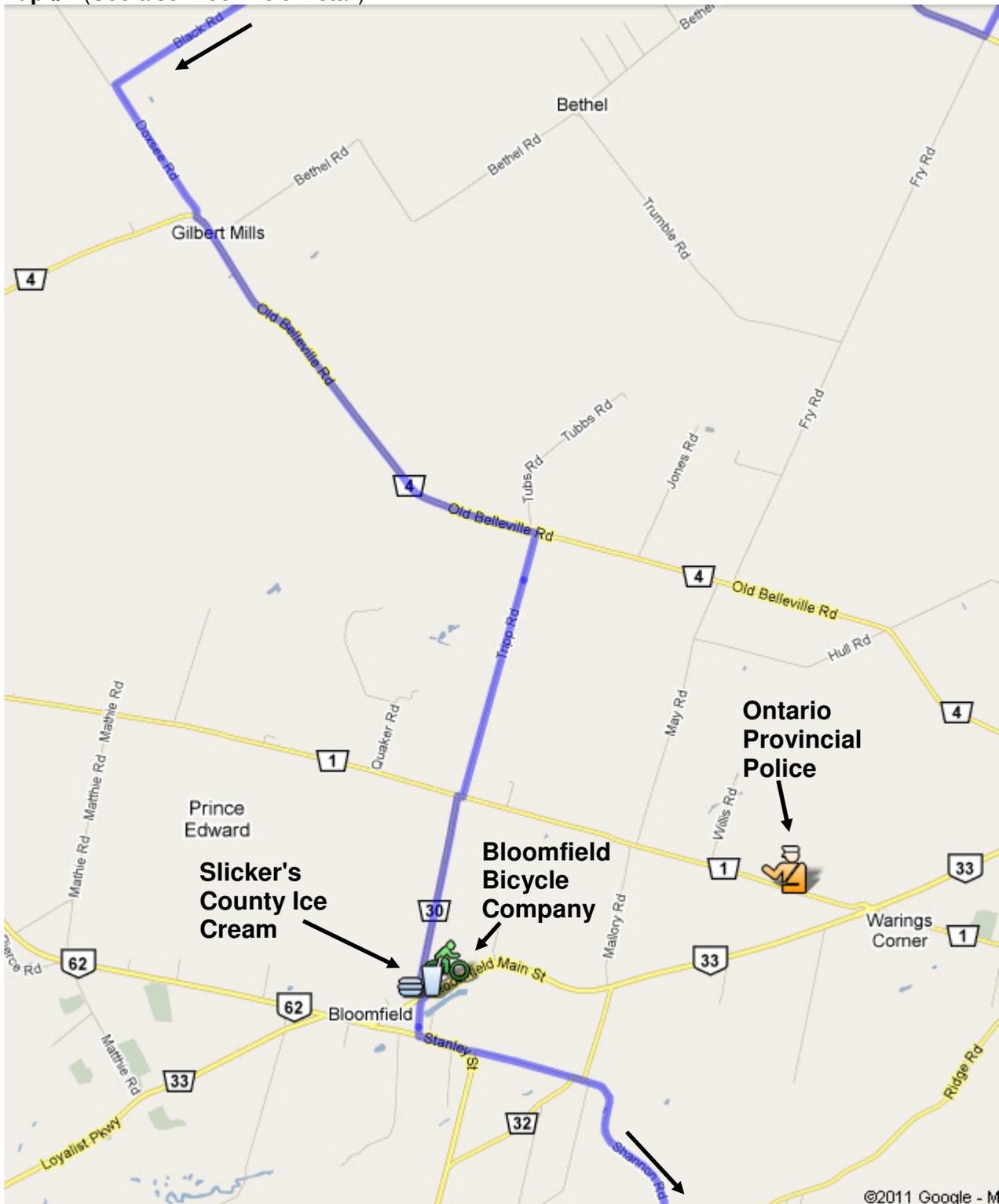
West Lake Willows Resort



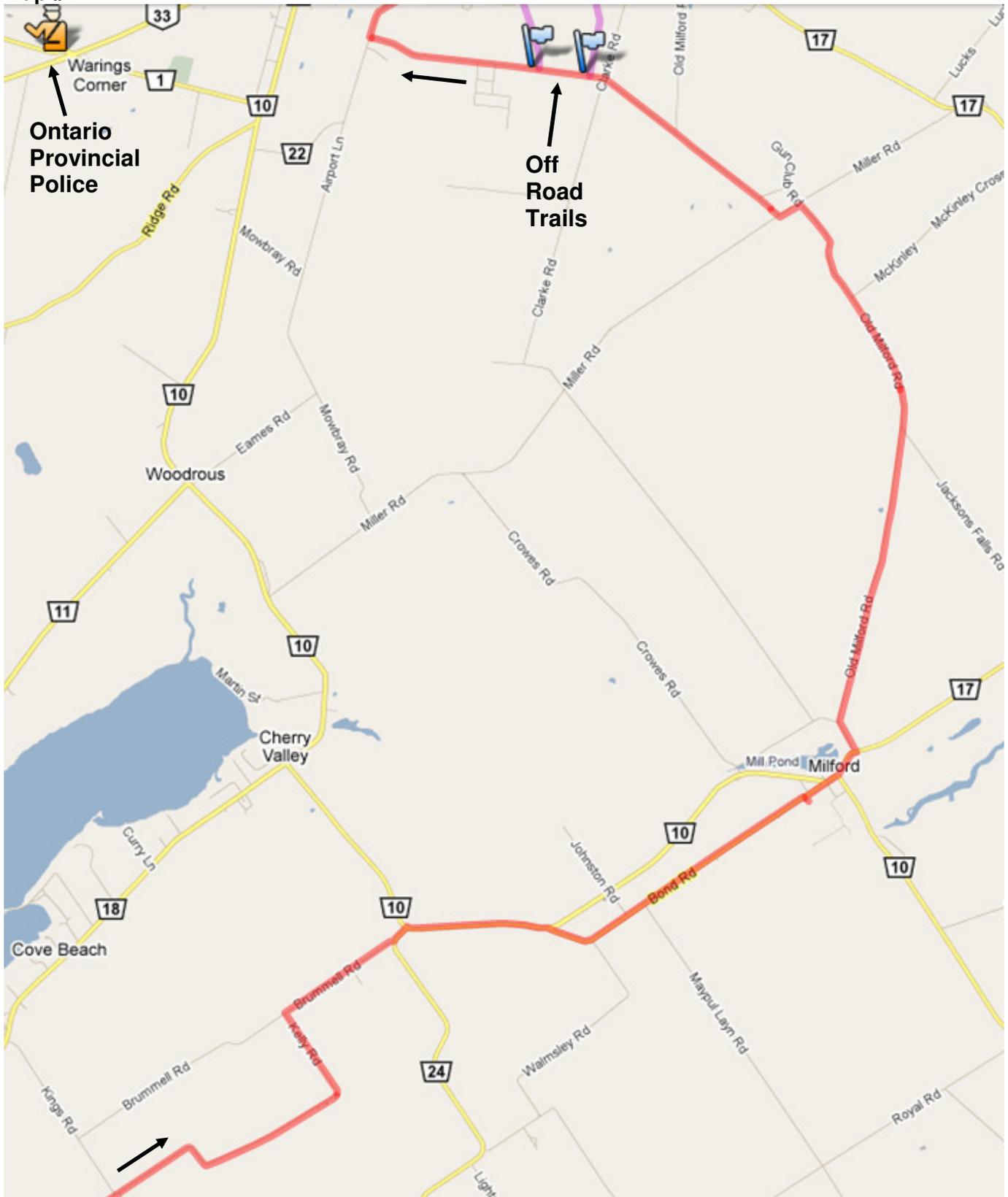
Macaulay Mountain Off Road Bike Map



Map #2 (See also Bloomfield Detail)



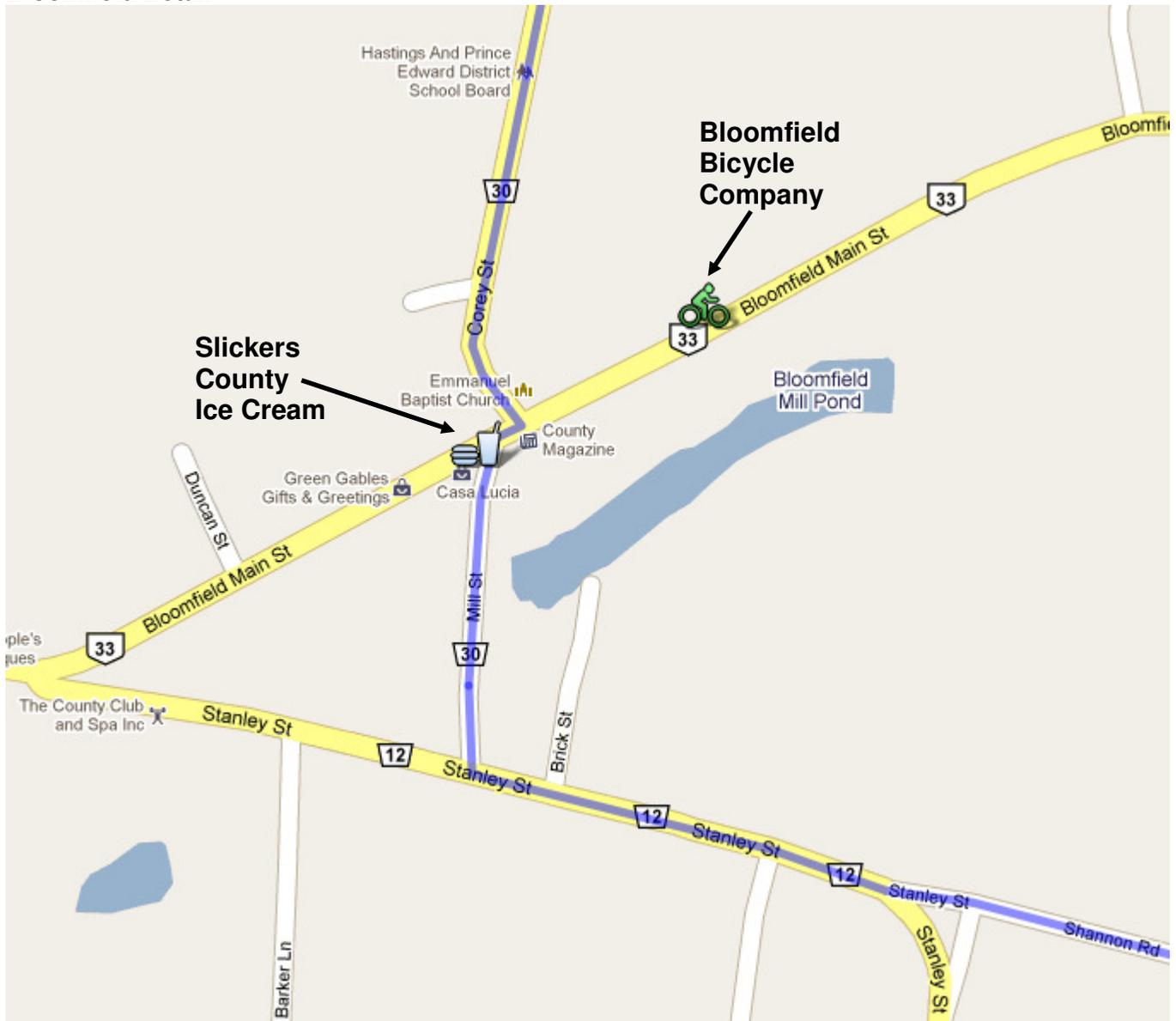
Map #4



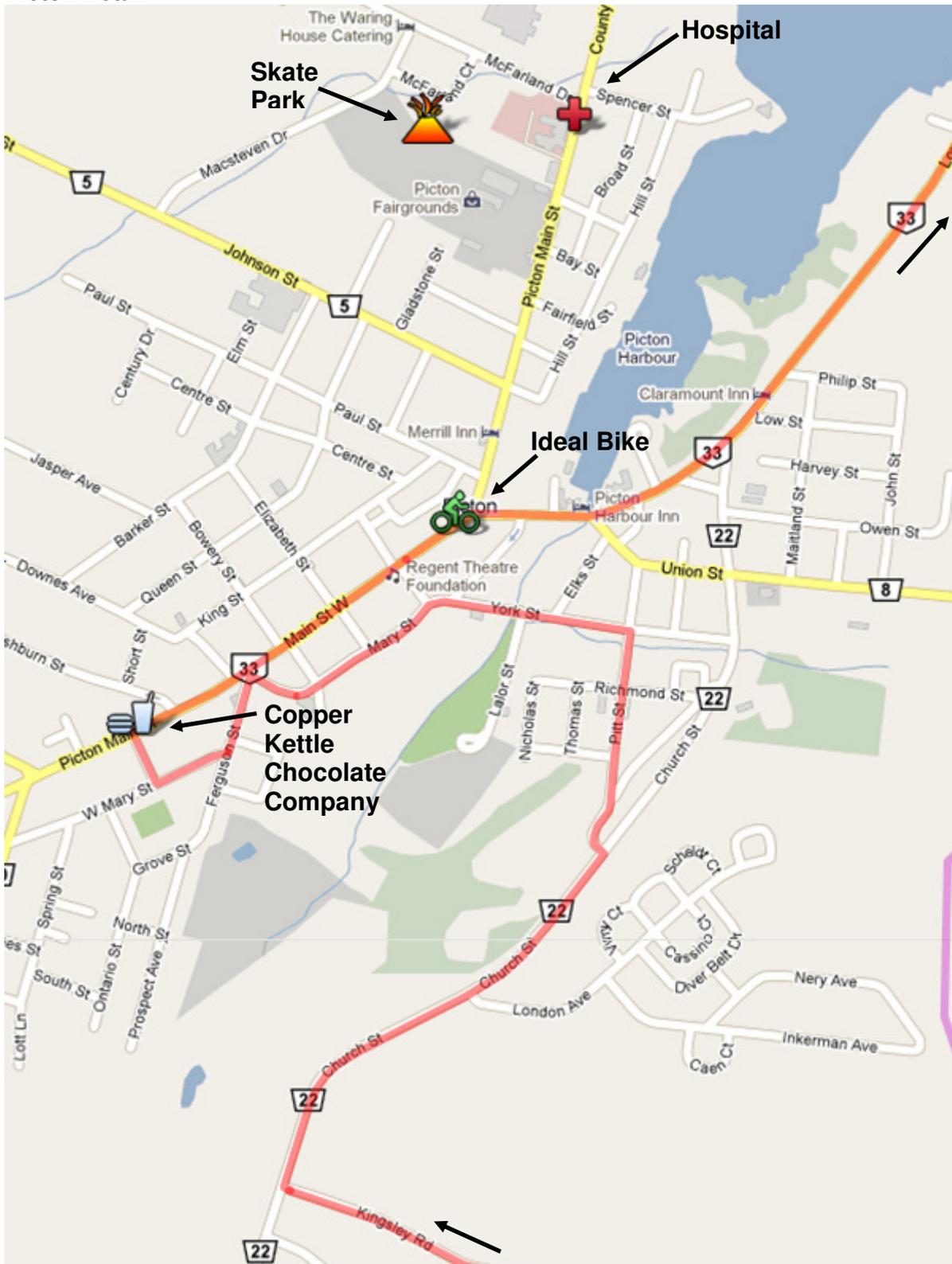
Map #5 (See also Picton Detail)



Bloomfield Detail



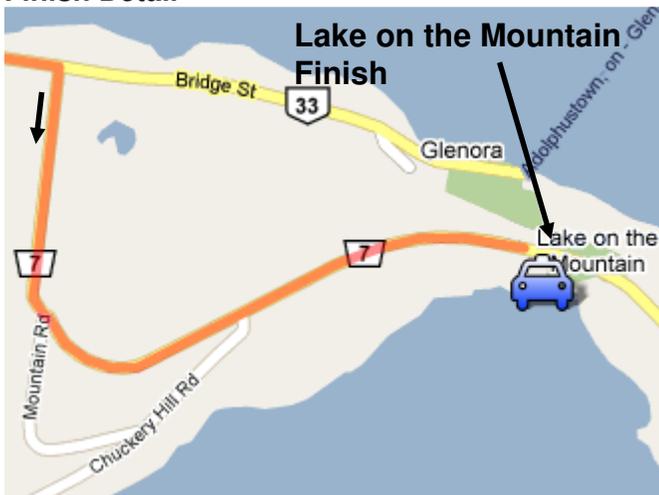
Picton Detail



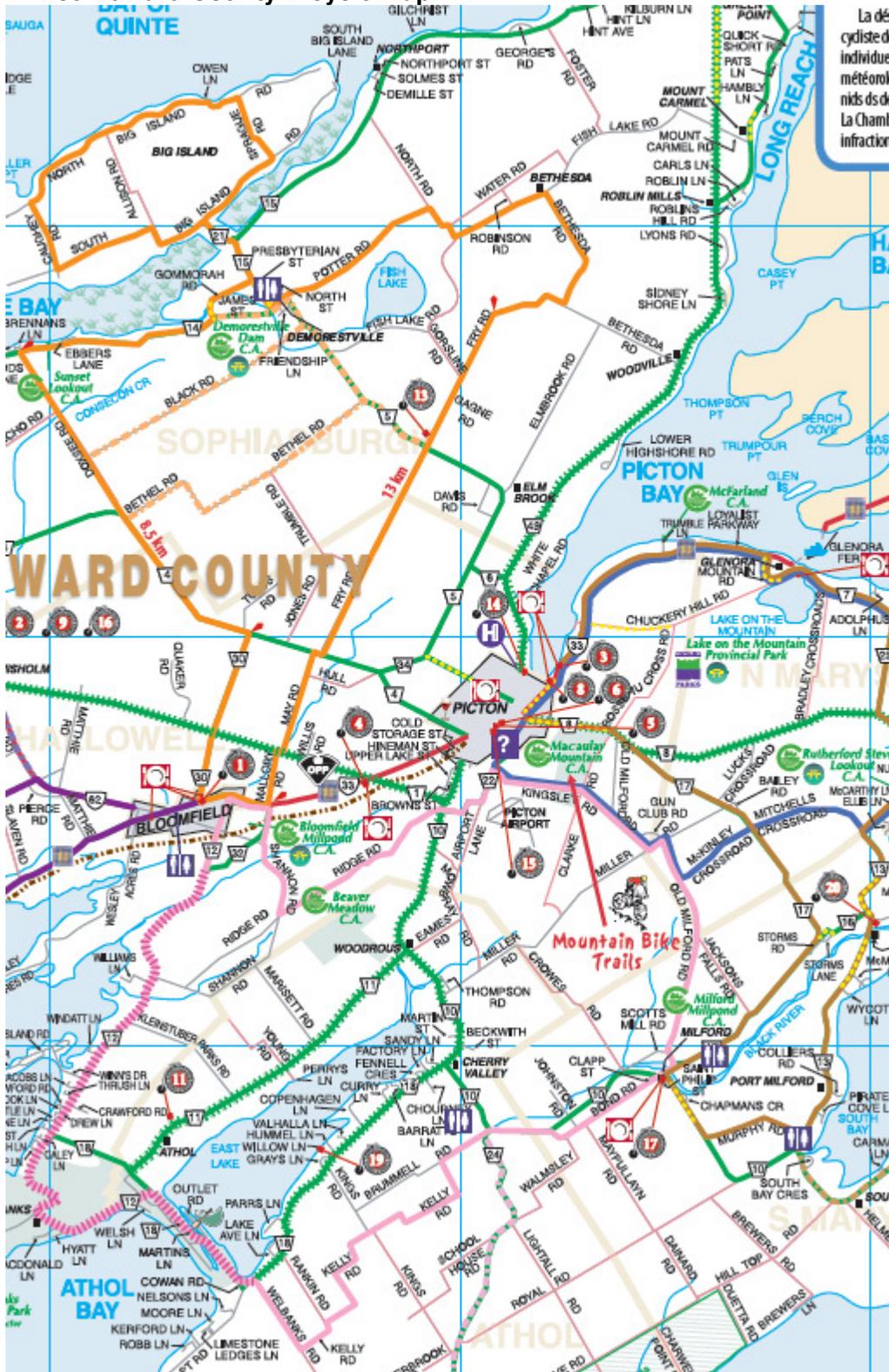
Saturday Night Campsite Detail



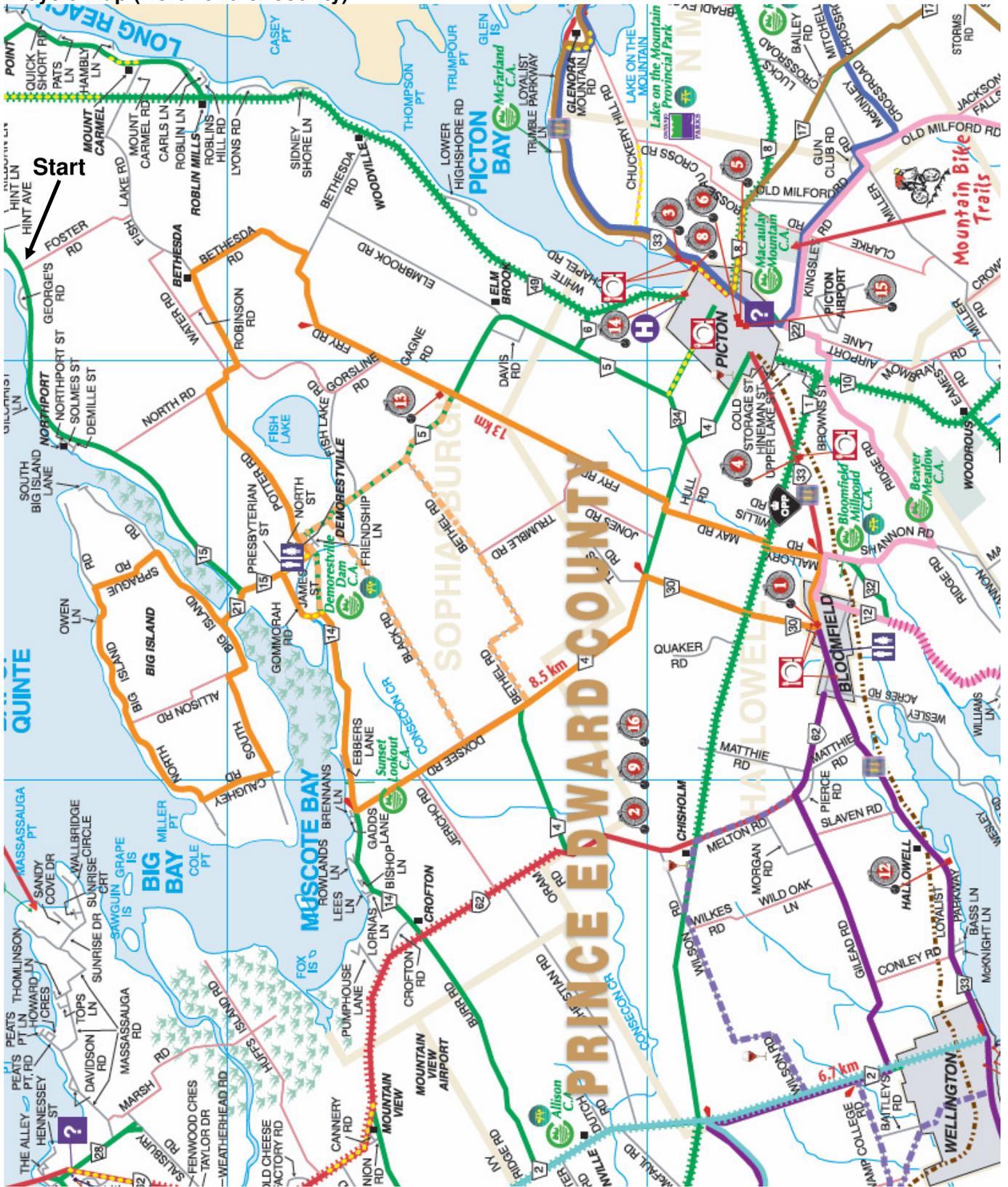
Finish Detail



Prince Edward County Bicycle Map



Bicycle Map (North end of county)



Bicycle Map (South end of county)



Saturday Night
West Lake Willows Resort

Report

The Prince Edward County bicycle tour worked really well, the Venturers quite enjoyed themselves. My expectations were also exceeded for their behaviour and handling of situations while out of my sight. They tell me they would like to do another tour at some point, saying that they would be up for carrying all their gear, but would want to do that with road bikes rather than mountain bikes.

Everybody I chatted with during the weekend was amazed that the Venturers were out by themselves, camping, and that I wouldn't even have any contact with them from Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon; not even knowing whether they reached their campsite. One Girl Guide leader I encountered was particularly envious as she said it is a huge amount of paperwork for her to even take her girls camping with leaders for a weekend. With me not being present for most of the weekend, I am having to write this report from the comments the Venturers made upon our meeting at the destination and from the debrief during the drive home. Sam in particular mentioned he was interested to find out what I was going to write.

Six Venturers were scheduled to participate, but Andreas had to back out. We started off meeting at 5:30pm on the Friday at the tractor trailer. Four of the Venturers turned up, mostly on time, but 6:00pm rolled by and Calvin still hadn't showed up. Now he is not usually late. So I drive home to give him a call, leaving the Venturers to wait for him, and no sooner had I stepped through my front door, than Heather tells me that Calvin just telephoned wondering when we were meeting! She had directed him to the tractor trailer, so back there I headed. Another half hour passes, and still no Calvin. The other Venturers were amusing themselves, using a huge soil screener as a climbing gym. Finally at 6:30pm, Calvin rolls up. It turned out, not only had he forgotten the time to meet, but the day as well! He had spent the past 20 minutes packing! It will be interesting to see what he forgot. It will turn out that he was better packed than some of the other Venturers. At least he brought his bike, which is more than Lochlan can say :)

We finally departed at 6:45pm, stopping to pickup Lochlan's bike on the way out. An easy drive down to Prince Edward County, with a distance of 198 km, arriving at Foster's Fishing Centre at 8:50pm; this was our camping spot for Friday night. We had made one short stop for fuel, with the kids naturally taking advantage of the situation to pick up some snacks. At least they appear to have gone off energy drinks! During the drive Lochlan produced a copy of Robinson Crusoe; the lads challenged Laura to read it in half an hour. She did it with about a tenth of a second to spare and then proceeded to amaze them with her answers as they quizzed her on the book.

Upon entering the campground, there was no one to be seen. After walking around the buildings for a few minutes, the owner came out of his house; he had seen the lights of the truck turn into the campground. It turned out that they had mixed up the dates and thought we were arriving on Saturday night. Not a problem though. They directed us to the best campsite and happily opened up the office to take our money. Really friendly folk. The ground was the nicest grass on which we had ever pitched tents. They don't officially open until the following weekend when Walleye (Pickerel) season starts, but were happy to let us stay as we were Scouts. As the Venturers were working on the tents, it was the perfect time for a Scout joke I had heard recently: With one Scout you get one Scout's worth of work done, with two Scouts you get half a Scout's worth of work done, and with three Scouts you get no work done!

While I was taking care of the paper work, the Venturers setup camp. This campground actually charges on a per tent basis, but they gave us four tents for the price of three and a group discount for being Scouts. We had brought our brand new light weight tents that nobody had every setup before. So the Venturers got first crack at the new tents in the dark :) They actually got them up very quickly, and even remembered to place the ground sheets under them. These are three man tents, but we had a maximum of two people in them, so they were very spacious. They really liked the new tents, and were especially impressed with how the water beaded on the fly and bounced off. Now I have photos of the tents in operation, I can send the thank you letters to the donors. Lochlan was quite happy that we were camping next to a barn :)

We had some light rain intermittently during the evening, but nobody felt like setting up the dining shelter, so we just toughed it out. We had a nice fire to keep warm, made hot chocolate, and had some two bite brownies as snacks. Lochlan had forgot his cup, and didn't want to drink his hot chocolate the European way; out of a bowl. Some of the lads decided to have their hot shower in evening (OK, so we weren't exactly roughing it!). Laura went over to the toilet block to check it out, and came back pretty quickly, reporting that the showers needed a quarter for every two minutes of usage! We certainly weren't expecting that, but luckily we had \$10 worth of quarters with us as the Venturers had asked for them during one of the plan review sessions for emergency telephone calls. So all was well. We found it took 2-3 quarters per shower, not including the one Sam lost when he started the timer before getting undressed. Laura said the women's showers were nicely tiled, but the men's showers were lined with sheet metal on which reflective stickers were affixed. But still much better than cold water out of a bucket.

On Saturday morning I started kicking the Venturers out of bed at 7:00am. By about 7:30am, they had all emerged. Laura was actually up before then having her shower. The clouds had cleared late in the evening, so it got a little chilly overnight. I had seen the thin sleeping bag Sam brought and asked him if he might be cold in it. "No, I'll be fine". In the morning: "I was really cold last night"... I had brought my fleece sleeping bag liner, so I leant that to him for the second night. Breakfast was simple cereal and porridge. The Venturers struck their camp; this was the nice point for me where I didn't have to take down my tent and pack my gear. I taught them to spread the tents for drying while they ate breakfast. They found the tents to fold and pack really easily. They spread out the emergency equipment (e.g. first aid kit, bike repair kit, money, etc) and the maps. Laura had a bag on a bike rack, and Sam and Nick both had panniers, so they took these extra items. Everybody else just had their lunch, water, emergency maps, and rain suit. The lads came across to me as just a little bit nervous from the way they spoke about being off by themselves.

By 9:20am there were ready to leave; or so they thought. As they started to bicycle, Nick found his rear mud flap was dragging on his wheel, and Calvin found a plastic piece had half broken off his gear wheel during transit. I told them they had to fix these items by themselves, with just the repair kits they were carrying. So they started asking themselves if they had any duct tape. Upon examination of the repair kit they found they did have some. So Sam says, "I guess we should know what stuff we have". And not five minutes had passed since I went through all the stuff they had with them! In one ear and out the other :) So the bikes were fixed, and then Sam came to the conclusion they should have a look at the map. That's was unfortunate, as I was looking forward to see them cycle to the campground entrance and suddenly realise they didn't know where they were going :) So Sam reviewed the day's schedule with the rest of the Venturers, along with the first page of the map, and then off they went.

I relaxed for a couple of hours and then headed off with all their gear to their Saturday night campground, West Lake Willows Resort. I had tried to get them in Sandbanks Provincial Park, but provincial parks won't allow kids under 16 to camp without an adult present. At the resort, I found another very friendly owner. This is a summer trailer park, with a single campsite on the water facing the Sandbank dunes. Very beautiful view actually. I deposited all the gear and made the payment. The owner asked if he could give the Venturers a load of free firewood, or were they not allowed fires. Sure I said, spoil them all you want. Coincidentally the owners of the two campgrounds we used attend the same church.

Upon my return to the Foster's campground, I went for a 20 km bicycle ride. After that I sat down in my chair, and promptly fell asleep in the afternoon sun :) Other than bicycling and transporting equipment back and forth, the rest of my weekend was passed with reading (My Side of the Mountain) and watching movies on a laptop (Schindler's List, August Rush, The Secret Garden).

About five kilometres into the trip on Saturday, Nick decides to give Lochlan a pat on the back as he rode by. Well, that will be the last time Nick messes with Lochlan! The next thing you know Nick is flying from his bike into a 30 foot/30 second slide on the road; admittedly Lochlan also had to do an undignified exit from his bike too. However, while Lochlan is still in one piece, Nick has a nasty case of road rash on his forearm, and a little on his hip. So out comes the first aid kit and the cameras, not necessarily in that order. Nick was patched up, the wound well photographed, then he was told to "suck it up". And they were off again. This was reported as an official incident to Scouts Canada (not that any insurance claim is likely).

Upon arriving in Bloomfield, the Venturers hit the Bloomfield Bicycle Company to thank them for all their help in planning the route. The owners of the shop were presented with a thank you letter and a Merrickville Scout Group crest. The Venturers loved both the shop and the owners, saying both were very hip and cool. They owners gave the Venturers each small and large bumper stickers: "TV SUCKS, Ride your bike". The Venturers filled up their water bottles. As they were leaving, the owners called out that their bicycle seats were too low. So those were all adjusted as they left the campsite the next day. Before the next bike your, we should have an adjustment session with a local shop. Bloomfield offered to do this with us, but they are a fair drive for us.

Next stop for the Venturers was the Slickers County Ice Cream store. They had a gift certificate each for an ice cream cone. There were also two spare gift certificates as Nick wasn't feeling up to an ice cream and there was one for Andreas (who dropped out after the gift certificates were purchased). So they used those to trade up to waffle cones. A previous idea they had was to make some little kids day by given them the spare gift certificate. The store personal were really friendly, even taking a group photo and putting it on the wall of the shop. If only I could have had them in uniform... This ice cream stop, and the chocolate stop on the Sunday, had the ulterior motive of being half way check points in the event I had to track down the Venturers.

The Venturers arrived at their Saturday night campground at 2:30pm. They first setup camp and then went into explore and play mode. The owner of the resort dropped off a free load of firewood at the campsite; yes, roughing it again! The Venturers asked if they could do a good deed in return, but their offer was declined. It is the thought that counts. Even the Venturers thought the location had a really nice view. Their next door neighbour came over and had a chat with them, giving them some history of the area and pointing out how they could explore the sand dunes. So they headed off for some fun in the sand. They played some Frisbee on the road. Sam managed to break the Frisbee by throwing it into the corner of a trailer; though its probably Calvin's fault for not catching it :) They said the Frisbee still worked fine, but not knowing that I threw it away during my Sunday equipment pickup.

Nick's wound was re-dressed using items from the expedition first aid kit at the campsite. This kit includes Polysporin (triple anti-biotic ointment actually). They said it looked a lot better in the morning after that had been put on. They suggested that ointment be added to the other first aid kit.

When it came time to make supper, I thought Calvin knew how to use the lightweight stoves from the canoe trip last year, but it turned out he didn't :(Sam figured out the stoves after 30 minutes of working at it; 25 minutes before reading the instructions and 5 minutes after :) This somehow involved Sam's finger catching on fire, multiple times... The hamburgers were voted as excellent (frozen from Costco). The buns were toasted over the second stove. The sliced dill pickles were all consumed with the hamburgers and wraps. Sam made himself a double cheeseburger; the photograph looked very professional.

The Venturers departed at 9:30am on the Sunday, arriving at the finish at Lake on the Mountain for 2:50pm. I had arrived about 1:00pm and had a nice hamburger and fries at The Inn while waiting for them. They stopped at the Chocolate Shop in Picton with a gift certificate, but said they would have preferred an ice cream again. While the chocolate truffles they purchased were good, they found the items in the store to be expensive. They also said the store personal weren't anywhere near as friendly as those at the ice cream shop in Bloomfield.

At the Macaulay Mountain off road trails, they started on them and liked a few of the corners, but hit a really big wet spot and decided to call it quits. Wimps! Around there they stopped for lunch. After smelling for a while, what they described as "death", they found they had been eating next to a very dead wolf (or coyote). Lots of photos taken naturally.

The last hill up to Lake on the Mountain was the worst. As the truck dropped into a lower gear as I climbed it, I thought "the kids are going to kill me!". As it was they didn't mind it so much, and insisted on coasting down it all the way to the ferry. Sam treats every hill as a race against the world.

Calvin's rear gear partially broke at the top of the last hill, about 2 km before the finish, so they had to stop and repair that. The repair tools were put to good use; though no flat tires. For fixing Calvin's rear derailleur they needed to get a Phillips screwdriver in, but there wasn't enough space; they were able to use the wrenches instead. All the lads had grease covered calves, but that could have something to do with Lochlan's liberal spraying of WD-40 on the chains.

When I picked up the equipment on the Sunday, the tarp covered bundle looked so close to how I left it, I first wondered whether the Venturers had made it to the campground. Though closer examination showed the position of the logs to be a little different. The site was impeccably clean, the garbage tied up in the bag, everything just perfect. I went and had a chat with a couple of their neighbours to get a report on the Venturer's behaviour. They couldn't say enough good things about them: "Good clean fun", "Great group of kids", etc. Make us proud they do. Overall I drove 173 km dropping equipment off and picking it back up.

Following the route went pretty well. The Venturers only made a few wrong turns, but soon got themselves back on the right route. Once Laura told them the right way to go, but the lads out voted her and took the group the wrong way :) They will have to learn to obey women eventually... Coming up to Sandbanks they reported having a bit of trouble trying to get the map to match the actual roads. They also missed a turn into Picton, but got a nice downhill run out of it.

The Venturers were chased by dogs a couple of times on the road. In one case a snappy Shih Tzu. That was the only time they debated whether to peddle faster or do the get off the bicycle and put it between themselves and the dog.

With these kids used to only bicycling on country roads, cycling through Picton was a new experience of dodging cars. They were quite concerned with parked cars opening their doors, and Sam deked into an empty space not realising a car was trying to do a parallel park in that spot!

While the Venturers did a good job with dressing Nick's abrasion, their work could be improved upon. Thinking about it, the standard first aid courses we all take focus on keeping a person alive for the ten minutes until an ambulance can arrive. I think there would be a lot of value having the Venturers taught specifically about wound cleaning and dressing. I'll look to see if I can find a paramedic or an emergency room nurse who could run such a session.

On the leadership front, the Venturers reported that Sam took the lead for route navigation during the day, while Calvin took the lead at the campsite. For everything else there was shared leadership, consensus, and periodic voting.

When asked how they like camping without adults, the Venturers said there was very little difference as we pretty well let them do what ever they want anyway. Hmm... Maybe we need to be stricter :) Though they said on arriving at the campsite they found they did the work first before playing, whereas with adults around they would just starting playing as they knew the adults would ensure they got the work done when it was needed. They also did like the freedom to run to their own schedule and add/delete items as they saw fit.

As I would not be present for most of the journey, I had given the Venturers strict instructions to take lots of photos. Sam had his video camera, Laura had her camera, and I leant Heather's camera to Lochlan. In the past when I have asked for photos I have got back maybe one or two, if that. This time I got back hundreds! I had told Lochlan that he could pass along the camera to someone else after he had taken ten photos. Well, he never gave it up, and kept on shooting all weekend. I think he wants to compete with his mother for family photographer status :) The lads said Laura is working up to replacing me as the stealth photographer, getting photos they don't know are being taken.

The food all worked out well. We didn't run out of anything. The Venturers say that hamburgers and wraps are their favorite meals, but I am determined to introduce them to cooking more interesting meals. There were four onions, but one would have been enough. Both the horse radish and Montreal steak spice go down well. I understand that Lochlan coated his hamburger with the steak spice while cooking it, and then gave it another equally thick coating when it made it too his bun. For the record, any large amounts of left over food are either kept (frozen) for the next camp, or they are credited for the cost if the perishable food can be eaten by my family. There was one request for processed (fake) cheese for the hamburgers; yuck! The green apples all went, but the red ones didn't; I can never understand why the preference seems to switch back and forth.

One wouldn't think that sunscreen wouldn't be needed in April. But the Venturers all got burnt on the Saturday. Only Calvin brought sunscreen (though he admits it was by accident) but he didn't think of getting it out until everybody, including himself, was burnt. So at least they had sunscreen on their sunburn for Sunday. Calvin burns easily, and had a nice fingerless glove burn similar to what he had on the canoe trip last year. I will confess that I also got burnt while asleep in my chair :) The weather was perfect though, blue sky, sun, and 15C on the Saturday; overcast and 20C on the Sunday. Not a drop of rain except Friday evening and during the drive home.

When I dropped off the equipment at their Saturday night campsite, I forgot to leave a lantern (which they didn't care about), but I also forgot the newspaper for lighting the fire, the cutting board, and the cheese slicer/grater. The newspaper and the cutting board they missed. But them still managed a fire, evidentially Nick did an awesome job on it. The Venturers claimed they couldn't slice the onion without a cutting board as the picnic table might be dirty. Did they not think of using one of their plates?

The Saturday route turned out to be a little short. The Venturers arrived at the campsite at 2:30pm, for a total duration of about five hours for 50km. And that was with long stops at the ice cream store, the bicycle shop, and repairing Nick. They did like being able to stop for those long periods, but there was a consensus that a 75 km route would have been better. While they also arrived early at the finish on the Sunday, they didn't spend anywhere near as long on the off road trails as planned.

As for speed, the Venturers were reasonably well matched. Laura was generally the slowest, but did better on the second day. The lads said they didn't mind as it gave them a chance for a rest at the top of the hills.

For the next time we take bicycles, I will hope to construct a bicycle rack to place in the cargo trailer. Even with the bungee cords, the bicycles did get bounced around a bit. As indicated earlier, a plastic bit of Calvin's large gear wheel broke off, and we didn't like the look of how some of the bicycles were resting against each other upon our arrival.

We got on the Glenora ferry at 3:45pm, for the short trip across to the mainland. A fuel stop in Kingston, during which the Venturers are getting into a habit of getting Tim Horton's Iced Capps. However, this time the Venturers went (at Laura's suggestion) to a closer corner store with a Tim Horton's counter. I didn't see them enter that store, and assumed they had gone to the main Tim Horton's to which they usually partake. So I maneuver the truck and trailer across the traffic and through the twisty parking lot, only to find they are not there! Looking around I spot the other store, so I walk back to retrieve them with their purchases. Nothing is ever simple.

Arrival in Merrickville was 6:15pm, 2 1/2 hours and 211 km. We first went to my house to unload much of the equipment and food that was to be left there. Calvin and Nick called for pickup about 6:30pm. Sam and I then dropped off Lochlan. Then Sam and I dropped the cargo trailer off and placed equipment back in storage. Sam was dropped off at 7:00pm.