

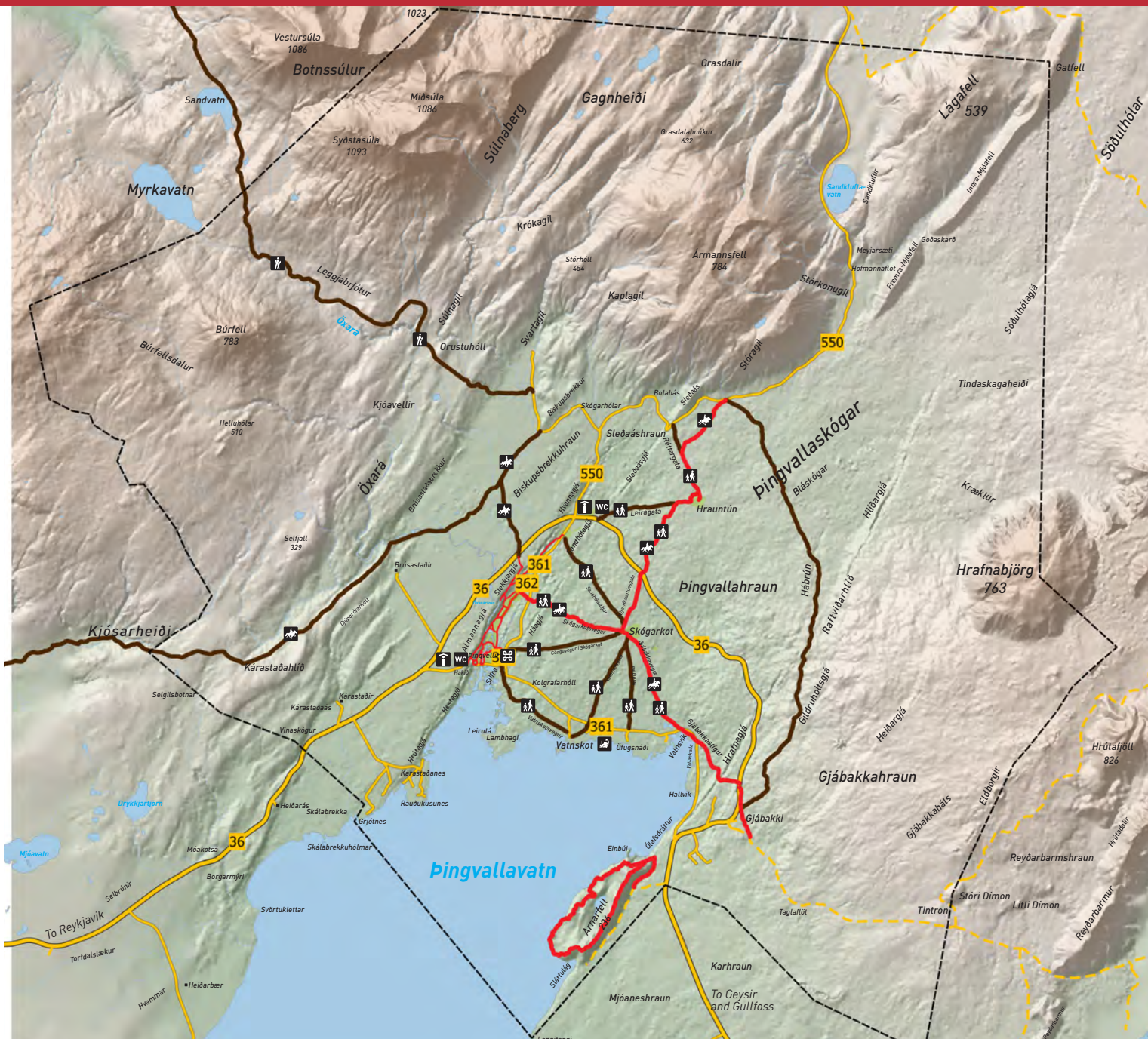
ÞINGVELLIR NATIONAL PARK

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WELCOME TO ÞINGVELLIR



Pingvellir National Park was founded by law in 1930. The Act states that "Pingvellir at Öxará shall be a protected national shrine for all Icelanders." In 2004 Pingvellir was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List. During the Old Commonwealth era (930-1262), The Lögregta (Law Council) was responsible for law making and the resolution of legal disputes. Laws were recited from memory every year to the assembly from the Lögberg (Law Rock). Almanna gjá is a gorge that defines the eastern edge of the North American tectonic plate. In the east of the park, at Hrafnagjá starts a micro tectonic plate. A seven kilometers rift valley separates the two plates. Tectonic activity has given rise to the dramatic landscape seen at Pingvellir today and continues to actively shape it.

Lake Þingvallavatn is Iceland's largest lake (84.km²) and is host to a unique ecosystem. The clarity of the water arising is a result of filtration through the surrounding lavafields that allows light to access greater depths than would otherwise be normal. This allows for more plant growth, more photosynthesis and greater biological productivity. This culminates in a very large variety of Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) and four endemic varieties of Arctic char (*Salvelinus alpina*) not to mention fish eating birds such as the Great northern diver (*Gavia immer*).



FACILITIES AT PINGVELLIR NATIONAL PARK

The National Park Information Centre at Leirar can provide advice on camping, fishing and hiking as well as other general information on the park. There is a small, comfortable, cafeteria where drinks and light meals can be obtained.

At Hakið Vistor centre is an interactive exhibition where the national park's history and nature comes alive. Guests can also find there souvenir shop and small cafeteria.

PINGVELLIR NATIONAL PARK RULES

- All nature in the National Park is protected. Do not disturb any natural or man-made feature.
- Do not damage vegetation. Fires are prohibited.
- Do not litter in the National Park.
- Do not drive off-road or park outside a designated parking areas.
- Dogs must be kept on a leash, and owners must clean up after their pets.
- Note that the Þingvellir area has many rock fissures and cracks. Stay careful.
- Camping is only permitted at designated campsites. Observe quiet between midnight and 8 am.
- Angling permits are sold at the service centre. Note that boats must not be launched from National Park land.
- Park rangers and service centre staff will be pleased to provide further information.
- Þingvellir National Park is a haven of peace. Drunkenness is inappropriate here, and disturbs other visitors. The National Park reserves the right to expel inebriated visitors.

