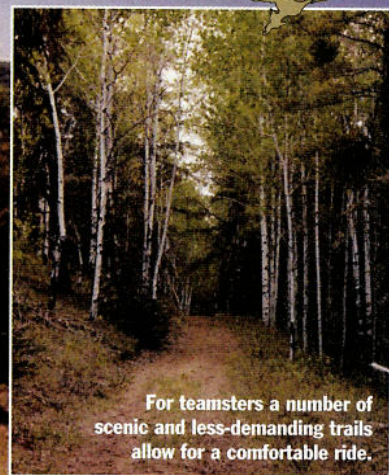


Sandhills Wildland Park

Fort Assiniboine, Alberta



For teamsters a number of scenic and less-demanding trails allow for a comfortable ride.

ROBERT STEVENSON

Panoramic views of a unique ecosystem await equestrians at the Sandhills Wildlife Park near Fort Assiniboine.

A good location to condition your horse for the summer trail riding season is at the Fort Assiniboine Sandhills Wildland Park, located in west-central Alberta about a two hour drive northwest of Edmonton along Highway #33.

The sand hills are unique and contain open grown forests in which an extensive network of trails meander through stands of jack pine, aspen, black spruce and tamarack in pristine settings. In the spring, riders can relax and enjoy fragrant smells and sights that signal the arrival of the season. At a number of spots view vistas of the surrounding countryside and then drop-down along the willows and poplars on the banks of the mighty Athabasca River. Riders will glimpse many birds from the trail, perhaps hear ruffed grouse drumming as part of their spring courtship ritual.

Along the wagon trails, old cabins and gravesites of pioneers make reference to a bygone era.

A noteworthy feature of these sand hills, at this specific location, is the absence of all-terrain vehicles. Equestrians can enjoy the quietness and tranquility of the hills and forest, a sensation worthy of the trip itself.

~ Robert Stevenson, Sherwood Park, AB



Camping is available at reasonable rates with tie-stalls and corrals at Horse Creek Ranch (ten kilometers east of the historic community of Fort Assiniboine, on the north side of the Athabasca River). horsecreekranch.ca (1-888-699-6099). Cabins, electrical hook-ups for RVs, and washrooms for campers.

STAGING POINT:

Trails are suitable for all levels of riders, and are generally sand-based. Horses do not need shoes. The rolling nature of the terrain allows you to exercise your horse at your own pace. Many of the trails follow along the eskers (ridges) of former sand dunes and are intertwined amongst the encroaching trees and shrubs. From the Horse Creek Ranch riders have the option for convenient short rides or longer trips. Circuit trails are popular, and signboard maps are strategically placed at trail intersections or at the vista views.

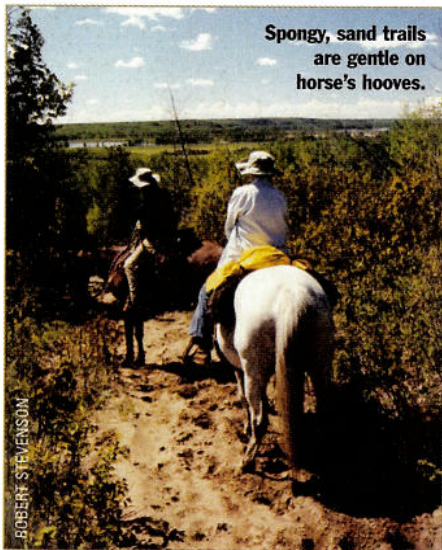
TRAIL CONDITIONS:

Hike up the famous Klondike Trail, formerly used by gold prospectors heading to Alaska. Enjoy bird watching, fishing, kayaking, gold panning, and if you need a city break, Edmonton is less than two hours away.

AREA DIVERSIONS:

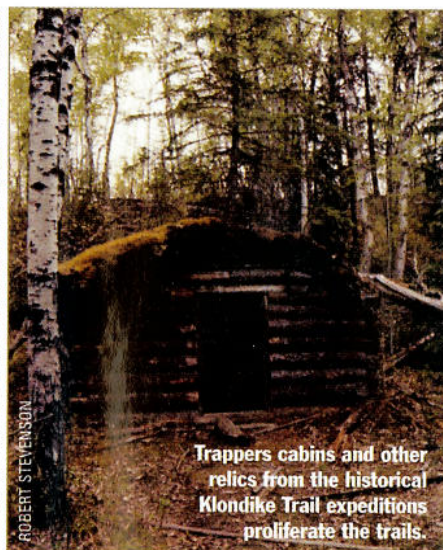
Fort Assiniboine originated as a Hudson Bay Company post in the early 1800s. It was used by hunters as a transfer station between the buyers from Edmonton and trappers from the Lesser Slave Lake area. During the gold rush of the late 1800s, the area was inundated with fortune seekers hoping to find a quick route to the vast riches of the Yukon, via an ancient native and caribou path (Klondike Trail), which meandered by the Fort.

HISTORY:



Spongy, sand trails are gentle on horse's hooves.

ROBERT STEVENSON



Trappers cabins and other relics from the historical Klondike Trail expeditions proliferate the trails.

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