

WEST EDMONTON – PRECIOUS GREEN SPACES



easy

Hiking in this north section of the Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve is a wonderful wilderness experience. The trail crosses Whitemud Creek three times and winds through a mix of huge balsam poplars, spruce and various shrubs. The Whitemud Ravine Nature Reserve has the highest biodiversity of plants and animals in the city. Enjoy the informative signs.

**TRAILHEAD:** *Whitemud Ravine north parking lot – south of Campbell Bridge and Fox Drive*

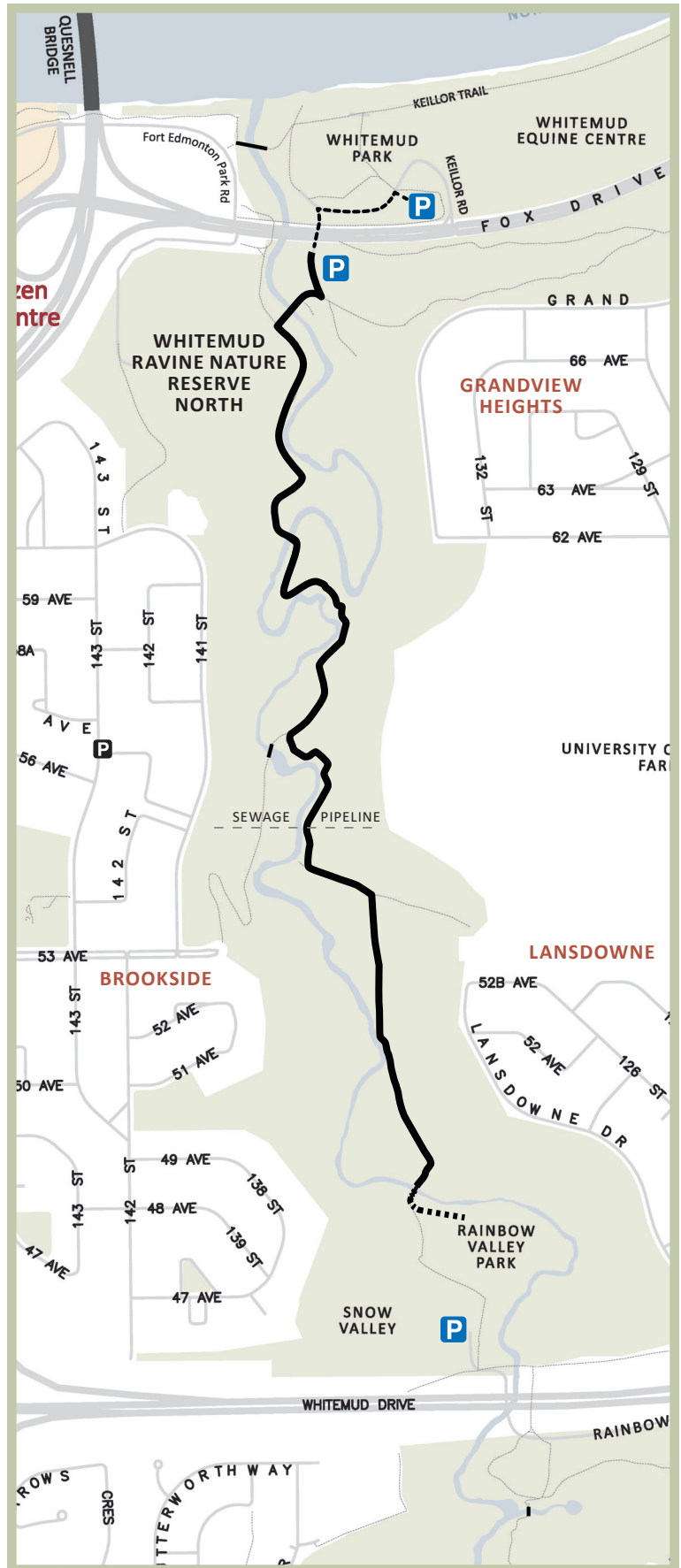
The main trail in the north part of the Whitemud Ravine is situated between Fox Drive and Whitemud Drive (or between Fox Drive and the Rainbow Valley Campground and Snow Valley ski chalet).

The nature reserve starts from where the Whitemud Creek empties into the North Saskatchewan River. The side trails via trail or stairs take you (on the east side) up to Grandview Heights, the University Farm and the Lansdowne community, and (on the west side) alongside the Tommy Fox Farm and up to the Brookside neighbourhood.

**DISTANCE/DIFFICULTY:** *4.4 km round trip to footbridge #284; 5 km round trip to campground store; easy, granular trail. No cyclists allowed and dogs required to be on leash.*

- From the south end of the Whitemud Ravine North parking lot, walk west to cross the pedestrian footbridge over Whitemud Creek. Turn left (south), with the Whitemud Creek on your left and the Fox Farm on your right.
- About halfway along the walk, the trail forks. The sign at this junction indicates that the path on the right goes to Brookside and the main one on the left goes to Snow Valley.
- Keep left on the main trail and proceed to an overhead trestle supporting a large sewage pipe. Just beyond the trestle is a graveled area that is rather bare except for two benches, a memorial rock and an underground pipeline.

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- The main trail continues south through the forest to the last footbridge (#284), which crosses Whitemud Creek near the campground. The Rainbow Valley Campground store (additional 0.3 km) is on your left, and straight ahead is the Snow Valley Ski Hill and Chalet.
- Return the way you came.

## AMENITIES

- washrooms and a meeting room in new amenity building (Alfred H. Savage Centre, 13909 Fox Drive) south of Fox Drive and below the big sledding hill
- washrooms in a smaller amenity building north of 13810 Fox Drive - open 9:00 am to 10:00 pm
- snacks available at the camp store in the Rainbow Valley Campground, open mid-April to mid-October, or at the ski chalet, open in winter
- blue emergency phone at bridge near bottom of sledding hill

## DESCRIPTION

Whitemud Creek drains a large watershed from southwest of Leduc and empties into the North Saskatchewan River just east of the Quesnell Bridge.

High above the trail is a trestle bridge that supports a pipe carrying sewage to the Gold Bar Sewage Treatment Plant. The nearby underground Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline carries oil from the refineries of Strathcona County to the west coast of BC. This pipeline does not really belong in the middle of the city but it was built here in 1953, two decades before TUCs (Transportation Utility Corridors) were in place. Pipelines require close and careful monitoring especially where they cross under rivers and creeks, which is why Kinder Morgan cleared a swath of land over the pipeline for better sight lines and access.

## HISTORY

The Nahiwuk (Na-hi-yah-wuk) Cree lived along the confluence of Whitemud Creek and the North Saskatchewan River. While visiting Edmonton in 1858, James Hector of the Palliser expedition noted that the white mud found along the creek's banks was used to whitewash the Hudson's Bay Company buildings.

The area has been used as a park since 1912. Dr. L.L. Fuller donated land to the city to establish a park along the creek, as did others such as Tommy and Clara Fox. In 1990 both the Whitemud and Blackmud Ravines were designated as nature reserves to restrict development and protect the environment.

Campbell Bridge was named after Duncan L. Campbell, who farmed the area and built the first bridge over the creek. The present bridge was built by the city in 1969.

The big hill was once used as a ski hill with a tow rope. It is now a sledding hill.

Alfred Savage worked for the city of Edmonton in many senior positions, including Commissioner of Public Affairs and Superintendent of Parks and Recreation.