

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE  
ST. WALBURG MAP SHEET AREA, 73F**

The area covered by the St. Walburg map sheet is located in the northwestern part of settled Saskatchewan; the western limit of the area forms part of the Alberta-Saskatchewan boundary. Most of the southern two-thirds of this 5700 square mile area is in farms, but even in the farming region, there are many bluffs of trees and some extensive wooded sections. Forest dominates the north where farming is restricted almost exclusively to part of an old lake plain, north of Barthel.

More than three-quarters of the area is in the Alberta Plateau physiographic region, or Third Prairie Level, where elevations range from 1800 to more than 2500 feet above sea level. The lower lying Saskatchewan Plains physiographic region, or Second Prairie Level, occurs mainly in the south-central lowland, bounded by Jackfish Lake to the east, Maidstone to the west, and Turtleford to the north; it is also found in a very small region north of Barthel.

The Saskatchewan Plains lie between 1700 and 1900 feet above sea level; the lowest elevation of 1550 feet coincides with the valley floor of the North Saskatchewan River. In extent, the Plains are approximately coincident with the region of maximum glacial lake coverage, but the lowland is characterized by undulating and gently rolling plains developed on lacustrine, glaciofluvial, and till deposits. The North Saskatchewan River follows a glacial meltwater channel, and lies 150 to more than 250 feet below the general level of the plains. Other deep cut valleys mark the locations of smaller meltwater channels.

Rising above the lowland is the Alberta Plateau. The edge of the Alberta Plateau is marked by the Missouri Coteau, which is a hilly zone formed by the escarpment that separates two erosional levels, the Saskatchewan Plains and the Alberta Plateau; it is composed of morainic and other glacial materials that were deposited along the escarpment. The Missouri Escarpment is most prominent in the southeast where, east of Jackfish Lake, it rises steeply from 1800 to 2300 feet above sea level. It is also well developed in the northeast, but elsewhere the escarpment is less well defined. Kame moraines are common, and eskers are locally prominent, such as southeast of St. Walburg. Above the escarpment is the Third Prairie Level, a gently to strongly rolling morainic plain where outwash deposits, kame moraines, and eskers are common. Its highest elevations, more than 2500 feet above sea level, occur in the Thickwood Hills, east of Turtle Lake.

**CLIMATE**

The climate is mid-latitude continental. Winters are long and cold, summers are fairly short, and the average total annual precipitation of 14 to 16 inches is rather low. For January, the mean monthly temperature is 0°F to 1°F in the lowland, and drops to -3°F in the upland; the lowest temperatures recorded in January are between -60°F and -65°F. The mean monthly temperature for July is between 62°F on the northern upland and 64°F in the southwest. The absolute maximum temperature recorded is higher than 100°F. In the northern upland, the frost-free period is short, 60 to 80 days, compared with 90 days or more in the lowland. About two-thirds of the precipitation falls from May through September and in the same period, about 1200 hours of sunshine are recorded.

The park belt, or aspen grove region, is typical of the southwestern and south-central parts of the area. Here, frequent small bluffs of aspen and fescue prairie form the natural vegetation. In the same region as the park belt are dark-colored grassland Chernozemic soils, mainly Black soils. In the east and north, in the uplands, and in regions with cooler and more moist conditions, the natural vegetation is aspen or aspen-spruce forest and includes extensive wetlands. In this zone, the dominant soils are Dark Gray Luvisols or Gray Luvisols. Much of the upland remains in forest and part of it is included in the Bronson Provincial Forest.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE**

Fish capability is rated good to excellent for most of the lakes located north and east of the North Saskatchewan River. Jackfish, Murray, Brightsand, and Turtle lakes support pike, pickerel, and whitefish, whereas Helene Lake supports mainly pickerel. The Bronson Lakes of the northwest contain pike, pickerel, and some whitefish. The North Saskatchewan River also provides fair sport fishing with species such as pike, pickerel, goldeye, sauger, and sturgeon. Nonnative species are being stocked at various locations including Jackfish Creek near Glaslyn where brook trout have been released.

Wetland habitat suitable for waterfowl production and migration stops is found in many locations. In general, the sloughs and ponds of the southwest rate highest in terms of production, but the main gathering sites for migrating ducks and geese are on the edges of the eastern upland, at Helene, Turtle, Jackfish, and Midnight lakes. Midnight Lake is an extensive but shallow slough.

Among upland game birds, Sharp-tailed Grouse and Hungarian Partridge are common in settled sections. Ruffed Grouse are found throughout the area and with Spruce Grouse, they compose the dominant upland game bird population of the forest. In comparison with other parts of settled Saskatchewan, densities of upland game birds are rated as medium.

Medium densities of white-tailed and mule deer are typical and fairly high concentrations occur along the valleys of the North Saskatchewan River, Battle River, Gully Creek, and northeast of Jackfish Lake. Other ungulates become prominent on the forest fringe and in the forest where moose and elk, as well as deer, are common.

Beaver, squirrel, muskrat, and lynx are trapped mainly in the northern forest. The black bear, sometimes shot as a nuisance and occasionally for fur, also inhabits the wooded sections, but is not subject to sport hunting.

**SETTLEMENT AND LAND USE**

By the late 18th century, the North Saskatchewan River had become a main route in the western fur trade and for three decades following the introduction of the steamboat in 1874, it assumed some importance as a transportation link in the settlement of the western interior. Some of the early fur trading posts were on Pine Island (4HK), which is located in the North Saskatchewan River near the junction with Gully Creek. These posts, established in 1786 by independent peddlars, as well as the Hudson Bay Company's Manchester House that was destroyed in 1793, were soon abandoned in favor of upriver sites. Farther upstream, Fort Pitt stands, like Fort Carlton, on the flat below the high bank of the Saskatchewan River. Fort Pitt was founded in 1835, besieged and plundered in 1855, and finally closed in 1890; one building has been rebuilt and a cabin erected. Overland trails included the Fort Pitt - Carlton, Meadow Lake - Battleford, Cochin - Green Lake, and Battleford - Edmonton trails.

Two sites are associated with the Riel Rebellion of 1885. On April 13, eleven days after the massacre upstream at Frog Lake, Big Bear and about 250 followers arrived at Fort Pitt (3HCK). He demanded that the civilians entrust themselves to his mercy and the police withdraw from the fort. The civilians accepted the Indian offer while police under Inspector Dickens destroyed all arms, and left with the ammunition in a leaky scow downstream to the fort at Battleford. This success at Fort Pitt helped to persuade many Indians to support Big Bear directly or to harass native trading posts.

Twelve miles east of Fort Pitt is an isolated hill, Frenchman Butte (3HVK), where Big Bear with the Plain and Wood Cree were holding a "Third" Dance when they learned of the defeat of Riel and of the proximity of the army of General Strange. The Indians quickly set up defences on the hill and occupied positions in the marshy region below. On May 28, Strange's men attacked but made little headway, although the Indians were in hasty retreat when he gave the order to withdraw.

Onion Lake (4VHK) grew as a center on the Battleford-Edmonton Trail following the establishment of reserves under chiefs Seekaskooth and Makaroo in 1879. Church missions were founded in 1883 and a farm instructor was located in each reserve. The Hudson Bay Company and North West Mounted Police posts were established in 1886. Indian resident schools built in 1892, and the telegraph office introduced in 1894.

Significant settlement began with the Barr Colonists, a group led from England in 1903 and 1904 by the Reverend Isaac M. Barr. Hundreds of families reached Saskatchewan by rail in the spring of 1903 and then moved to the lands set aside for them near the present city of Lloydminster. In 1905, the Canadian Northern Railway was extended from North Battleford to Lloydminster; another line was extended to Meota in 1909, Edam in 1911, Turtleford in 1913, St. Walburg in 1922, and Fairholme in 1924. Between 1926 and 1930, other branch lines were built to serve the agricultural region.

Smaller group settlements included the Dutch settlement at Edam in 1906, the Negro Colony near Maidstone in 1910, of which little is visible today, and the Sudeten settlement in 1938 and 1939 near St. Walburg. Most of the land presently occupied was settled between 1903 and 1921 and the rest of the land was settled before 1931. The northern region has been cut over and burned, but few settlers have successfully established farm operations; much of this region is now managed as part of the provincial forest.

Agriculture is the most extensive land use; the occupied farm lands include most of the southern two-thirds of the area or the region that is roughly coincident with the zone of Black soils. Wheat is the dominant crop but a large acreage is in barley and oats. Rapeseed has become a prominent crop particularly along the north of the settled region and there has been an increase in improved pasture and tame hay production. Beef raising in conjunction with grain farming operations are common; on the Missouri Coteau and rougher lands, grazing leases are frequent, and cooperative and provincial pastures have been organized.

In 1940, about 300 barrels of crude petroleum, the first in Saskatchewan, were taken from a producing gas well near Lloydminster. The Lloydminster region continues to be a significant producer of natural gas and heavy crude oil.

Lloydminster has a population of 3500 on the Saskatchewan side and about the same population on the Alberta side of the boundary. It is the main retail and wholesale center for the southwest. Small centers such as St. Walburg, Maidstone, Lashburn, Turtleford, and Glaslyn serve adjacent farming regions. Much of the retail and wholesale trade is based on North Battleford and other cities outside the area.

**LAND CLASSIFICATION FOR RECREATION**

The upland units have been rated mainly Classes 5 and 6, and some featureless, poorly drained land units have been rated Class 7. Those upland sites rated Class 4 or higher have historical or other cultural significance, such as the Imhoff Studio (4HP) south of St. Walburg, where there are paintings by Count Berthold Imhoff, a muralist. Within the deep river corridors, the recreation capability is moderately low to moderately high. In particular, the North Saskatchewan River valley exhibits a variety of conditions. The valley walls are treed, the river is suitable for canoeing, and there is considerable upland wildlife so that many stretches are capable of supporting activities such as riding, hiking, viewing, and camping. Some smaller valleys such as the Monney, north of Paradise Hill, provide vistas and sharp changes in land use and unusual vegetation. The highest ratings are reserved for some of the shorelands. Lakes occur in most parts of the area except in the southwest, but many are shallow sloughs or too small to provide potential for recreational activities.

Jackfish and Murray lakes, in the southeast at the base of the Missouri Escarpment, are heavily used, but Jackfish Lake, which is larger and superior in quality, is capable of sustaining more extensive recreational use. The best shorelands are on the east side of Jackfish Lake, where there are beaches of high to very high capability. Here, the backshore consists mainly of aspen-covered, gently rolling slopes of the Escarpment, whereas the foreshore is gently sloping, which provides safe beach conditions for swimming and related activities. The Battlefords Provincial Park is located on the eastern side of Jackfish Lake, as well as private cottages, camping, boating, and other recreation developments. Shorelands on the western side are of poor quality, characterized by low-lying, mainly treeless backshores where the land is farmed to the edge of the water. A narrow channel connects Jackfish Lake with Murray Lake; angling capability is good in both lakes.

Farther north, in the east and central sections, Birch, Helene, Turtle, and Brightsand lakes are capable of sustaining water-oriented activities. Birch Lake is of particular interest because of its irregular shape and the variety of wetland wildlife, including pelicans. The south and east sides of Birch Lake have the best capability, with well-drained backshores and stands of aspen. Elsewhere, offshore weeds, boulders, shallow water, and on the north side, poorly drained backshores produce shorelands of low capability; fluctuations in water level often detract from the overall quality. On Helene Lake, submerged and emergent weed restrict the use of the offshore zone. Weed growth together with algae present severe problems in some sections. Most of the backshore, however, is well drained and supports stands of aspen, jack pine, or on low-lying sites, black spruce. Brightsand Lake and the southern half of Turtle Lake have some Class 1 and 2 sand beaches. Most of the backshore of these lakes is well drained and, except where farmlands intervene, is covered with mixed woods in which aspen and white spruce are dominant. Weeds occur offshore in parts of both lakes, but dominate the shallow northern half of Turtle Lake. Angling is good and wetland and upland wildlife is varied.

In the northwest, within the Bronson Forest, are lakes whose separate and group capabilities make this region one of significant potential. Ministikwan is the largest lake, with Worthington, Peck, Little Fishing, and Bronson lakes comprising the other important lakes. The backshore of Ministikwan Lake is moderately sloping and well covered by aspen, spruce, and jack pine; shorelands range from moderate to high capability. Little Fishing and Peck lakes have some good beaches, some of which are not rated higher because of their small size. Offshore weeds, poorly drained backshore, and occasionally algae growth reduce capability in some shorelands on Bronson, Worthington, Peck, and Little Fishing lakes. The Bronson Lakes are all good angling waters.

In terms of terrain and vegetation characteristics, hydrographic patterns, and road connection, the whole northwest of settled Saskatchewan warrants consideration as a geographical entity. In this context, the area is part of a recreational region of high natural capability.

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**DESCRIPTION DU TERRITOIRE DE LA  
FEUILLE DE ST. WALBURG - 73F**

Le territoire représenté sur la feuille de St. Walburg se trouve dans le nord-ouest des régions aménagées de la Saskatchewan; la limite occidentale du territoire coïncide avec la frontière de l'Alberta et de la Saskatchewan. Des fermes occupent la majeure partie des deux tiers méridionaux de ce territoire de 5 700 milles carrés; toutefois, même dans les régions agricoles, il y a un grand nombre de bosquets et quelques vastes secteurs boisés. La forêt domine dans le nord où les terres agricoles se limitent presque exclusivement à une partie d'une ancienne plaine lacustre, au nord de Barthel.

Plus des trois quarts du territoire appartiennent à la région structurale du plateau de l'Alberta, ou troisième palier de la prairie, où l'altitude varie de 1 800 à plus de 2 500 pi. A une altitude inférieure, la région structurale de la plaine de la Saskatchewan, ou second palier de la prairie, occupe surtout les basses terres du centre-sud que limitent le lac Jackfish à l'est, Maidstone à l'ouest et Turtleford au sud; cette région occupe aussi un très petit secteur situé au nord de Barthel.

Dans la plaine de la Saskatchewan, l'altitude varie de 1 700 à 1 900 pi; le point le plus bas atteint 1 550 pi et se trouve au fond de la vallée de la rivière Saskatchewan-Nord. La superficie des plaines correspond à peu près à la superficie maximale des terres qu'avait inondées le lac glaciaire; les basses terres présentent toutefois un relief ondulé et légèrement vallonné et sont formées de dépôts de till et de matériaux lacustres et fluvioglaciaires. La rivière Saskatchewan-Nord coule dans un chenal de fusion glaciaire, à une altitude inférieure de 150 à plus de 250 pi à l'altitude d'ensemble des plaines. D'autres vallées profondément encaissées marquent l'emplacement de chenaux de fusion moins importants.

Le plateau de l'Alberta domine la région des basses terres. La bordure du plateau de l'Alberta correspond au coteau du Missouri qui est une zone de collines formée par l'escarpement qui sépare deux surfaces d'érosion de niveaux différents, la plaine de la Saskatchewan et le plateau de l'Alberta; le coteau est constitué de matériaux morainiques et d'autres matériaux glaciaires déposés le long de l'escarpement. Le relief de l'escarpement du Missouri est plus marqué dans le sud-est, à l'est du lac Jackfish, son altitude passe brusquement de 1 800 à 2 300 pi. Son allure est également bien marquée dans le nord-est mais, partout ailleurs, elle est plus effacée. Les kames sont communs et on trouve des eskers à certains endroits comme au sud-est de St. Walburg. Le troisième palier de la prairie domine l'escarpement; c'est une plaine morainique légèrement ou fortement vallonnée où les dépôts d'épandage, les kames et les eskers sont communs. Le point culminant, situé à plus de 2 500 pi, se trouve dans les collines de Thickwood, à l'est du lac Turtle.

**CLIMAT**

Le climat est un climat continental de latitude moyenne. Les hivers sont longs et froids, les étés courts et la précipitation annuelle totale moyenne est assez faible, variant de 14 à 16 po. En janvier, la température mensuelle moyenne varie de 0 à 1°F dans les basses terres et tombe à -3 sur les hautes terres; les plus basses températures enregistrées en janvier varient de -60 à -65. En juillet, la température mensuelle moyenne varie de 62 sur les hautes terres septentrionales à 64 dans le sud-ouest. Le maximum absolu déjà enregistré dépasse 100. Dans les hautes terres septentrionales, la période sans gel est courte et va de 60 à 80 jours alors qu'elle dure 90 ou davantage dans les basses terres. Environ les deux tiers de la précipitation tombent de mai à la fin de septembre et, pendant la même période, on enregistre 1 200 heures d'ensoleillement.

La prairie-parc ou la tremblai est typique du sud-ouest et du centre-sud du territoire. Ici, le couvert végétal naturel est formé de nombreux petits bosquets de trembles et de prairie à fétuque. Dans cette région de prairie-parc, on trouve des sols de prairie chernozémiques foncés, pour la plupart des sols noirs. Dans l'est et le nord, sur le bas-plateau ainsi que dans les régions plus fraîches et plus humides, la végétation naturelle correspond à la forêt de tremble ou de tremble et d'épinette et comprend de vastes mouillères. Dans cette zone, les sols dominants sont des luvisols gris foncé et des luvisols gris. La majeure partie du bas-plateau est boisée et un secteur appartient à la forêt provinciale de Bronson.

**POISSON ET GIBIER**

Les possibilités pour la pêche sportive varient de bonnes à excellentes dans la plupart des lacs situés au nord et à l'est de la rivière Saskatchewan-Nord. Dans les lacs Jackfish, Murray, Brightsand et Turtle, on trouve du brochet, du doré jaune et du corégone; le lac Hélène renferme surtout du doré jaune. Dans les lacs Bronson, au nord-ouest, il y a du brochet, et un peu de corégone. La rivière Saskatchewan-Nord présente également d'assez bonnes possibilités de pêche au brochet, au doré jaune, à la laquaisse, au doré noir et à l'esturgeon. Des espèces allongées servent à l'avalanche de cours d'eau dont le ruisseau Jackfish, de Glaslyn, enserré en truite arc-en-ciel.

Les mouillères convenant à reproduction de la sauvagine et les étapes migratoires sont assez nombreuses. Dans l'ensemble, les fondrières et les étangs du sud-ouest présentent des possibilités plus élevées pour la production mais les principaux endroits de rassemblement pour les oies et les canards migrateurs se trouvent à la limite du bas-plateau oriental, sur les lacs Hélène, Turtle, Jackfish et Midnight. Le lac Midnight est une fondrière variée mais peu profonde.

Parmi les espèces de gibier à plumes variées, on trouve le canard colvert, le canard à tête bleue, le canard à tête grise, le canard à tête blanche, le canard à tête noire, le canard à tête verte, le canard à tête bleue et le canard à tête grise. Ces espèces sont typiques et on trouve des groupes assez importants le long des vallées de la rivière Saskatchewan-Nord, de la rivière Battle, du ruisseau Gully et au nord-est du lac Jackfish. D'autres espèces d'Ongulés prédominent sous couvert forestier ou à la limite des forêts où l'original et le wapiti aussi bien que le cerf sont communs.

Le castor, l'écureuil, le rat musqué et le loup-cervier sont surtout piégés dans les forêts du nord. L'ours noir, parfois tué comme animal nuisible et, occasionnellement, pour sa fourrure, vit également dans les secteurs boisés mais il n'est pas un gibier de chasse sportive.

**PEUPLEMENT ET MISE EN VALEUR DE LA TERRE**

Vers la fin du 19e siècle, la rivière Saskatchewan-Nord était devenue une route importante pour le commerce des fourrures dans l'ouest et, pendant les trente années qui ont suivi l'introduction du bateau à vapeur en 1874, cette voie de communication a joué un rôle assez important dans le peuplement du centre-ouest. Certains des premiers postes de traite se trouvaient sur l'île Pine (4HK), située sur la rivière Saskatchewan-Nord, près du point de confluence avec le ruisseau Gully. Ces postes, créés en 1786 par des marchands indépendants, ainsi que Manchester House, qui appartenait à la Compagnie de la baie d'Hudson et qui fut détruit en 1793, ont vite été abandonnés au profit d'endroits plus en amont. Plus haut encore, le fort Pitt, comme le fort Carlton, se dressait sur un replat qui domine la haute berge de la rivière Saskatchewan. Le fort Pitt a été créé en 1835, assiégié et pillé en 1835 et finalement abandonné en 1890; un édifice a été reconstruit et un monument commémoratif érigé. Les pistes terrestres comprenaient celles qui reliaient le fort Pitt au fort Carlton, Meadow Lake à Battleford, Cochin à Green Lake et Battleford à Edmonton.

Deux endroits sont associés à la rébellion de Riel de 1885. Le 13 avril, onze jours après le massacre de Frog Lake, en amont, Big Bear et environ 250 hommes arrivèrent au fort Pitt (3HCK). Il demanda aux civils de s'en remettre à sa merci et, aux policiers, de quitter le fort. Les civils acceptèrent son offre tandis que les policiers, sous le commandement de l'inspecteur Dickens, détruisirent toutes les armes et s'embarquèrent avec les munitions sur un chaland percé pour se diriger vers le fort de Battleford situé en amont. Le succès obtenu au fort Pitt convainquit les Indiens d'appuyer Big Bear directement ou en s'attaquant à des postes de traite.

La communauté d'Onion Lake (4VHK) se développe sur la route menant de Battleford à Edmonton après la création d'réserves par les chefs Seekaskooth et Makaroo en 1879. Des missions furent créées en 1883 et un instructeur agricole s'installa sur chaque réserve. La compagnie de la baie d'Hudson et la Gendarmerie du Nord-Ouest ouvrirent des postes en 1886, des écoles furent construites en 1892 pour les Indiens d'endroit et un bureau télégraphique fut ouvert en 1894.

Le peuplement commence vraiment avec l'arrivée des colons Barr, un groupe amené d'Angleterre en 1903 et 1904 par le révérend Isaac M. Barr. Des centaines de familles atteignirent Saskatoon par chemin de fer au printemps de 1903 et s'installèrent sur des terres qui leur avaient été réservées près de l'actuelle ville de Lloydminster. En 1905, le chemin de fer du Canadian Northern fut prolongé jusqu'à Lloydminster à partir de North Battleford; une autre ligne fut prolongée jusqu'à Meota en 1909, jusqu'à Edam en 1911, jusqu'à Turtleford en 1913, jusqu'à St