

Lomond Sinkhole

A sinkhole is a distinctive formation of topography known as “karst”. It occurs when the landscape is shaped by the dissolving action of water on layers of soluble bedrock (usually limestone, dolomite, or marble). Lomond Sinkhole can be accessed off Route 430 just past Bonne Bay Big Pond. From the junction of the Trans Canada Highway and Route 430, drive north approximately 25 km and turn left onto Whitewash Road. Proceed ~6 km and turn right, continue for another ~3 km and turn right again. Continue for ~5 km before turning left, then proceed up the hill for another 2 km to the end of the road. Follow the trail until you hear the waterfall.



Note man standing at the top of the falls.



View from inside the sinkhole.

A sinkhole is described as a bowl, funnel, or cylinder-shaped depression feeding water underground. The Lomond Sinkhole is made up of limestone, which lies just below a layer of slate. It developed along a geological fault zone, marked by a vertical body of dolomite. It is likely that acidic bog water caused the limestone to dissolve under the slate, enlarging the fault, and forming a cave. Large slabs of rock at the bottom of the hole suggest that the roof of the cave collapsed, resulting in the sinkhole. Lomond Sinkhole is approximately 30m deep by 45 m wide with a waterfall shooting from the top of the cliff into the bottom of the sinkhole. The water does not form a pool of water where it lands but disappears into an underground drainage system. Like most karst landscapes, a number of sinkholes can be found nearby.

The Lomond Sinkhole area is part of the boreal forest, as is all of Newfoundland. Further defined, it falls into the Western Newfoundland Forest ecoregion. Balsam fir is the most common tree species, interspersed with black spruce and white birch. The area was first logged in 1957-58 by Cyril Goosney for Bowater’s Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Mills Ltd., and if you venture into the hole you will see sawdust and slabs from a portable sawmill set up to provide lumber for the logging camp. This locale was also the first major area where Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd. started pre-commercial thinning operations in 1978. When the area was harvested for the second time in 2010, a 50m buffer was left around the sinkhole for safety, and to maintain the integrity of the sinkhole.



Slabs from old sawmill

Lomond Sinkhole is a popular attraction visited by people on snowmobile, horse-back, and more recently by vehicle. The spot was seen on the television show *Man Tracker* where it was used as a resting place for the night.