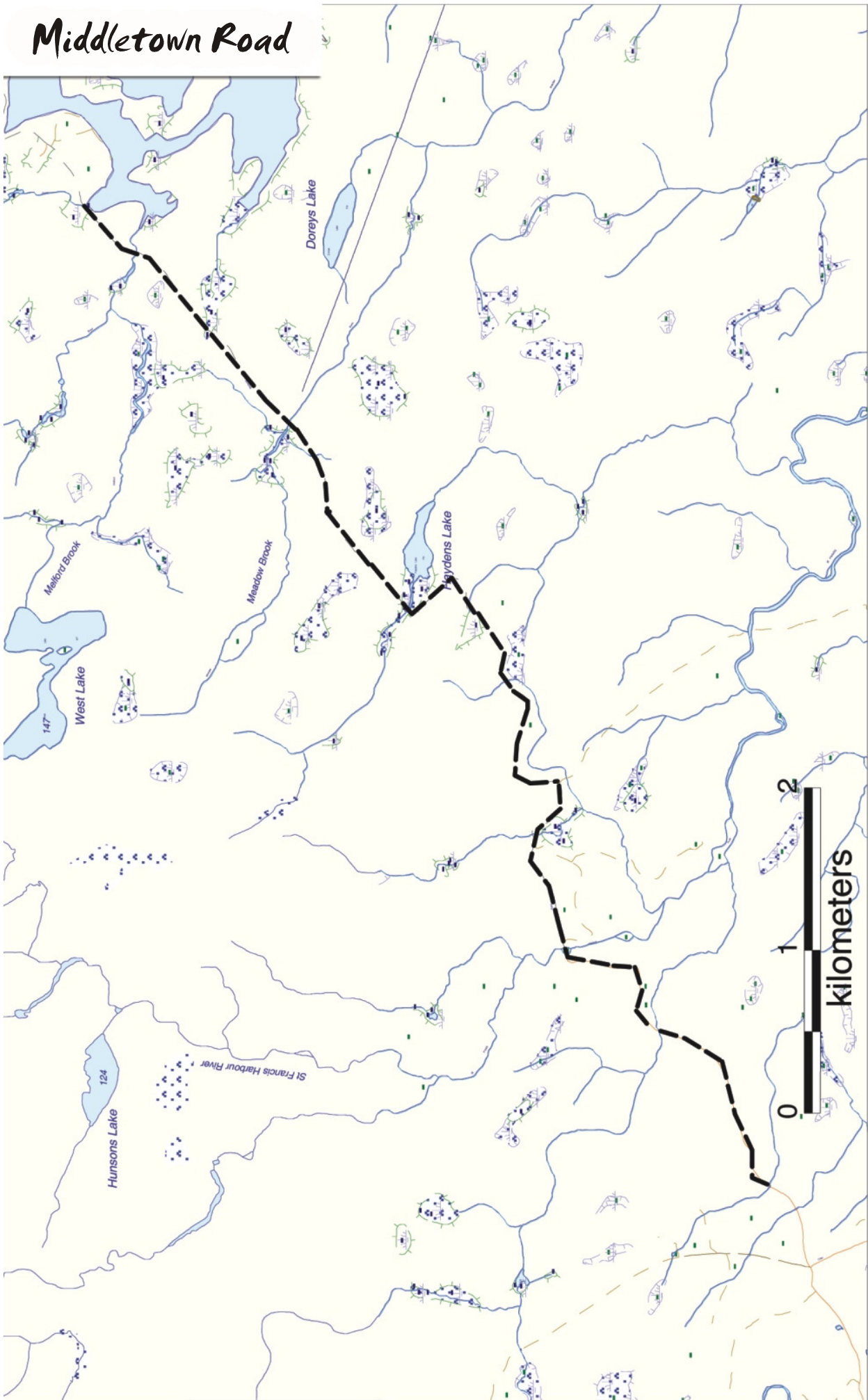


# Middletown Road



# Middletown Road

**Length:** 11 km one-way

**Time:** full day

**Type:** gravel road

**Facilities:** none

**Closest Amenities:** Mulgrave

**Rating:** 3



**Access Information:** Driving west on Hwy 16 from Guysborough turn left onto Hwy 344 at the junction to Mulgrave. Take your third left at the sign marked Middletown. Travel approximately 4 km and park your vehicle in the clearing ahead of the bridge crossing Clam Harbour River.

**Special Features:** Middletown is the site of what was once known as Birchtown, named in honour of British General Samuel Birch who arranged the evacuation of Black Loyalists from New York. Arriving from slavery and war between 1783 and 1785, the Black Loyalists were the largest group of African-born and African-descendants ever to arrive in Nova Scotia. The Black Loyalists had difficulty obtaining land grants from the government, which forced them to live in such removed areas, the nearest store was 7 miles away. The Middletown road built along the old trodden route used by residents of Birchtown to obtain groceries, and dry goods. The route dates to 1812 and was initially used as an escape route for the residents of Guysborough during the war.

**Description:** The entire route being groomed and open to vehicle traffic, it is negotiable where you begin. We chose a starting point at the first bridge. Four km along, you will encounter a fork where it may feel instinctual to take the left route, which seems more a continuation of the road than an adjunct. Resist this impulse and take the road to the right, which bends out of sight. Surrounded by berry fields, bears and other wildlife are plentiful. Maintain an alert mind. Marching on try to imagine years ago traveling this route with not even the comfort of a maintained road. Knowing that through rain or snow, cold or sweltering heat, the journey by foot or horse was a necessary part of your existence. Descending from one last summit we feel a sudden drop in air temperature, which is penetrated by the haunting call of the loon. This is the entrance to England's Lake that is marked by a large concrete dam. This is where the hike ends and a pick up vehicle can be parked.

