

Mud Lake & Pinhey Sand Dunes

KSCCC – April 10, 2026

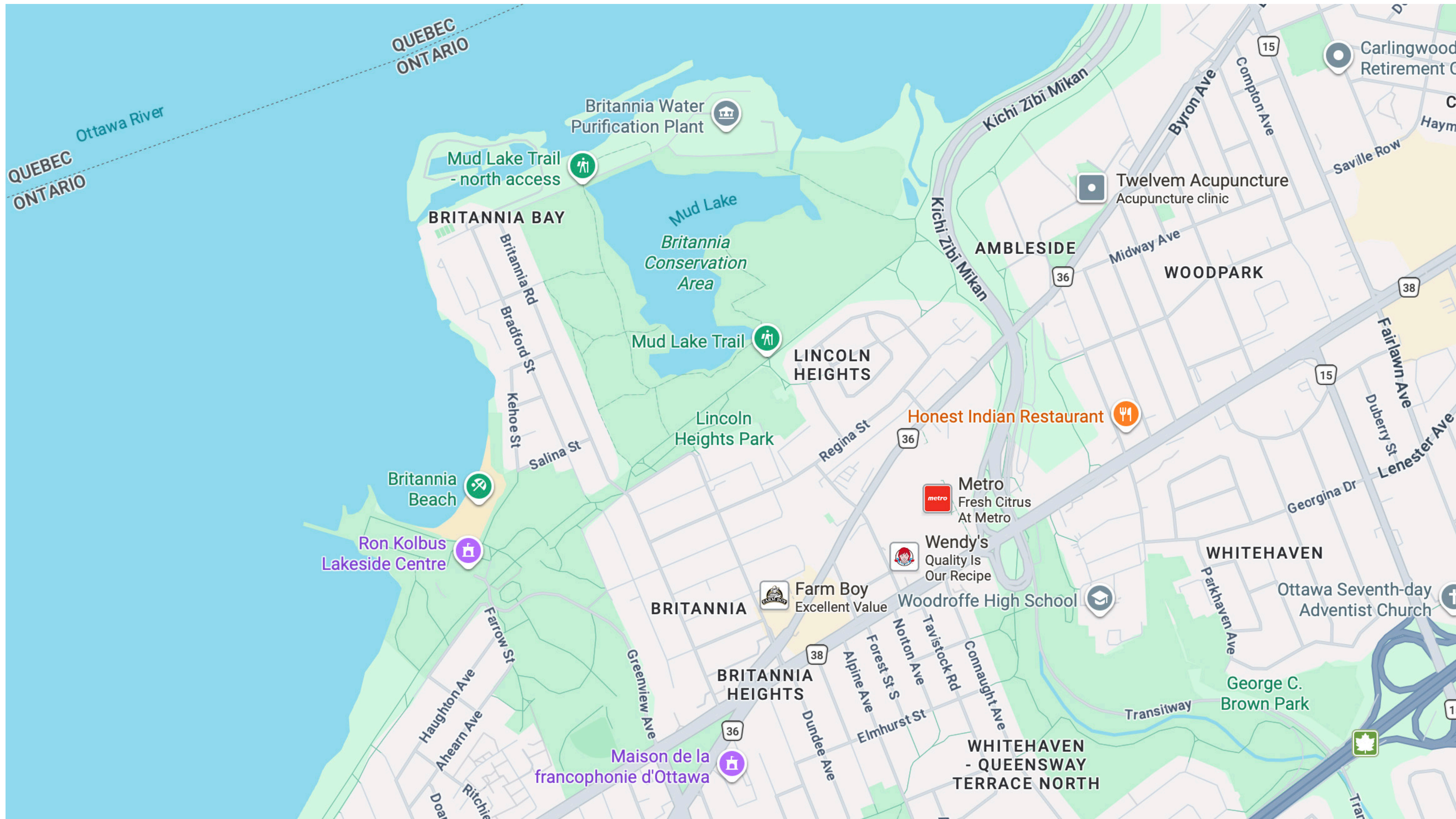
Jay-Dee Purdie

MUD LAKE

- Where Is It Located?
- What Is It?
- A Long Time Ago ...
- Some Interesting History
- A Quick Look About
- Wild Life

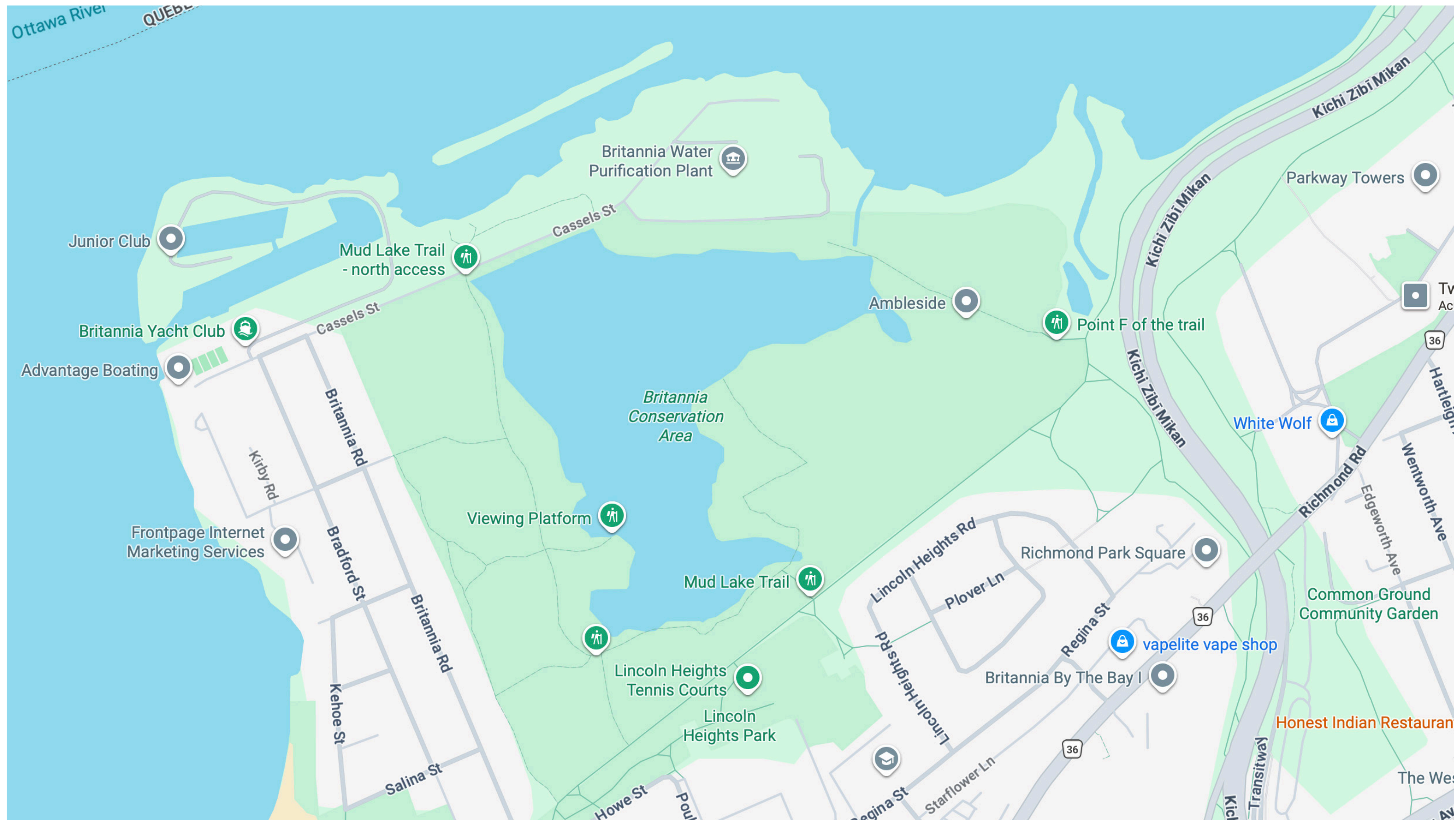
Mud Lake

Where Is It Located?



Mud Lake

Where Is It Located?



Mud Lake

What Is It?

- Originally, just a bay of the Ottawa River
- NCC ecological habitat within Ottawa urban area
- A protected conservation area — Britannia Conservation Area
- 60 hectares (148 acres) of wetland & forest
- A wide variety of plant, mammalian, amphibian, reptilian and fish species
- About 260 species of birds
- Numerous paths — longest one is about 3 km
- Access to Ottawa River

Mud Lake

A Long Time Ago ...

- **450 to 470 Million Years Ago**

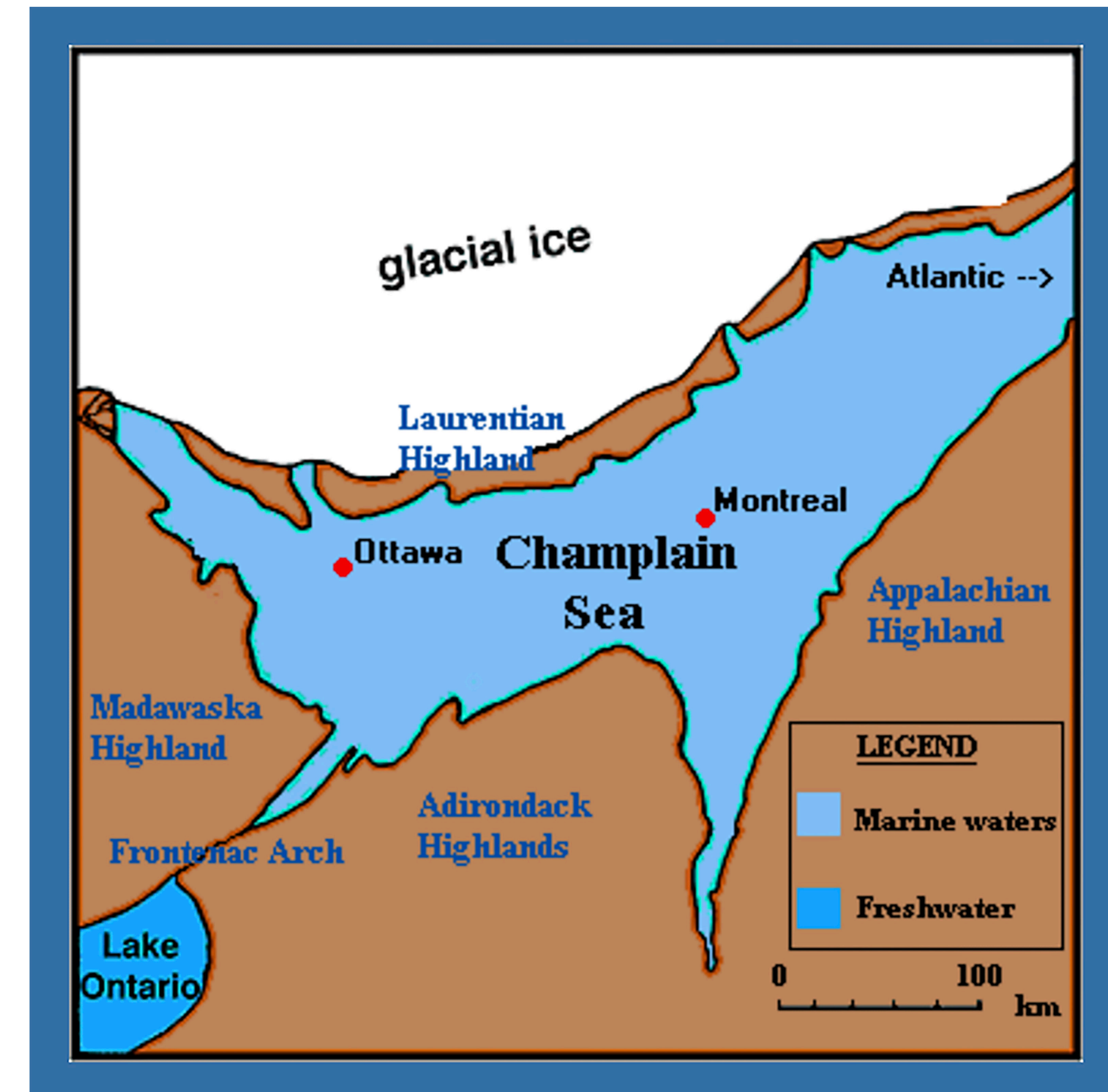
- Ottawa limestone originated from warm, shallow tropical seas
- Limestone rock formed by accumulation of lime muds, oozes, and the shells of marine organisms on sea floor
- Area that is now Ottawa was located near the equator

- **20,000 Years Ago**

- Last ice sheet was about 2km thick and was retreating
- Sea was mix of Atlantic Ocean water & glacial run-off and lasted about 13,000 to 10,000 years ago

- **9,500 Years Ago**

- Land started to rise without weight of glacier



Mud Lake

Glacial Erratic



Mud Lake

Aerial View 1958



Mud Lake

Aerial View 1965



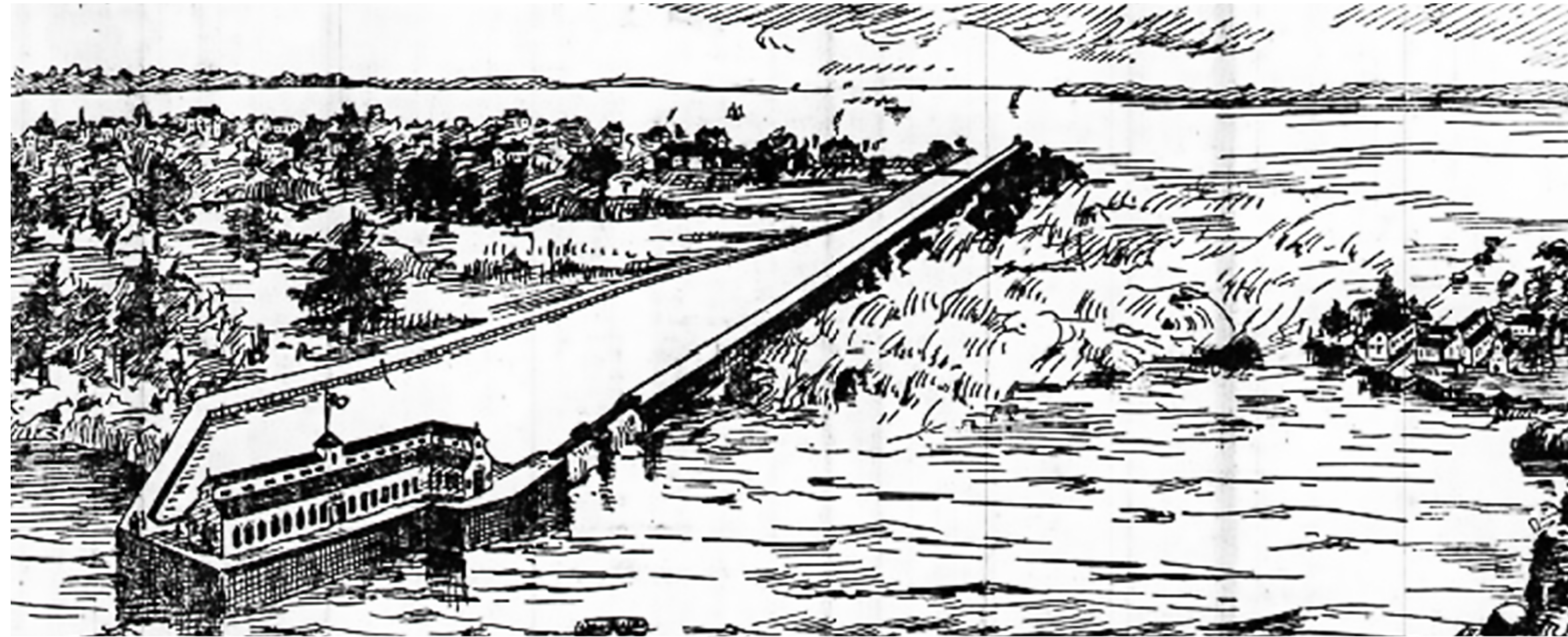
Mud Lake

Aerial View 2021



Mud Lake

Ottawa Evening Journal - February 25, 1899



- 1898 — Metropolitan Electric Company purchased 160 acres of land in the Mud Lake area
- Intention was to harness water at the Deschênes Rapids for a hydroelectric power generation plant
- Canal would be 14 feet deep, 150 feet wide and between 2,000 and 3,000 feet long
- Dig up & move over 100,000 cubic yards of solid rock and 25,000 cubic yards of earth
- Material dug up would form 53 foot high embankments on the north and south sides of the canal
- Start of Work — April 3, 1899
- September 16, 1899 — first sign of trouble when the labourers not getting paid
- Project failed in 1901

Mud Lake

A Quick Look About - The Lake



Mud Lake

A Quick Look About - Ottawa River



Mud Lake

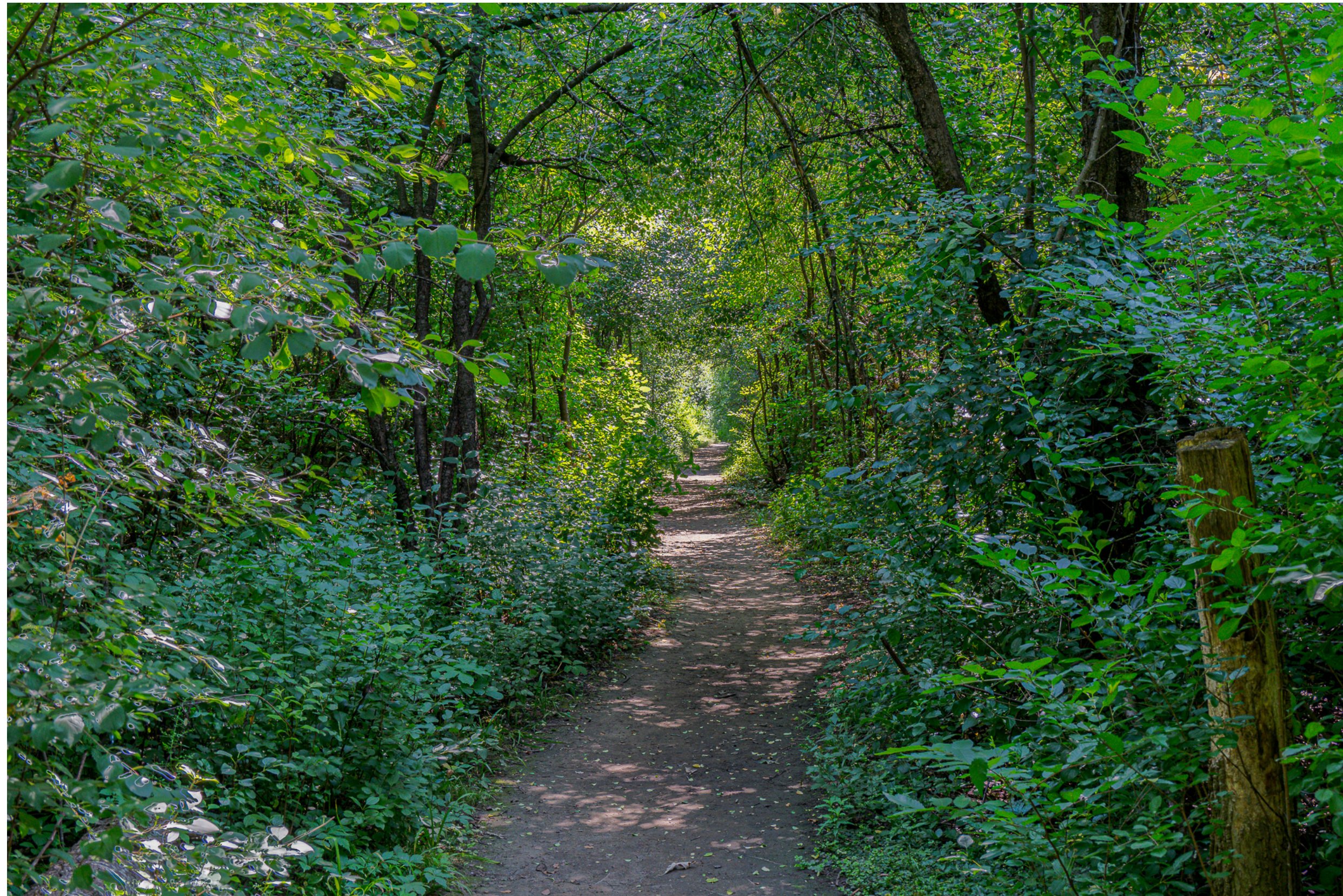
Trail Map

- No dogs allowed
- No bicycles allowed
- Stay on official trails
- Do not feed birds & animals
- Respect plant & animal life
- Stay off the ice



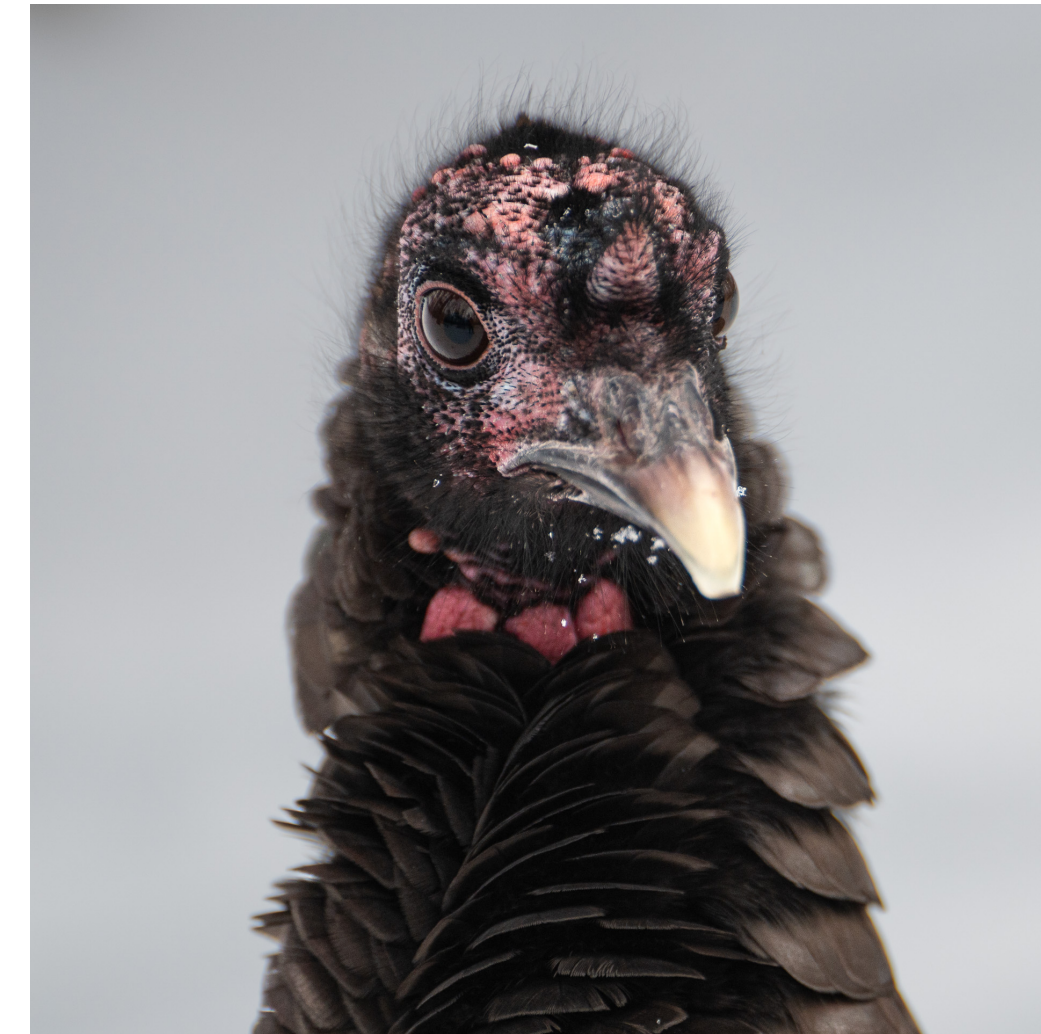
Mud Lake

A Quick Look About - Trails



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Birds



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Geese



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Geese



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Ducks



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Ducks



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Ducks



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Amphibian



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Amphibian



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Flora



- 44 rare & 15 uncommon plant species
- Invasive non-native plants affecting biodiversity
- 11 species identified covering 29% of area
- Primary species of invasive non-native: glossy buckthorn, Norway maple, garlic mustard, honeysuckle, dog-strangling vine

Mud Lake

Wild Life - Mammals



Mud Lake

Wild Life - Mammals



Pinhey Sand Dunes

Where Is It Located



Pinhey Sand Dunes

Some History

- 8,500 to 8,000 years ago sea floor formed Pinhey Sand Dunes
- Original dunes covered over 1.5 million square metres
- 1950's tree planting programs turned dunes into a pine forest
- With support of NCC, restoration and reclamation work started by volunteers from Biodiversity Conservancy International
- Four sites have been cleared and restored

Pinhey Sand Dunes

Aerial View 1965



Pinhey Sand Dunes

What It Looks Like



Pinhey Sand Dunes

Flora & Fauna



Some References ...

- NCC Greenbelt >>> <https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/hiking-and-walking-greenbelt>
- Mud Lake
 - NCC >>> <https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/mud-lake>
 - Ottawa Life >>> <https://www.ottawalife.com/article/mud-lake-connect-with-nature-without-leaving-the-city/>
 - Hydro Dam >>> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkvPSYavl0w>
 - Book “Ottawa’s Britannia” by Eva Taylor & James Kennedy (2017)
- Pinhey Sand Dunes
 - NCC >>> <https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/blog/bringing-the-pinhey-sand-dunes-back-to-life>
 - Canadian Geographic >>> <https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/ottawas-pinhey-sand-dunes/>
 - Biodiversity Conservancy International >>> <https://www.biodiversityconservancy.org/pinhey-sand-dunes/geological-history>

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END**