

How to get to Lonesome Lake in 4 easy steps



I. Hike the Palmer/Lunos/Precipice Trail to the Hotnarko



The bridges (once maintained by Stanley) have been mostly replaced.



The trail was bulldozed for 11 kilometres to the Hotnarko River in 1969, burying parts of the original trail.



The trail goes by old homesteads from the early 1900s, now mostly gone, with no one living upriver since Stanley and John died



Atnarko is partway up the river, and still has buildings standing (privately owned). The only access in winter (when swans were at Lonesome) was by snowshoe, which John and I did in 1979.



Isabel Edwards (in her 70s in this photo, along with Katie's Mom) lived here for many years, and proves you don't have to be young to enjoy hiking the trail



Stanley Edwards, as the last resident of the upper Atnarko, did much of the road and trail maintenance during the '80s and '90s

2. Hike the Stillwater Trail to Stillwater Lake



After crossing the Hotnarko (on a footbridge) you hike the rock bluffs and Atnarko floodplain to Stillwater Lake



Rocks keep on rolling, and trail maintenance is not as good as it was in Stanley's day



Stanley Bruce Edwards died a few years ago on the trail, on his way to his Stillwater home



When you get to Stillwater Lake, you cross the Atnarko River at the outlet. The bridge here was built by John Edwards in the early 1970s, with logs he floated down the lake. A flood took it out some years ago



The current bridge is the third attempt at crossing the Atnarko and is a steel and cable suspension with steep incline

3. Paddle and Hike Stillwater Lake and the Hunlen Trail to Lonesome Lake



Stillwater is a lovely lake (we keep a canoe there, after portaging it in years ago). With some of our groups on longer trips, we would hire Stanley to push us up the lake on his cattle barge. In the photo to the left, we are going to Chris' house-warming party.



The trail from Stillwater to Lonesome is rarely used now, and involves a crossing of Hunlen Creek (well below the Falls), here in flood in May.



Alternative to hiking the rough and sketchy trail, we could get Jack Turner to boat us up the lake

4. Relax, You Are Almost There



A different route to Lonesome, which we occasionally took people on, was to hike to Turner Lake and then follow the 1953 Geological Survey Trail down to Lonesome. John Edwards used this steep and rough route to commute from the homestead to his canoe and cabin rental business on Turner Lake. Here John is pointing out the homestead, 2,000 feet below us.

The homestead and all the Edwards and Turner buildings burned down in a forest fire in 2004.



One of our last trips to Lonesome Lake was on a Thanksgiving, when we packed a frozen turkey up the trail to share with Jack and Trudy at their homestead. Trudy told us it was the first time they ever had turkey and we thank our good friend Peter for carrying it on his back all the way, past autumnal grizzlies and roaring rapids.

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