

Finke River 4WD Route




The Finke River 4WD (four wheel drive) route takes in a spectacular section of the mighty Finke River and provides a challenging 4WD experience between Finke Gorge and Watarrka National Parks.

The Finke River with its permanent waterholes and wide flat bed has been of great importance to Aboriginal people for thousands of years, providing a travel and trade route through the region. Ernest Giles was the first European explorer to navigate this section of the Finke River in 1872. Many more explorers recognised its value as a navigation aid in their push north.

After the establishment of an inland mission at Hermannsburg in 1877, Lutheran Missionaries came to use the Finke as a supply route. The first white settlers established a pastoral industry around the reliable waterholes of the Finke.

Today this section of the Finke River is protected within the Finke Gorge National Park. The drive amongst the River Red Gums is an excellent opportunity to observe wildlife, especially the waterbirds of Central Australia.

Planning Your Trip

 The route is **high clearance 4WD only** and is **not suitable for trailers**. It should only be attempted by people with previous 4WD experience. The remoteness of this area makes planning and emergency contingencies essential.

Before you begin:
Determine your fuel needs remembering that driving is

mainly 4x4 and fuel consumption will be higher than normal.

Take 6 litres of water per person per day, plus extra water in case of delays.

Ensure you have adequate vehicle recovery equipment for sand driving and check your spare tyre. Always inform a reliable friend of your intended route, along with the dates you will be travelling. Be sure to notify them of your return.

The remote nature of the route, infrequent traffic and high risk of becoming stuck or suffering vehicle damage makes travelling with another vehicle essential. The Finke River Route is not a short cut to Watarrka National Park.

Road conditions are variable, subject to severe flooding and should always be checked prior to departure. Obtain current road conditions by calling **1800 246 199**.

Be Prepared!

People planning 4WD visits should notify a reliable person of their intended route and plans. Carry a satellite phone, EPIRB or personal locator beacon.

Driving in Sand

The Finke River 4WD Route is mostly sand driving. Make sure hubs are locked in and 4WD is engaged. Deflate your tyres to 30psi (200kpa) to increase their surface area.

Drive in the existing wheel ruts to avoid getting bogged or causing erosion.

If you do become bogged don't spin the wheels - get out and inspect the situation. If you are not deeply bogged, removing


Please Remember

- There are no bins on park, please take your rubbish home with you. Do not burn or bury rubbish.
- Pets are not permitted.
- Avoid using soaps or detergents in or near waterways.
- Use gas barbecues or fuel stoves where possible.
- Firewood collection is not permitted in the park.
- Stay on existing tracks and do not enter Aboriginal living areas without permission or a permit.
- Leave all gates as you find them and do not disturb stock or tamper with bores, fences or other structures.
- Observe all road condition, safety and warning signs.

sand from the front of all the wheels and under the chassis may free you. If you are deeply bogged jack up each wheel in turn and backfill under it with sand. As a last resort repeat the above procedure lowering the pressure to 15psi (100kpa). Do not drive more than 30km per hour until you have reinflated your tyres as the vehicle is in danger of rolling.

What to do in an emergency

If you break down always stay with your vehicle and wait for help. Police and medical facilities are available at Hermannsburg and a district nurse is available at Kings Canyon.

 **Bush Camping** is permitted within the Park only where shown on the map. No facilities are provided.

Please note: no bush camping is permitted in the Finke River between Hermannsburg and Palm Valley.

Parks & Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory

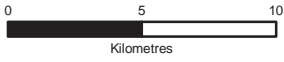
Finke Gorge Ranger Station
Ph: (08) 8956 7401
Fax: (08) 8956 2870
www.nt.gov.au/parks

Regional Office - Tom Hare Building
Sth Stuart Highway ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870
PO Box 1120 ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
Ph: (08) 8951 8250



Finke 4WD Route

To West MacDonnell National Park via Thorala (Gosse Bluff)
To Watarrka via Mereenie Loop

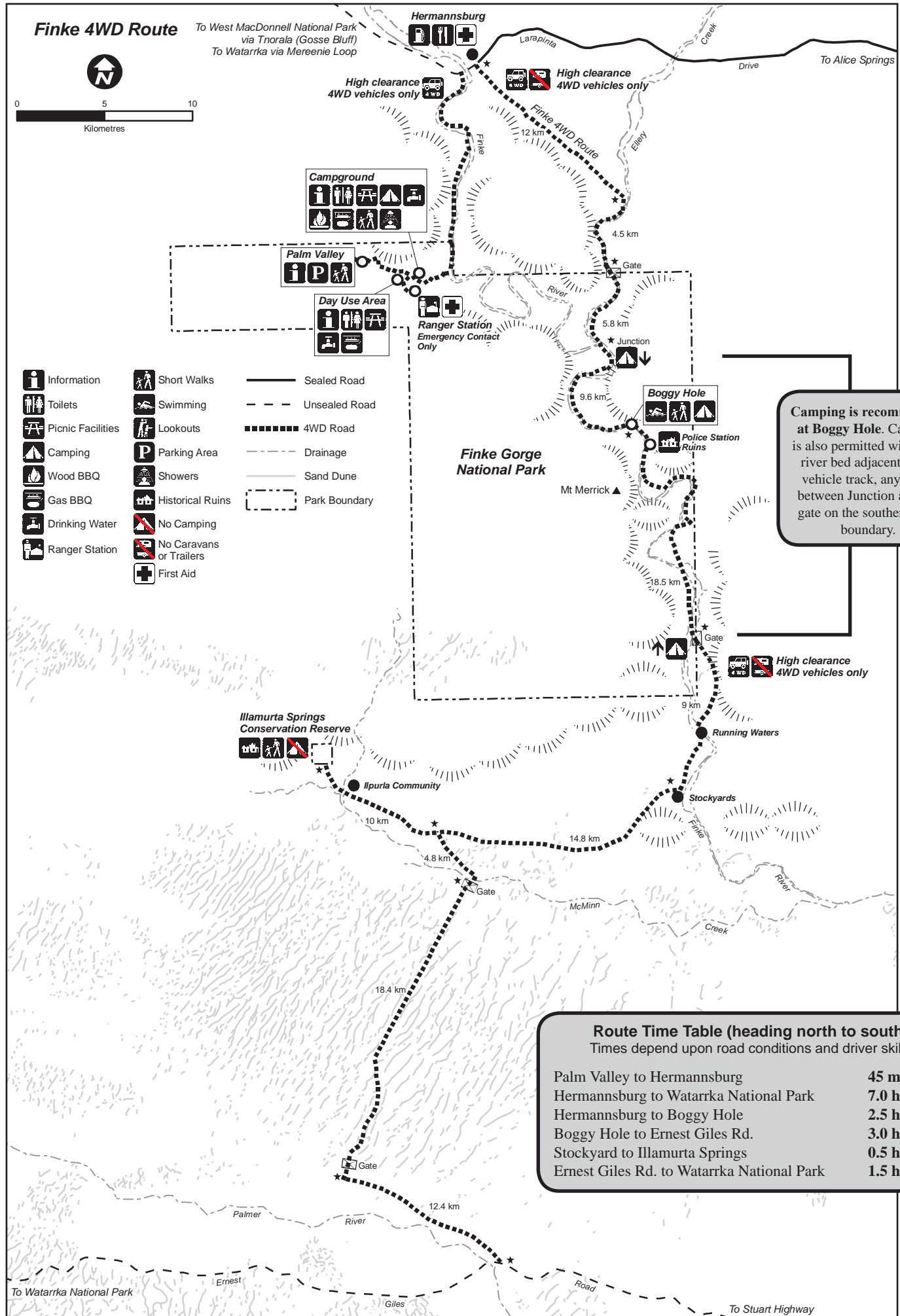


Campground

Palm Valley

Day Use Area

- Information
- Toilets
- Picnic Facilities
- Camping
- Wood BBQ
- Gas BBQ
- Drinking Water
- Ranger Station
- Short Walks
- Swimming
- Lookouts
- Parking Area
- Showers
- Historical Ruins
- No Camping
- No Caravans or Trailers
- First Aid
- Sealed Road
- Unsealed Road
- 4WD Road
- Drainage
- Sand Dune
- Park Boundary



Camping is recommended at Bogy Hole. Camping is also permitted within the river bed adjacent to the vehicle track, anywhere between Junction and the gate on the southern park boundary.

Route Time Table (heading north to south)
Times depend upon road conditions and driver skills

Palm Valley to Hermannsburg	45 mins
Hermannsburg to Watarrka National Park	7.0 hr
Hermannsburg to Bogy Hole	2.5 hr
Bogy Hole to Ernest Giles Rd.	3.0 hr
Stockyard to Illamurta Springs	0.5 hr
Ernest Giles Rd. to Watarrka National Park	1.5 hr