



A Bay Sculpted by Ice Canada

The land around Liverpool Bay in Canada's Northwest Territories owes its otherworldly appearance to ice past and present.

Thousands of years ago, this area was buried under a massive ice sheet that sprawled over much of North America. During that time, glacial activity carved out parallel lakes separated by strips of land that look like giant, skeletal fingers. After the glaciers retreated, pockets of ice lingered underground. As those pockets have melted and the frozen ground has thawed, lakes have formed.

Geologists have offered different explanations for the formation of the finger-shaped ridges: they may be moraines created by the movement of ice, or they might be sediment ridges that formed between channels of subglacial meltwater. Smaller thermokarst lakes in this scene are formed by both the long- and short-term melting of ice and permafrost.