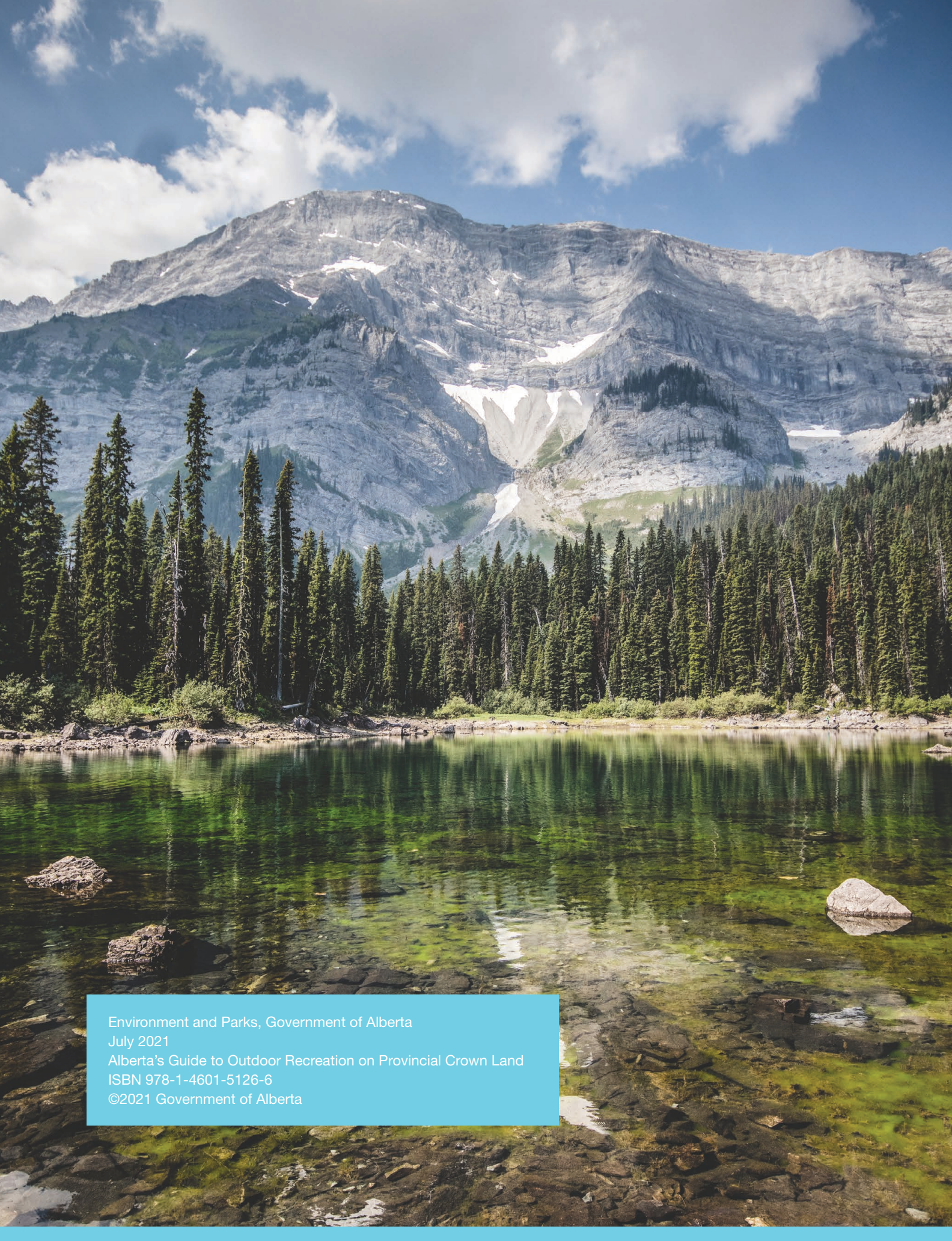




Alberta's Guide to Outdoor Recreation on Provincial Crown Land

SUMMER 2021

Alberta



Environment and Parks, Government of Alberta
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Table of Contents

Minister's Message.....	4		
1. Outdoor Recreation in Alberta	9	3. Where to Recreate on Crown Land	31
Lands Administered by Alberta Environment and Parks	10	Northern Alberta Public Land Use Zones	34
Recreation Management Planning	12	Central Alberta Public Land Use Zones	38
Indigenous Peoples	12	Southern Alberta Public Land Use Zones	42
2. Outdoor Recreation Activities	13	4. Education and Enforcement on Crown Land.....	47
Non-Motorized Recreation	16	Rules and Regulations on Crown Land	49
Motorized Recreation	18	Specified Penalties and Tickets	51
Hunting, Fishing and Firearms.....	22	Contact for Concerns	53
Camping on Crown Land	24	Stay Connected.....	56
Campfires	28	5. Glossary and Acronyms	57



Minister's Message

Alberta's Guide to Outdoor Recreation on Provincial Crown land is a resource for Albertans and visitors that provides valuable information about recreation in our great outdoors.

Last fall, we announced Alberta's Crown Land Vision, a commitment to update Alberta's Environment and Parks' legislation for the 21st century. It is available at alberta.ca/CrownLands. The vision guides our work toward a common sense approach to management of Crown land that recognizes that conservation, recreation and economic uses can and do support each other.

The vision sets the stage for improvements Albertans have asked for, like supporting the sustainable use of trails and backcountry land and conservation of Crown land and biodiversity to ensure land uses are sustainable into the future.

Over the years, we have seen an increase of recreational activity on public land – activities such as hiking, biking, fishing and camping. I trust this guide will enhance Albertans' awareness of responsible stewardship and best practices as we set off on our adventures.

Albertans have also told us they want well-maintained trails and facilities, and enforcement of rules to preserve Alberta's Crown lands for future generations. In a recent engagement, a majority of Albertans told us they are supportive of user-based fees to help maintain Alberta's Crown land. To support sustainability and conservation of public lands, we recently announced a Public Lands Camping Pass. Funds from the pass will go directly towards improvements to the recreation experience through infrastructure upgrades, education, enforcement, public safety, better waste management and environmental protection.

I am excited for the upcoming summer season and look forward to enjoying the exceptional landscapes we are privileged to have in our own backyard with my family and friends.

I encourage Albertans to get outside and explore all the unique and beautiful locations our province has to offer, and please remember to recreate responsibly and respect the land. This guide is designed to evolve over time and we welcome your feedback at OutdoorRecreation@gov.ab.ca.

Sincerely,
Jason Nixon
Minister of Environment and Parks



Going outdoors? Submit what you see to support conservation efforts.



your.alberta.ca/the-outdoor-recreation-channel

Report wildlife observations

– **NatureLynx**

Track bear sightings in Northern Alberta

– **GrizzTracker**

Stop the spread of invasive species

– **EDDMaps**

Address fish habitat barriers

– **ABWCI**

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Public Lands Camping Pass

The new Public Lands Camping Pass helps support conservation and protection of Alberta's beautiful and remote landscapes. Before you head out to camp on public lands along the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains, make sure you have your pass. Be prepared to provide proof of payment to enforcement officers, if requested.



When?

Passes are required year round, as of **June 1, 2021**.

Alberta

Where?

The pass applies to public land in the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains from Grande Prairie to Waterton Lakes National Park, west of Highway 43 and Highway 22. The pass does not apply to private, municipal or federally-owned lands, or to the Kananaskis Conservation Pass area. Consent is required to enter onto agricultural leased land. Leaseholders can deny access under certain conditions. For details visit alberta.ca/AgriculturalCrownLand.

Who?

Campers 18 years and older must have a pass:

- 3-days \$20/person | Annual \$30/person (ages 18+)

A pass is not needed:

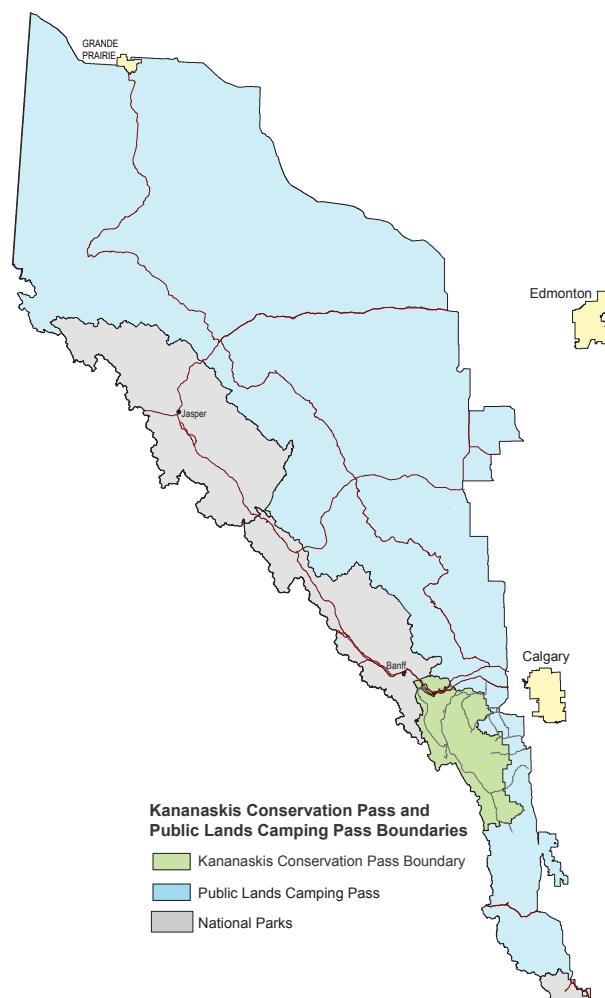
- to camp on public land outside of the camping pass area or in an established campground where camping fees are already charged
- to use public land for the day for other recreational activities
- to access public land for authorized work or volunteer duties
- for clients of disposition holders where the holder's disposition is for the purpose of camping
- for First Nations people with Status card
- north of the Red Deer River for:
 - Metis Settlement members
 - recognized Métis Harvesters
 - members of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation
- for persons receiving benefits from:
 - Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)
 - Adult Health Benefit
 - Income Support

Why?

Funds from the pass will be reinvested in the region to improve recreation experiences and help conserve these beautiful landscapes so they can be enjoyed now and for generations to come.

Your pass will help:

- upgrade infrastructure
- improve education
- support conservation and help protect the environment
- monitor and enforce rules
- promote public safety
- provide better waste management



How?

You can get your pass:

- online at albertarelm.com or AlbertaRELM mobile app
- at locations that sell fishing and hunting licences

A \$3.25 system processing fee and GST will be applied to every transaction. A one-time Wildlife Identification Number (WIN) purchase is required to access the system (\$8, but with a \$2 discount if purchased online).

Additional Information

All rules and regulations still apply.

For more information visit: alberta.ca/CampingPass

General Information | 310-3773



Give a helping hand

We all use the land of the Eastern Slopes in different ways that can impact the health of Alberta's native trout and their habitats. Lend our native trout a helping hand and get involved with a stewardship group to help keep Alberta's waters cold, clean, clear and connected.

alberta.ca/NativeTrout



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada



fRI Research
Informing Land & Resource Management





1. Outdoor Recreation in Alberta

Lands Administered by Alberta Environment and Parks

Provincial Crown land is administered and managed by the provincial government and makes up approximately 60 per cent of Alberta's land base. This includes public land, parks and protected areas administered by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). For more information on the management direction of these areas, read the Alberta Crown Land Vision at: alberta.ca/CrownLands. It is important to understand the rules across the different land areas. Crown land is a benefit to all and rules apply no matter where you are. For more information about rules visit [Section 4 of this Guide](#). Laws and land designations assist in the management of these lands and resources. **This guide provides an overview of the diverse recreational opportunities available to Albertans on provincial Crown land (public land, parks and protected areas), with a focus on public land recreation.** The *Public Lands Act* is the main legislation directing use and management of these lands. Provincial parks and protected areas have different regulations. For more information visit albertaparks.ca/regulations. Under the *Public Lands Act*, lands can be designated as Public Land Use Zones, Public Land Recreation Areas, and Public Land Recreation Trails. Other land areas under the *Public Lands Act* include agricultural public land and vacant public land.

Public Land Use Zones (PLUZs)

A PLUZ is a tool for managing recreational activity, including motorized access, while considering other land uses. It can help to protect and maintain sensitive areas, watercourses, waterbodies and key wildlife habitat. PLUZs are designated under the Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR) in Alberta. Within a PLUZ, forestry, oil, gas and other commercial and industrial activities are permitted - these lands are held under a disposition.

Each PLUZ has conditions and regulations specific to that land base. Visitors are expected to know and abide by the regulations for the public land they are visiting. See [Section 3 of the Guide](#) for details on the rules for each of Alberta's PLUZs.

Public Land Recreation Areas (PLRAs)

PLRAs are commonly located at access points to public land or within an existing PLUZ. PLRAs are designated under the PLAR to manage high intensity recreational use and may provide limited amenities for camping, staging, water access and day use. These areas may also provide information and education resources via kiosks or interpretive and regulatory signage. Although similar, Provincial Recreation Areas (PRAs) have additional rules and are administered under the *Provincial Parks Act*.

Public Land Recreation Trails (PLRTs)

PLRTs are designated under the PLAR. There are five PLRTs in Alberta. These trails are generally three to six metres in width, are commonly used by recreationists and are managed for recreational use by AEP.

Agricultural Crown Land

These are Crown lands held under agricultural disposition, such as a grazing lease. These lands can be within or outside a PLUZ. The conditions for public recreational access on agricultural leased lands varies and specific rules such as contacting the leaseholder prior to entering agricultural Crown land is required. For more information visit Alberta.ca/AgriculturalCrownLand.

Vacant Public Land

These are areas of public land that do not have assigned or active formal dispositions, such as a lease or license. In these areas, a wide variety of recreational activities are enjoyed by outdoor enthusiasts. Vacant public land can overlap with a PLUZ or remain undesignated. Recreationists should be aware of other activity on the busy landscape.



Recreation Management Planning

The government uses five key approaches to manage recreation on provincial Crown land:

- **Engineering:** Designing and constructing facilities to address environmental, economic or social interests and values.
- **Education:** Informing recreationists about what is expected, important and interesting.
- **Enforcement:** Ensuring compliance with rules and regulations.
- **Evaluation:** Making sure actions are accomplishing goals and addressing issues.
- **Experience:** Ensuring that the needs of the users are met in a way that creates a positive experience.

Alberta's provincial Crown land has a long history and is managed for a wide variety of uses. To find out more about the history of Crown land in Alberta, visit alberta.ca/PublicLandsHistory.

Alberta Environment and Parks balances diverse interests on provincial Crown land by considering input from Albertans on land use planning throughout the province. If you would like to be involved in the planning and management of recreation areas, connect with us during regional and recreation management planning processes.

Recreation Management Planning: Area-based or location-specific recreation and land management plans may be undertaken to identify outcomes and ensure well managed land uses are not in conflict. Planning processes in Alberta involve stakeholders with many perspectives. Indigenous people bring unique perspectives to planning processes as knowledge holders and rights holders. To keep track of current planning and engagement initiatives, visit alberta.ca/CrownLands. You can also connect with Alberta's recreation planners by emailing AEP.Planning@gov.ab.ca.

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous Peoples have always lived in a reciprocal relationship with this landscape, acting as stewards of the land and depending on healthy ecosystems for their way of life. Alberta recognizes many Indigenous Peoples rely on natural landscapes and biodiversity for traditional land-use activities and to exercise their constitutionally protected rights. On provincial Crown land, the rules for recreational land-users are different from those for persons exercising a right to hunt, fish or trap for food. This includes rules on camping, campfires and the use of off-highway vehicles or snow vehicles.

For more information on Indigenous hunting and fishing in Alberta, visit alberta.ca/HuntingAndFishing.

To review the Guide to Applying the Public Lands Administration Regulation in the context of Aboriginal Peoples' rights, visit alberta.ca/PublicLands-Indigenous.



2. Outdoor Recreation Activities

If you love spending time outdoors, provincial Crown lands offer opportunities to enjoy a wide range of activities and adventures in a variety of settings. In order to fully enjoy Alberta's outdoors, it is important to know where, when and how different recreational activities may be pursued.

Since all activities have an environmental impact, it is up to the individual to be informed and avoid:

- Leaving garbage behind. Pack out what you pack in.
- Negatively impeding other users' experience.
- Loss of vegetation from using undesignated trails.
- Soil compaction, erosion and leaving wheel ruts from driving off trail or in wet conditions.
- Transfer of invasive species or weeds to new areas by failing to clean equipment.
- Water contamination from improperly disposing of waste material or from driving in waterways.
- Sparking wildfires by leaving campfires or cigarettes unattended, or failing to remove debris from OHV hot spots.
- Wildlife harassment and endangerment by getting too close, leaving garbage behind, feeding them, or allowing pets to run free.

This section provides suggestions to help you prepare for various activities and information to help you understand the applicable rules and regulations. With your support, Alberta's provincial Crown land can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Did You Know?



If you plan on accessing agricultural Crown land, you can find leaseholder contact information by visiting maps.alberta.ca/recaccess.

Leased lands may look like:

- Fenced, posted or cultivated lands.
- Lands containing buildings which may be used or occupied.
- Lands where livestock or domestically raised animals may be present.

In order to support stewardship, all recreational users follow a set of standard conditions:

- Checking if the Crown land you're visiting is leased to an agriculture producer as different rules apply. Contact the leaseholder for access, as access can be denied.
- Parking vehicles clear of driveways and access routes.
- Obtaining consent to light fires.
- Leaving gates the way you found them.
- Packing out all litter.
- Avoiding damage to land and property.



KnowB4UGo

- Plan your route.
- Only travel on trails that are designated for your activity and do not have closure notices posted. Check for area and trail closures by visiting alberta.ca/PublicLandClosures or albertaparks.ca/advisories.
- Know the terrain and be prepared for all possible weather conditions.
- Avoid wet, muddy or rough areas.
- Travel in groups for safety and bring bear spray.
- Know individual and group abilities and limits.
- Tell a friend or family member your plans/approximate timeline/proposed route, and let them know when you've returned.
- Know the regulations of where you're going (found in [Section 3 of the Guide](#)).



Be Lawful

- Stay off private or leased land, unless permitted.
- Do not disturb artifacts, fossils, livestock, property or wildlife.



Be Respectful

- Leave all gates and fences as you find them.
- Dispose of waste properly – pack out what you pack in.
- Do not damage vegetation and trees.
- Keep pets under control and on a leash where required.
- Give wildlife space to avoid conflict. For more information visit: alberta.ca/wildlife.
- Share the trail with other users. Indicate how many are in your group when passing others.

Some activities may be subject to specific details or restrictions, such as the maximum width and weight of an off-highway vehicle (OHV) or specific dates or timeframes for when activities are permitted. Below are icons you might see on the landscape that show common types of recreation activities.

ICONS	
Motorcycling	Camping
Side by Side OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
Truck or SUV	Snowmobiling
Cross-Country Skiing	Boat (Non-Motorized)
Bicycling	Fishing
Hiking	Equestrian
Hunting	

Non-Motorized Recreation

Hiking



When hiking, yield to horses. In backcountry areas, use established trails to avoid trampling fragile vegetation.

Step over, rather than on, exposed roots to prevent damage to bark. To get involved in a local hiking community, connect with the Alberta Hiking Association at abhiking.ca.

Biking



When biking, ride in control at all times and yield to other non-motorized users (e.g., hikers and horseback riders). Building ramps and permanent structures or modifying trails is prohibited except where authorization has been granted by AEP. Watch out for motorists when bicycling on roadways and always follow the rules of the road. To get involved in a local bicycling community, connect with the Alberta Bicycle Association by visiting albertabicycle.ab.ca.

Unless otherwise signed, e-bikes are permitted on public lands. Alberta Parks only permits e-bikes on trails designated for their use. This includes any roads and designated motorized trails in parks, as well as pathways and trails specifically designated for e-bikes within parks.

E-bikes are a relatively new and changing technology that are neither your standard road or mountain bike nor an off-highway vehicle, according to regulations and rules that define vehicles in the province.

Not all e-bikes are the same. Pedal-assist e-bikes are non-throttled electric powered bicycles that provide up to 500 Watts of continuous max output, which stops assisting when either pedaling stops or 32 km/h is reached. Throttled or power-on-demand e-bikes allow users to travel without human power similar to dirt bikes and scooters. Some pedal-assist bikes can also provide greater power output or assistance beyond what is defined under the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations.

Equestrian



When horseback riding, be alert to other trail users and avoid grazing wherever possible. Horses should not be tied to live vegetation. In a Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ), the tethering and grazing of horses is not allowed within 100 metres of lakes to prevent water contamination and erosion of shorelines.

Permits to graze horses for recreational use may be required, particularly in areas such as the Forest Reserve where forage has been allocated for livestock grazing.

Equestrian users are encouraged to high-line their horses to prevent damage to roots. In some PLUZs, providing weed-free supplemental feed for horses is required to prevent overgrazing, ensure adequate forage for wildlife and prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Before leaving your campsite, manure and excess feed must be removed from sites and disposed of properly.

Many parks offer equestrian opportunities. See albertaparks.ca/equestrian for more information.

To get involved in a local riding community, connect with the Alberta Equestrian Federation at albertaequestrian.com.

Did you know?



Where there are no outhouses, select a spot away from trails, campsites and at least 70 metres (230 feet) from water sources. Dig a 12-16 centimetres hole to reach the dark-coloured soil layer. When filling the hole with soil, do not pack it down. Pack out any paper products.

Boating and Water Access



If you are launching a boat, you are permitted to enter onto the bed and shore of a waterbody from provincial Crown land.

In Alberta, the law requires you have a life-jacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) on board the watercraft for each person. Transport Canada also requires each craft to have bailing equipment, a sounding device and lights for night navigation. For more information on what to look for when choosing a PFD, visit the Transport Canada website at tc.gc.ca/boatingsafety.

When heading to the water, respect the shorelands and avoid launching and landing in soft or marshy areas. As a steward of our watersheds, ensure that you clean, drain and dry any equipment that touches the water to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species and whirling disease. To get involved in the canoeing or whitewater paddling community, connect with Paddle Alberta at paddlealberta.org or the Alberta Whitewater Association at albertawhitewater.ca.

Climbing and Caving



When climbing or caving follow these tips:

- Use existing or removable climbing equipment and protection.
- Be sensitive to trail erosion on steep approaches and fragile alpine areas.
- Wear sturdy boots with good tread, as climbing and hiking often involves travel over loose rock (scree).
- Check for cave closures at alberta.ca/PublicLandCaveClosures.
- Avoid anchoring to and stepping on exposed roots and vegetation to minimize bark damage.
- Cave formations and life are vulnerable to outside contamination. Don't touch anything you do not have to and clean your gear between trips.
- White-nose syndrome is a serious threat to Alberta's bat populations.
- Avoid climbing in areas with nesting birds.

To get involved in a local climbing community, connect with the Alpine Club of Canada by visiting alpineclubofcanada.ca.

Cross-Country Skiing, Backcountry Skiing and Snowboarding



When cross-country skiing, backcountry skiing, snowboarding and splitboarding, there should be adequate snow cover to avoid contact with the tops of small trees and other vegetation—as these may be broken or damaged by skis or snowboards. For information on avalanche safety, visit avalanche.ca/map.

Connect with the cross-country skiing community through Cross-Country Alberta by visiting nordiqalberta.ca.

Wildlife Viewing and Photography



When viewing wildlife, always be aware of your surroundings, follow posted wildlife warnings or closures, and keep a safe and respectful distance (100 metres/300 feet from bears and 30 metres/98 feet from elk). Give animals their space and do not disturb or feed them. All wildlife will respond when you are too close, either by retreating or acting aggressively toward you. Do not engage in any activities that disturb nests, dens, or result in wildlife altering their behaviour due to your presence.

Commercial photographers are required to obtain appropriate permits in parks and protected areas. For more information visit: albertaparks.ca/permit-portal. For more information on preparing for recreational activities where conflict with wildlife may exist, visit alberta.ca/wildlife.

Did You Know?



Alberta's caves are an important home for many of the province's hibernating bats that are under threat from white-nose syndrome.

Cavers should take precautions to prevent the unintended spread of this disease. For more information visit alberta.ca/bats.

Motorized Recreation



KnowB4UGo

Motorized recreation on provincial Crown land is regulated under the Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR) and the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act*.

For registration and traffic laws, the *Traffic Safety Act* defines an off-highway vehicle (OHV) as:

- Amphibious crafts
- Dune buggies
- Off-road motorcycles
- Quads and trikes
- Snow vehicles

For recreation-related regulations within the PLAR, the definition of OHVs:

- Includes motor vehicles used for cross-country travel on land or water.
- Does not include snow vehicles (snowmobiles) or boats.

Be aware that Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ) rules may be different for OHVs and snow vehicles. Use of OHVs may also be permitted in some Alberta Parks' sites. Where it is allowed, riders must stay on designated OHV trails and obey all signs.

Always plan your route ahead of time, using designated trails and water crossings on current official Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) maps. When using a snow vehicle, ensure you are aware of the nearest warming shelters or staging areas in case of inclement weather. For more information on avalanche safety, visit avalanche.ca/map.



Be Lawful

Every OHV and snow vehicle operating on provincial Crown land must at all times have:

- Valid registration and insurance. To register a vehicle, go to alberta.ca/RegisterVehicle.
- Valid licence plate properly affixed in a visible location.
- A red rear tail lamp capable of emitting a light visible from at least 60 metres (185 feet).
- At least one front white headlamp capable of illuminating a person, vehicle or object from at least 60 metres (185 feet).
- A proper muffler, spark arrestor and no exhaust system modifications that cause increased noise.

OHV recreationists from **another province** must:

- Carry proof of residency.
- Follow the rules regarding registration and the display of licence plates as required by their provincial jurisdiction. If you have been in Alberta for more than 30 consecutive days, Alberta requirements for registration and licensing apply.
- Produce valid proof of insurance upon request by an enforcement officer.

Did You Know?



OHVs can start wildfires. Help reduce the risk - remove debris from OHV hot spots and have a working spark arrestor. Other tips on preventing wildfires are available at wildfire.alberta.ca/prevention.



Laws related to recreational OHV use include:

- Operators under 14 years of age must be supervised by an adult.
- Canadian Standards Association (CSA) compliant helmets must be worn when riding on public land.
- OHVs are not allowed on highways.
- Driving in any body of water, or on the shoreline, is illegal unless you are using a designated crossing that appears on current official AEP maps.
- OHVs should cross waterbodies at bridges or designated crossings. Crossing a waterbody anywhere else is not permitted.
- Washing a motorized vehicle in a waterbody is not permitted.
- OHVs must stay on designated OHV trails or within designated OHV areas in a Provincial Park, Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ), Public Land Recreation Area (PLRA), or Provincial Recreation Area (PRA).



Be Responsible

- Drive with care and attention and in consideration for other people or property.
- Check your tire pressure and tread depth, as high-pressure or aggressive-treads can increase soil compaction and damage vegetation.
- Knock debris off vehicles regularly to help prevent wildfires from sparking on dry vegetation.
- Use wash stations or portable washers to clean your vehicle. Washing motorized vehicles in lakes, streams or rivers is illegal and can deteriorate water quality, spread invasive species and impact aquatic life and habitats.

Did You Know?



Our natural environment is sensitive to disturbance. Riders should know the trail conditions – riding the trail when it's wet causes all sorts of problems. Never short-cut or create your own pathways to avoid muddy or rough areas. A single trail split into many small trails (trail braiding) greatly increases impact over time. Across Alberta, our actions have an environmental impact:

- Erosion from trails can cause sediment to enter rivers and streams, and poses a threat to fish, their habitat and native trout recovery.
- Rutting and compaction in wetlands and bogs affects how water flows through and is stored in those wet areas.
- Native prairie, sand dunes and subalpine environments are particularly sensitive to disturbance – plants here take a long time to recover.

Many different activities and interests occur in the same place on public land. Industrial and commercial users also rely on these trails and areas for their activities. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure we can sustain these uses.



Get Involved

To connect with Alberta's motorized recreation community, visit the Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association site at aohva.com. Snow vehicle enthusiasts can connect with the Alberta Snowmobile Association by visiting albertasnowmobile.ca. Trail enthusiasts can connect with Alberta TrailNet by visiting albertatrailnet.com.




Be Safe. Be Respectful.

When target shooting, choose an area away from roads, trails, people, and campsites, with a safe backdrop such as a hill or bank. Know what you're shooting towards.

Remove all cartridges, clays, targets and trash once you have finished shooting. Respect the land by leaving the area better than you found it.

Alberta 



Keep wheels out of water

More Albertans than ever are getting outdoors to enjoy our provincial Crown lands. Increased pressure on the landscape causes greater impact on our water, vegetation, wildlife and fish. Do your part to respect the land by keeping wheels out of water, wetlands, rivers, streambanks and shorelines. It's the law.

alberta.ca/MotorizedRecreation

Alberta 

Fish Identification

It's hard to predict what will bite the end of your line. Athabasca rainbow trout, bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout are native species that have a zero catch limit across the province. It's important to be able to identify your catch in order to follow the sportfishing regulations. Look for three key characteristics when identifying native trout. Remember, if you don't know, let it go!

Find out more by searching Alberta Fish Identification on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com).



Fins

Look at pectoral and pelvic fins for colouration, markings and fin shape. Char species have white leading edges.

Body Spots

Are they light or dark? Trout (like Athabasca rainbow trout) have dark spots, while char (like bull trout) have light spots.

Jaw

Look for jaw markings. Cutthroat trout have a red slash.

Pictured:
Westslope cutthroat

Alberta



Keep Fish Wet

Be ready to release your catch quickly and safely to give fish the best chance of survival.

1. **Minimize air exposure:** Keep the fish's mouth and gills fully submerged in the water as much as possible.
2. **Use wet gloves and a net:** Every time the fish comes in contact with a dry surface their protective mucus layer is removed.
3. **Limit handling time:** Consider using barbless hooks for quick removal and have your pliers or hook removal tool at the ready! Lifting the fish fully out of the water even for short durations to take a photo or remove the hook is harmful.

Learn more about these fish on mywildalberta.ca and facebook.com/MyWildAlberta.

Hunting, Fishing and Firearms

Hunters and anglers should always consult the current guides to Hunting and Fishing Regulations prior to heading out onto provincial Crown land. For more information, please refer to the annually-updated Alberta regulations website at albertaregulations.ca/huntingregs or albertaregulations.ca/fishingregs.

In most provincial parks and provincial recreation areas, discharging of firearms (including bows and slingshots) is strictly prohibited; firearms must be unloaded and taken down or encased. Hunting is permitted in designated wildland provincial parks, heritage rangelands and natural areas in accordance with provincial hunting regulations. Hunting may occur at a small number of provincial parks and provincial recreation areas but requires a firearms discharge permit. To find out where hunting and fishing is allowed, and other details, go to albertaparks.ca/hunting.

Although discharging a firearm is a permitted activity on public land, it is recommended that firearm use for sport-based target shooting or sighting your firearm, occur at authorized gun ranges. Personal safety, as well as the safety of others, should always be the first consideration when choosing a site to target shoot.

Know what you are shooting towards. Choose an area away from roads, trails and campsites, with a backdrop such as a hill or bank (see *Wildlife Act*, Sections 51 and 52). Some areas may prohibit recreational firearm use and are signed and mapped accordingly. Discharging a firearm is not permitted during the period commencing at a half hour after sunset and ending at a half hour before sunrise the following day (see *Wildlife Act*, Sections 28 and 53). Ensure all cartridges, clays, targets and waste are removed from the site. Leave the area better than you found it.

All firearm users must be aware of federal laws surrounding the acquisition, possession, transportation and use of weapons and ammunition. For further information, contact the Canadian Firearms Centre at 1-800-731-4000 or visit the centre's website at: rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/firearms.

Did You Know?



The Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association provides formal training in hunting and fishing education. For more information on their programs, visit aheia.com.

Did You Know?



There is an activity for everyone outdoors. For those that may experience mobility challenges, using OHVs to get to their favorite spots can be a great way to continue to enjoy public land.

Within parks, some provincial campgrounds offer accessible campsites. These are marked on Reserve.AlbertaParks.ca with a blue accessibility symbol or you can visit AlbertaParks.ca/Accessible-Camping for a full list.



KnowB4UGo

For fishing and hunting, it is important to know and properly identify wildlife to avoid harming species at risk. Boundaries of Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) and Public Land Use Zones (PLUZs) may overlap, and all or portions of WMUs may have vehicle access restrictions or timing restrictions.

Always stay on designated trails with motorized vehicles when fishing or hunting in a PLUZ.



Be Lawful

For information on using OHVs to access fishing, hunting or firearms areas, refer to the Guide's section on [Motorized Recreation](#).

Leaseholders must be contacted for recreational access to agricultural leased land, and can deny access for reasons outlined at: alberta.ca/AgCrownLandsRecreation.

Regulations that apply to hunting and fishing can be found in Alberta Regulations and Special Licence Draws at albertaregulations.ca.

Within WMUs or wildlife sanctuaries that overlap PLUZs, unless authorized it is unlawful to hunt or discharge firearms within 365 metres (400 yards) of the centreline of the road in a designated road corridor.

Did You Know?



Alberta's native trout thrive in cold, clean, clear and connected waters. Westslope cutthroat trout, bull trout and Athabasca rainbow trout populations are all threatened by habitat loss and degradation. Keeping your OHV's wheels out of water reduces the amount of sediment and pollutants in Alberta's waters, lessening the immediate risks to fish health.

You cannot discharge a firearm or bow and arrow from, or cause a projectile to pass along or across:

- A provincial highway (designation applies to all primary and secondary highways).
- A road that is paved, oiled, graded or regularly maintained (unless the road is held under any active disposition under the *Public Lands Act* or under an order under the *Surface Rights Act* or a person is hunting game birds with a shotgun under the authority of a licence).

If there is no identifiable ditch or fence to mark the outside edge of a roadway, then the roadway extends six metres (20 feet) from the edge of the traveled portion.

Securing targets to trees damages vegetation and is not permitted.



Be Respectful

Take all your garbage, including broken fishing lines or other equipment, with you when you leave.

Empty spent casings and shells can be a serious hazard for wildlife and can pollute soil and water.

Use responsible angling techniques: know your fish, know the regulations and always use appropriate fish-handling techniques.

Camping on Crown Land

Camping is a popular recreation activity for Albertans and visitors alike to experience what Alberta's diverse landscapes have to offer. There are many different options to camp on provincial Crown land. In Alberta Parks, provincial campgrounds provide unserviced, partially serviced and fully serviced campsites, and backcountry camping with limited or no services. On public land and in Public Land Recreation Areas (PLRAs) there is random and rustic camping with limited or no services.

Camping on Alberta Public Land

Random and Rustic Camping

Random camping, sometimes called rustic camping, can occur in Public Land Use Zones (PLUZs), Public Land Recreation Areas (PLRAs), and on vacant public land. Areas are often remote, with access from rural, gravel back roads or OHV trails. With limited or no services provided, campers need to be self-sufficient and able to manage their own garbage and human waste, bring or collect their own firewood from down and dead trees. With no garbage bins, you must clean-up after yourself

– pack it in and pack it out. Campers should also plan for limited cellphone coverage and know that safety issues are managed and enforced through conservation officers and law enforcement.

Camping spots cannot be reserved. These experiences are first come, first served, and have a maximum stay of 14 days. When selecting your spot to camp, be aware of location-specific regulations and consider how to reduce impacts to the environment and other users.

Did You Know?



A Public Lands Camping Pass is required to random camp along the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains, from Grande Prairie to Waterton Lakes National Park.

Funds from the pass will be reinvested in the region to improve recreation experiences and help conserve Alberta's beautiful landscapes.

Be prepared to provide proof of payment to enforcement officers, if requested.

See [page 6](#) for full details.





Photo: Robyn Rush



KnowB4UGo

- Do not camp where gas lines are present (look for signs).
- Camp at least 100 metres (330 feet) away from oil and gas well sites or facilities.
- Do not camp where you will block or restrict trail access or in an area where there is industrial land use.
- Camp in open areas away from game trails, berry bushes, clover patches, streams, rivers and lakeshores.
- For planning information visit alberta.ca/PublicLandsCamping.
- You must contact leaseholders before entering agricultural leased land. The leaseholder can deny access if you intend to camp. For full details visit: alberta.ca/AgriculturalCrownLand.



Be Lawful

- Before you camp on public land along the Eastern Slopes of the Rocky Mountains make sure you have your Public Lands Camping Pass. Funds will support recreation and help conserve and protect Alberta's public lands. Visit alberta.ca/CampingPass.
- Camp 30 metres (100 feet) away from waterbodies to avoid nutrients and sediments impacting water quality.

- Staying/camping longer than 14 days is prohibited. Ensure your camping facilities are temporary and portable, as camping too long on one site limits vegetation regeneration and impacts others' future enjoyment of that site.
- In a PLUZ, no camping or open fires are allowed within one kilometre of a PLRA or Provincial Recreation Area (PRA).
- No exploding targets or fireworks are permitted without a permit. For more information visit: wildfire.alberta.ca/prevention.
- Keep your campsite clean, take all garbage with you – leave nothing behind.



Be Respectful

- Camp or park on surfaces that are resistant to impact, to minimize damage to vegetation.
- Cook food and dispose of dishwater at least 100 metres (330 feet) from your sleeping area (not in the water).
- Ensure food and cooking equipment are safely stored in a vehicle or hanging out of reach, as food smells attract wildlife. Avoid disposing of dishwater in any waterbody as soap may harm fish and other aquatic species.

Questions about camping on public land?
Call AEP Outreach Services at 1-877-944-0313,
email aep.outreach-services@gov.ab.ca or
visit alberta.ca/AEPContactUs.

Camping in Alberta Parks

Front Country Camping (including group camping)

Provincial Parks and Provincial Recreation Areas (PRAs) offer a variety of front country camping amenities such as washrooms, showers, firewood, lake access and maintained trails. Provincial campground services can range from walk-in tenting campsites, to full-service RV sites with electricity and water services or comfort camping units. Parks staff, conservation officers, facility operators and volunteers ensure camping rules and etiquette are followed, and are responsible for maintenance and waste management.

Reservations can be made at over 90 campgrounds, while more than 150 campgrounds offer first-come, first-serve front country camping.



KnowB4UGo

- Make reservations at Reserve.AlbertaParks.ca up to 90 days in advance for individual front country and backcountry campsites, or 180 days in advance to book group and comfort camping.
- Plan ahead. Check for advisories such as fire bans, campground closures, road closures or blue-green algae alerts at www.albertaparks.ca/visit.



Be Lawful

- Regulations that apply to provincial parks are different than public land regulations. Visit albertaparks.ca/regulations for details.
- Vehicles parked in Kananaskis Country and the Bow Valley need a Kananaskis Conservation Pass. Find details at: alberta.ca/ConservationPass
- Pick up after pets. Pets must be kept on a leash no more than two meters in length at all times.
- Do not approach, feed or harass wildlife. It is illegal to feed wildlife in provincial parks and PRAs.

Backcountry Camping (designated & random)

Random backcountry camping is permitted in wildland provincial parks with some restrictions and recommendations. Campers access backcountry sites by hiking, cycling or riding horseback with all of their gear, often over a considerable distance. In some locations, limited services such as waste management is provided onsite, while more remote sites require campers to clean-up after themselves – pack in and pack out.

Most backcountry camping is on a first-come, first-served basis, but designated backcountry campsites in Kananaskis Country can be reserved. For more information visit: albertaparks.ca/backcountry.

- Campfires are permitted only in facilities provided. Never leave your campfire unattended.
- Alcohol is only permitted in campsites and designated day use areas.
- In Alberta Parks, the maximum stay is 16 consecutive nights.
- Follow maximum number of vehicles, equipment and people per site. Check albertaparks.ca/regulations for details.
- Use of fireworks is prohibited.



Be Respectful

- Quiet hours are from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Loud partying, stereos at high volume, excessive generator use and other rowdy behavior are not tolerated at any time.
- Camping permit owners are responsible for the actions of all camping party members as well as visitors to their campsite.

Got Questions? Check the Frequently Asked Questions at albertaparks.ca/FAQs or call Alberta Parks at 1-877-537-2757.



INTRODUCING THE KANANASKIS CONSERVATION PASS

Day \$15/vehicle | Year \$90/vehicle

When you park your vehicle at provincial park or public land sites in Kananaskis and the Bow Valley, you will need a conservation pass. Your pass helps make sure this unique part of Alberta will remain one of the most breathtaking places on the planet.

Learn more | alberta.ca/ConservationPass
Image credit: Travel Alberta - Paul Zizka

Alberta 

Campfires

Campfires need to be supervised at all times and extinguished before leaving the campsite. Soak it, stir it and soak it again, until coals are cold to the touch. Unmanaged campfires can easily become a source of wildfires. Before you head out, make sure you check the current fire advisory in the area.



KnowB4UGo

- Fires are not permitted when fire bans are in effect. To learn about the types and status of fire bans across Alberta, visit albertafirebans.ca.
- Find a local source for firewood and do not transport firewood to avoid spreading invasive species.
- Use existing campfire facilities, portable camping stoves or fire pits.
- Ensure you select your site and have the appropriate tools to safely enjoy your campfire. Learn more at alberta.ca/CampfireSafety.



Be Lawful

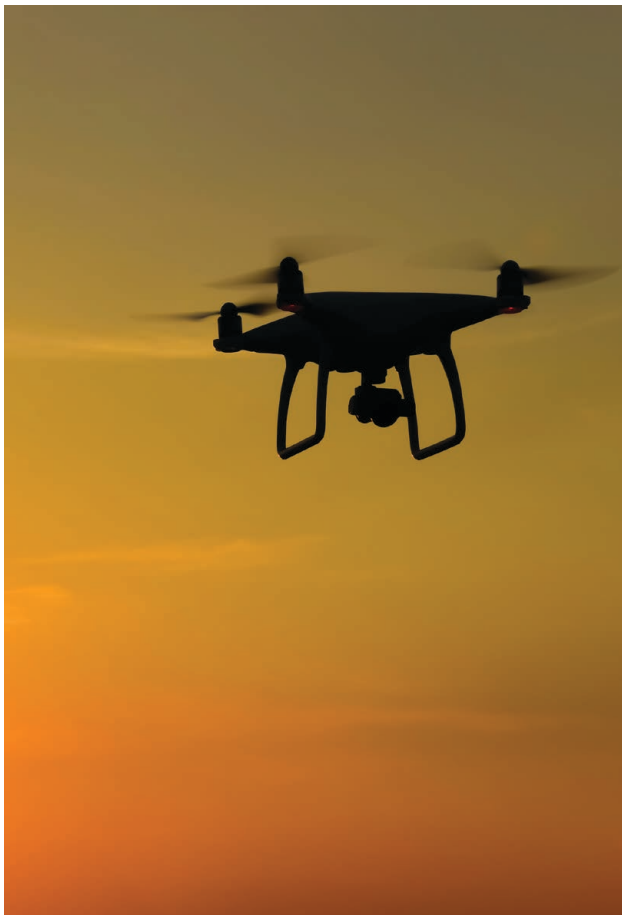
- In accordance with the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act*, campfires are permitted on provincial Crown land and within PLRAs for cooking and warming, but confined to facilities provided for containing fires. Refer to specific PLUZ information to ensure you are complying with the requirements of the area you are visiting.
- Open fires must be one kilometre from the boundary of a PLRA or PRA, while in some PLUZs, fires must be one kilometre from a roadway.
- Do not cut, chop or clear live forest growth unless you have a permit under the *Forests Act* from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. Trees and vegetation are important for wildlife habitat and soil quality.



Be Respectful

- To report a wildfire, call toll-free 310-FIRE (3473) or visit alberta.ca/firesmart.





Drones

Recreationists on provincial Crown land are becoming increasingly interested in flying drones, also referred to as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Remotely Piloted Aircrafts (RPAs). Canadian Aviation Regulations apply to RPAs as they are considered aircraft and are air space users. RPAs are not allowed to be flown recreationally in provincial parks and protected areas. Anyone flying RPAs on provincial Crown land should ensure they follow all standards for aircraft regarding wildlife harassment under Alberta's *Wildlife Act*.

For information on recreational use of RPA's, visit tc.canada.ca/aviation/drone-safety.

Did You Know?



Planning organized recreational group activities on provincial Crown land requires authorization. Activities that may require authorization include quad rallies, snowmobile rallies, and foot races. Authorizations are issued by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and allow group activities to occur in a specified area for a defined period of time.

To inquire about obtaining a provincial authorization, contact AEP at 310-3773 or alberta.ca/AEPContactUs



Group and Organized Activities

Group activities such as races or rallies require authorization from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). Getting people together for a group activity on provincial Crown land is a great way to enjoy being in nature together, fundraise, compete or conduct research. For more information about associated requirements, visit a regional office and talk to an AEP land manager or call 310-3773. In provincial parks and protected areas, permits are required to hold a special event, do guided activities or carry out research. For more information, albertaparks.ca/permit-portal.



— Nurture —
YOUR
CURIOSITY!

BOW HABITAT STATION

Calgary, Alberta

Alberta 

DISCOVERY CENTRE

FISH HATCHERY

TROUT POND

INTERPRETIVE WETLAND



Photo: Robert Mueller

3. Where to Recreate on Crown Land

The Government of Alberta recognizes Albertans' desire for recreation activities such as riding OHVs, horseback riding, hiking, biking, hunting, fishing and camping. Public Land Use Zones (PLUZs) accommodate and manage outdoor recreation and tourism experiences while also supporting long-term environmental protection and enabling sustainable resource development. This section includes information on permissible and non-permissible activities on different provincial Crown land designations. Permissible and non-permissible activities are determined by landscape features, with special consideration given to environmental impacts, habitat, and protecting species at risk. Most PLUZs are found in the southwest part of Alberta, also called the Eastern Slopes, as they are on the east side of the Rocky Mountains.

The Eastern Slopes of Alberta's Rocky Mountains cover an area of approximately 90,000 km², characterized by foothills and forest-covered mountains. The region includes headwaters, which are the upstream water sources for rivers that, among other things, supply drinking water to communities and provide habitat for a variety of species. The area, particularly along valleys, is home to diverse communities of plants and animals. Many animals, such as grizzly bears and golden eagles, use these areas as migratory pathways.

For Indigenous Peoples, the area is an important source of food and traditional medicine, and is used to perform ceremonies and preserve their way of life.

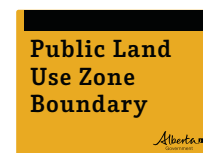
It is important to be informed and prepared when visiting provincial Crown land. There are conditions and regulations for both PLUZs and Public Land

Recreation Areas (PLRAs). Important information is found online, provided below and through on-site information kiosks and signage in some areas.

Public Land Use Zones

All visitors in a PLUZ must:

- Obey signs and posted notices.
- Obey any instructions provided by Government of Alberta staff.
- Leave the land in a clean and tidy condition.
- Use roads or designated trails only.
- Not camp or start an open fire within one kilometre of a PLRA or Provincial Recreation Area.



Public Land Recreation Areas

All visitors in a PLRA must:

- Keep pets in control on a leash.
- Receive authorization to place posters or signs.
- Not use explosives, fireworks or incendiary devices.
- Not set traps or discharge a firearm.
- Contain campfires, which are only permitted for warming and cooking.

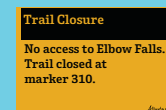
Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas

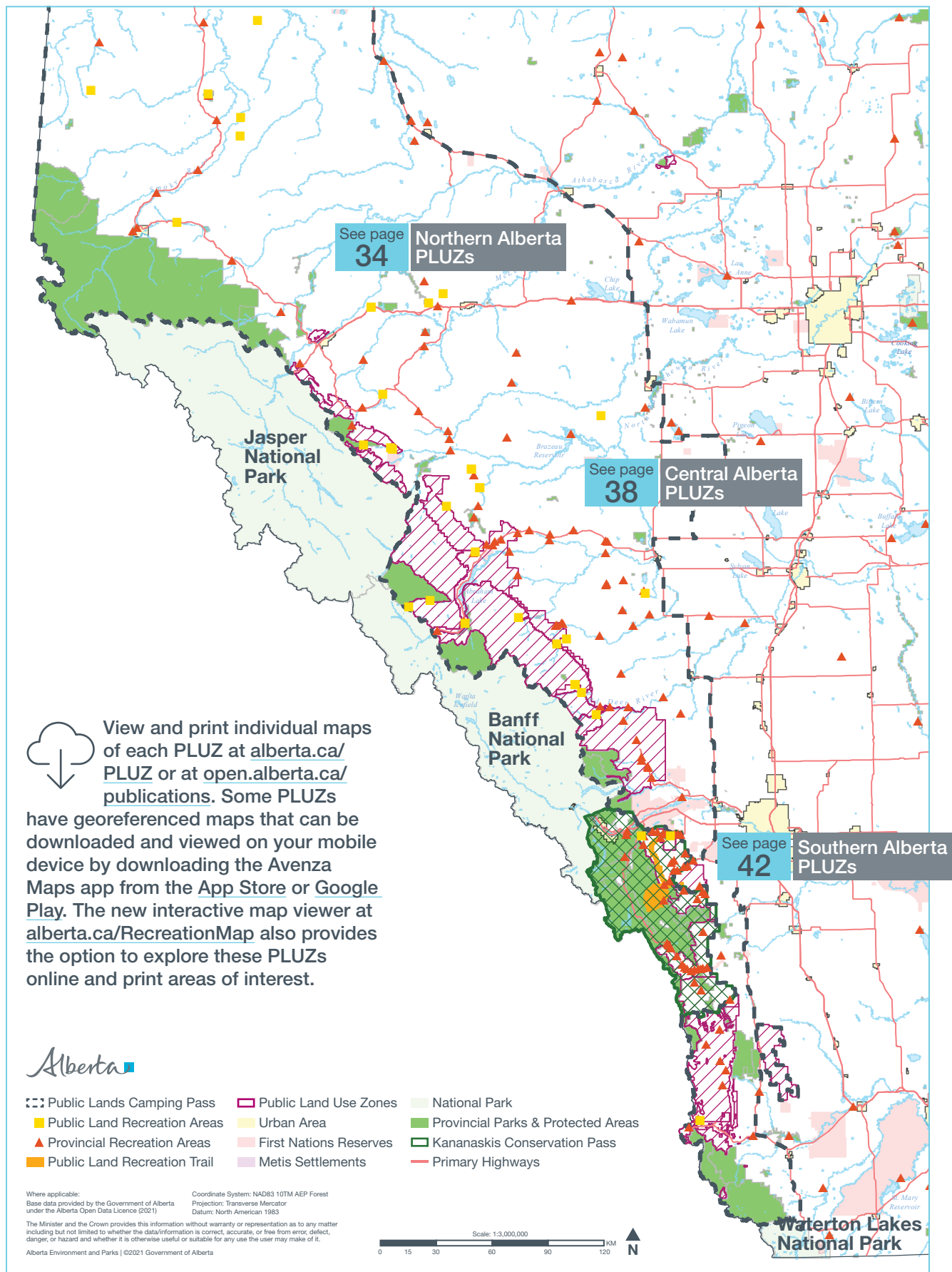
- All parks visitors must know the rules. Find out more at: albertaparks.ca/regulations.

Did You Know?



There are various styles of signs found on crown land. Below are some common types of signs found within PLUZs.







Northern Alberta Public Land Use Zones

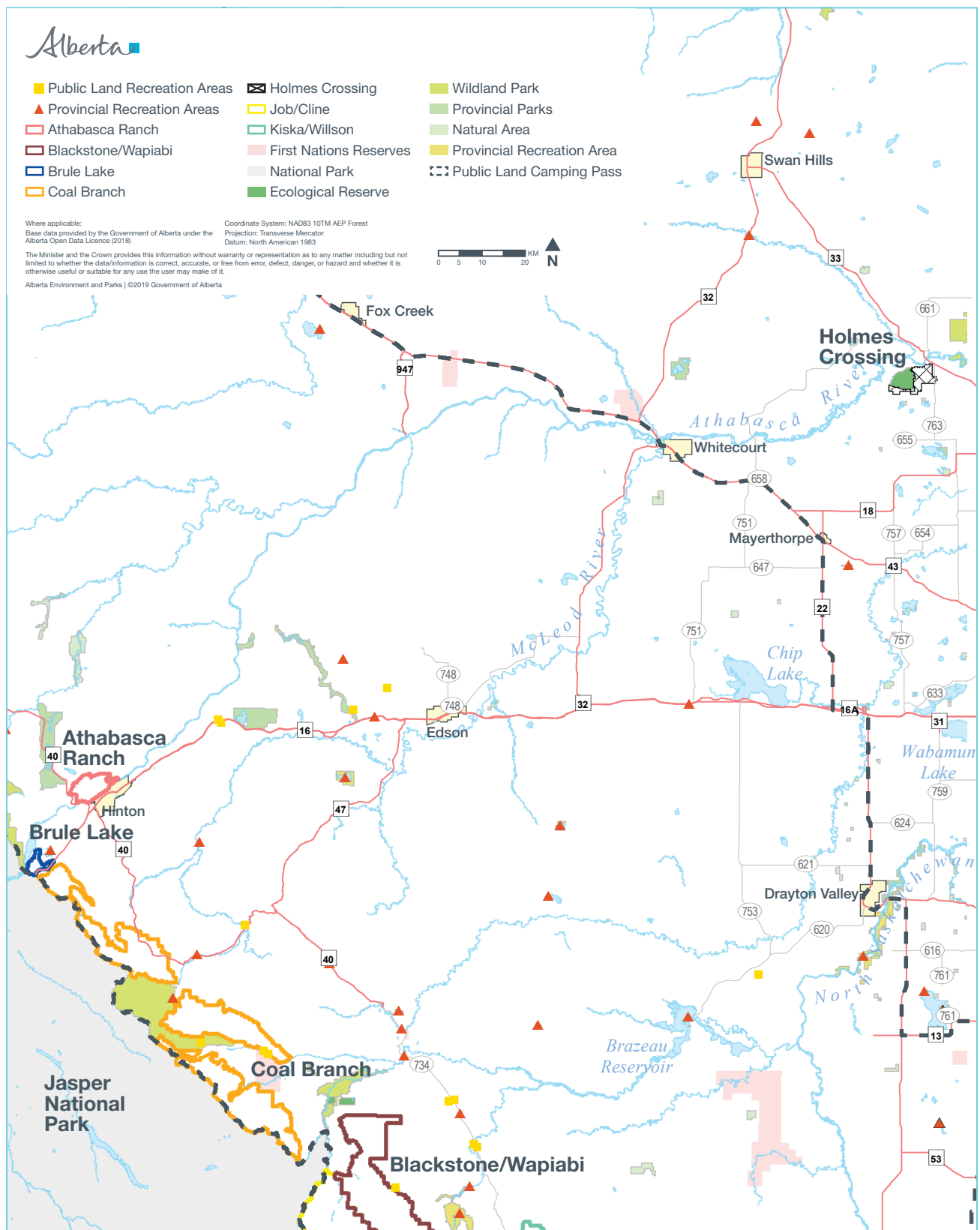
Upper Athabasca

The north portion of the Eastern Slopes is managed to protect the environment and headwaters while allowing responsible and sustainable recreational use. This expansive area is known for its rolling valleys, boreal forests, mountain views and sand dunes. The area provides excellent motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities, contains important wildlife habitat and forms part of the headwaters for the Athabasca River.





The region has very important and sensitive sub-alpine and alpine habitat of which is home to mountain goats, bighorn sheep, caribou, grizzlies, cougars, moose, elk and more. There is important song bird, owl, waterfowl and bat habitat in this area as well. Recently, a native bumblebee, *Bombus terricola*, which is designated as special concern in Canada was identified in the Grande Cache area.

Extensive backcountry hiking opportunities exist within the Willmore Wilderness Park and surrounding vacant Crown lands, in addition to equestrian and mountain biking trails, whitewater rafting and other water sports.

In addition to recreation this multiple use area includes forestry, agriculture, and oil and gas activities. Regulations determine where recreational activities can occur and under what conditions. It is your responsibility to become familiar with activities allowed in this area.



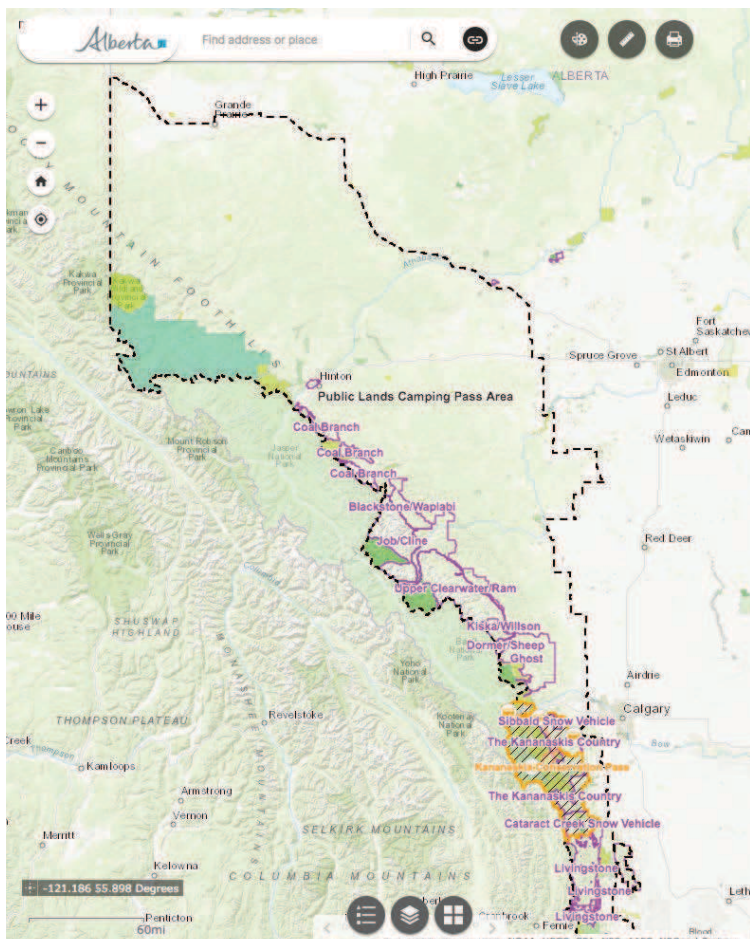
View and print individual maps of each PLUZ at alberta.ca/PLUZ or at open.alberta.ca/publications. Some PLUZs have georeferenced maps that can be downloaded and viewed on your mobile device by downloading the Avenza Maps app from the App Store or Google Play. The new interactive map viewer at alberta.ca/RecreationMap also provides the option to explore these PLUZs online and print areas of interest.

Northern Alberta Public Land Use Zones	Athabasca Ranch	Brule Lake	Coal Branch	Holmes Crossing
 Motorcycling	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Off-Highway Vehicle	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Side by Side OHV	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Truck or SUV	✓	✗	✗	✗
 Snowmobiling	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Boat (Non-Motorized)	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
 Hiking	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Bicycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Equestrian	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Cross-Country Skiing	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Camping	✓	✓	✓	✓

✗ Not permissible | ✓ Permissible | ✓ See location for specific location or time restrictions | N/A No shore access therefore not applicable.

Feed: Non-commercial equestrian users are allowed to graze their horses without a permit.

For Hunting and Fishing regulations in these locations, visit albertaregulations.ca.



Plan your adventure using the new interactive online map

Turn on and off different layers like area boundaries, kiosks and trails. Zoom in and click on Public Land Use Zones (PLUZs) and trails for permitted activities, timing restrictions and links to downloadable PLUZ maps.

alberta.ca/RecreationMap

Alberta

THANK YOU

We appreciate your feedback on past public engagements. To participate in other engagements visit:

alberta.ca/Engagement

Alberta



Central Alberta Public Land Use Zones

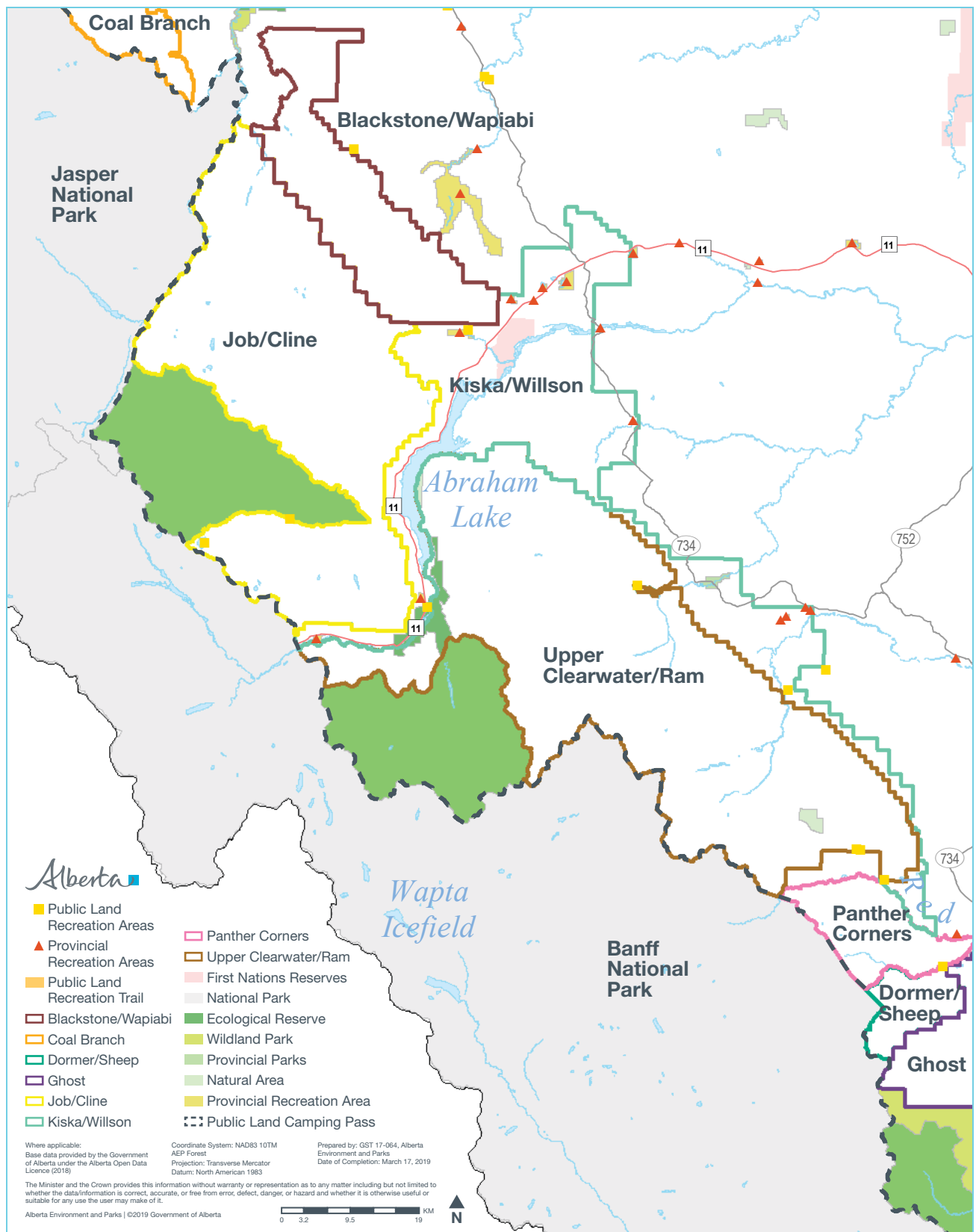
North Saskatchewan - Bighorn Backcountry

The central portion of the Eastern Slopes is managed to protect the environment and headwaters while allowing responsible and sustainable recreational use. The area includes more than 5,000 km² of public lands east of Banff and Jasper National Parks.

It hosts a large variety of recreational activities including camping, OHV and snow vehicle use, hiking, fishing, hunting, equestrian and cycling.

Importantly, the area also contains headwaters, which are upstream water sources for rivers that supply, among other things, drinking water for many communities in the Edmonton and Red Deer areas, and places downstream.

In addition to recreation this multiple use area includes forestry, agriculture, and oil and gas activities. Regulations determine where recreational activities can occur and under what conditions. It is your responsibility to become familiar with activities allowed in this area. For more information, visit: alberta.ca/BighornBackcountry.



View and print individual maps of each PLUZ at alberta.ca/PLUZ or at open.alberta.ca/publications. Some PLUZs have georeferenced maps that can be downloaded and viewed on your mobile device by downloading the Avenza Maps app from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#). The new interactive map viewer at alberta.ca/RecreationMap also provides the option to explore these PLUZs online and print areas of interest.

Central Alberta Public Land Use Zones	Blackstone/ Wapiabi	Dorner/ Sheep	Job/Cline	Kiska/ Willson	Panther Corners	Upper Clearwater/ Ram
 Motorcycling	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
 Off-Highway Vehicle	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
 Side by Side OHV	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
 Truck or SUV	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
 Snowmobiling	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
 Boat (Non-Motorized)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Hiking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Bicycling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Equestrian	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Cross-Country Skiing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Camping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✗ Not permissible | ✓ Permissible | ✓ See location for specific location or time restrictions | N/A No shore access therefore not applicable. Feed: Non-commercial equestrian users are allowed to graze their horses without a permit. Park: Nearby, partly-serviced camping is available through Alberta Parks. For Hunting and Fishing regulations in these locations, visit albertaregulations.ca.

Be BearSmart

- Carry bear spray and know how to use it.
- Keep your food and garbage away from bears.
- Stay in groups.

alberta.ca/BearSmart



Alberta

The official source for
information and updates
about recreating on
Alberta's Crown land.

Facebook.com/RespectTheLand

Alberta



Southern Alberta Public Land Use Zones

South Saskatchewan

The south Eastern Slopes are managed to protect the environment and headwaters while allowing responsible and sustainable recreational use. The area offers stunning vistas and diverse wildlife, as well as many recreation opportunities. The area covers the southern portion of the Foothills and Rocky Mountains, to the Waterton National Park northern boundaries. The western boundary borders Banff National Park and British Columbia.

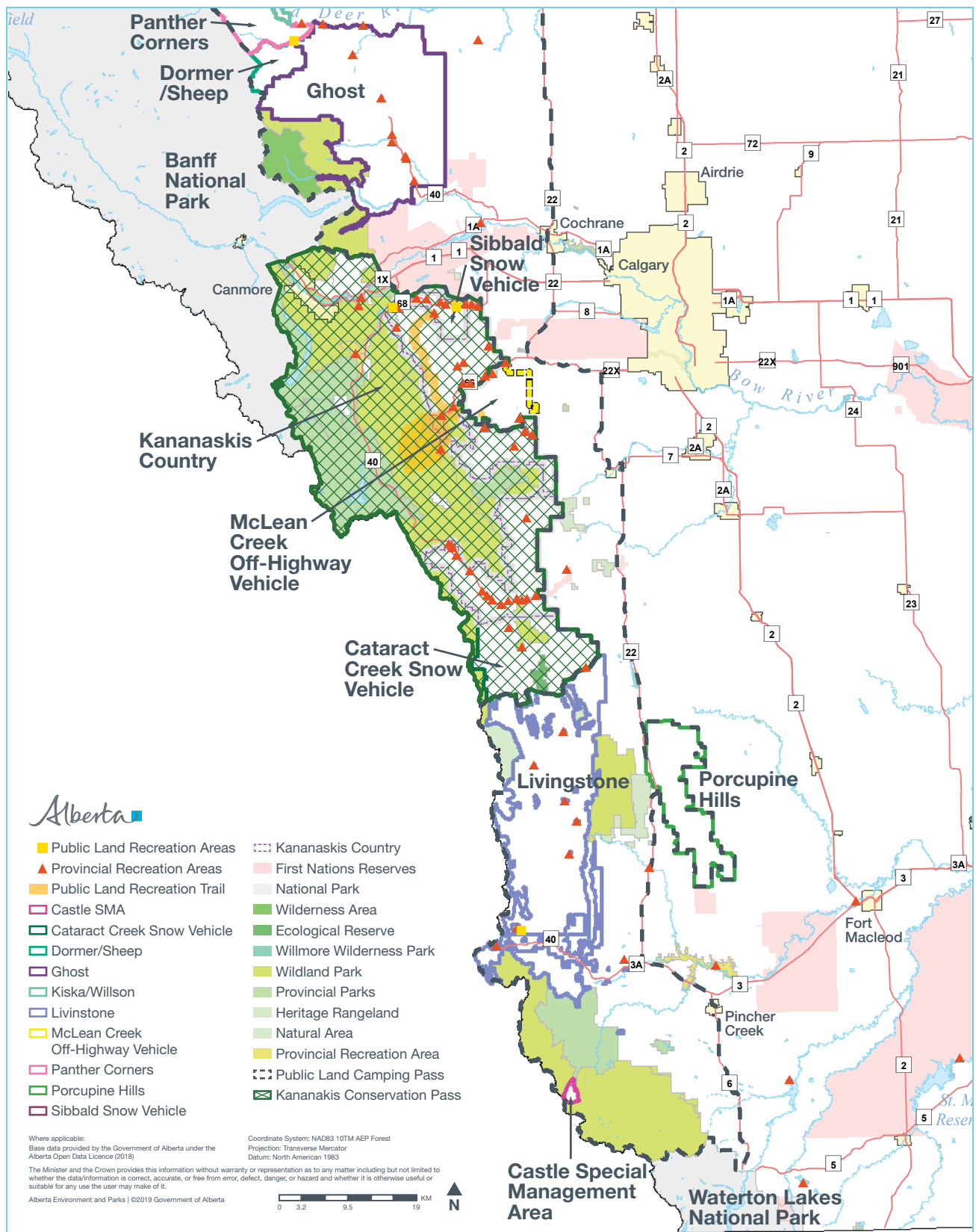
The region contains headwaters, that provide drinking water for many residents in southern Alberta, including Calgary and Lethbridge. This area is also home to many sensitive flora and fauna, including limber and white bark pine, rough fescue, grizzly bear, bighorn sheep, bull trout, and westslope cutthroat trout. Responsible recreation is vital to the sustainability of this area.

Visitors will find a variety of recreation opportunities when visiting this region, including mountain bike trails on Moose Mountain and throughout the Crowsnest Pass, whitewater rafting on the Kananaskis River, and cross-country skiing on the trails of West Bragg Creek and Allison-Chinook.

These areas are managed for multiple uses with a priority to protect the environment. In addition to recreation this multiple use area includes forestry, agriculture, and oil and gas activities. Regulations determine where the various activities can occur and under what conditions. It is your responsibility to become familiar with where your recreation activities are allowed in this area.

Motorized vehicle enthusiasts can enjoy off-highway vehicle (OHV) and snow vehicle use on designated trails. The areas are designated to provide off road enthusiasts with access throughout the area while minimizing conflicts with industry activities and environmental impacts.

Much of the region's Crown land does not have cellular service, so it is important to let others know where you will be and when to expect your return. Be sure to review the KnowB4UGo information, and follow all posted maps, signs and notices.



View and print individual maps of each PLUZ at alberta.ca/PLUZ or at open.alberta.ca/publications. Some PLUZs have georeferenced maps that can be downloaded and viewed on your mobile device by downloading the Avenza Maps app from the App Store or Google Play. The new interactive map viewer at alberta.ca/RecreationMap also provides the option to explore these PLUZs online and print areas of interest.

Southern Alberta Public Land Use Zones	Cataract Creek Snow Vehicle	Ghost	Kananaskis	Livingstone	McLean Creek Off-Highway Vehicle	Porcupine Hills	Sibbald
 Motorcycling	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Off-Highway Vehicle	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Side by Side OHV	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Truck or SUV	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
 Snowmobiling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Boat (Non-Motorized)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Hiking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Bicycling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Equestrian	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Cross-Country Skiing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Camping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✗ Not permissible | ✓ Permissible | ✓ See location for specific location or time restrictions | N/A No shore access therefore not applicable. **Feed:** Non-commercial equestrian users are allowed to graze their horses without a permit. **Park:** Nearby, partly-serviced camping is available through Alberta Parks. For Hunting and Fishing regulations in these locations, visit albertaregulations.ca. **Note:** Allison Chinook and Willow Creek have been removed as these locations are included within the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone Public Land Use Zones.

REPORT LAND ABUSE

www.reportapoacher.com

1-800-642-3800



Alberta 

Report wildfires to 310-FIRE

Report wildfires in the
forested areas of the
province by calling 310-FIRE.

1-866-FYI-FIRE
wildfire.alberta.ca

Alberta 



Check hot spots

Off-highway vehicles (OHVs) include quads, ATVs and any other vehicle intended for off-road use. Smouldering debris falling from these vehicles can start a wildfire. You can reduce the risk by stopping often to check hot spots and remove built up debris. Hot spots include the exhaust and muffler, under the seat, wheel wells and the engine and manifold. Do your part to prevent wildfires.

1-866-FYI-FIRE
wildfire.alberta.ca

Alberta 



4. Education and Enforcement on Crown Land

Education is one of the key tools used in recreation management on provincial Crown land. The goal of AEP's recreation education is to inform recreationists about what is expected, important and of interest when they are recreating on provincial Crown land, so they become good stewards who respect not only the land, but the air, water and biodiversity as well.

Being aware of the provincial rules and regulations is important, but understanding the rationale for these regulations and laws is even more significant. Education helps increase the understanding about why regulations exist and can eventually shift attitudes and change actions into positive behaviours.

Education happens through a variety of means; digitally through our online platforms, in-person at community recreation events and long weekend patrols, shared by partners and stakeholder groups with their members, or organically when friends and family members raise awareness with others. Everyone can play a part in raising awareness about responsible recreation and being a good steward of the land.

Responsible recreation, stewardship actions and compliance with regulations can ultimately lead to the following benefits, to both the environment and Albertans:

- Clean air
- Soil free from contamination and compaction that limits plant growth
- Intact forests and protection of native plants
- Respect for the rights of others and Indigenous Peoples
- Positive and sustainable recreation experiences for all
- Invasive species not spreading
- Protected headwaters and good water quality
- Healthy riparian areas and protection of fish habitat
- Habitat for wildlife and biodiversity
- Human-wildlife safety
- Survival and recovery of species at risk
- Long-term sustainability of provincial Crown lands

Please share our recreation education messaging:

Limit Your Stay to 14 Days:

- It's the law - When random camping on public land, limit your stay to 14 days at one camp site to allow others the chance to camp and limit stress on vegetation, soil, water and wildlife.
- Camp at least 30 metres (100 feet) away from the shores of waterbodies on public land.
- Only use down and dead trees for campfires.

Clean Drain Dry:

- Aquatic Invasive Species and fish diseases can be carried on gear, including your boat, waders and fishing gear. Always clean mud and plants from gear, drain all standing water, and dry between trips to protect Alberta's water.

Leave Nothing Behind – Garbage:

- Leave your spot spotless. Pack it in & pack it out.
- Protect water and soil from contaminants and ensure fish and wildlife have a garbage-free habitat.
- Dispose of human waste properly.

BearSmart – Recreation and Wildlife:

- Be aware around wildlife so both humans and wildlife stay safe.
- Pack away your food and garbage, control your pets at all times and keep bear spray easily accessible.

Soak It. Stir It. Soak it Again:

- Keep fires under control and don't let your campfire cause a wildfire.

Use Respect:

- Be aware the owner / leaseholder needs to be contacted before recreating on private or agricultural leased land.

KnowB4UGo:

- Know the rules and regulations that apply.
- Plan ahead and know your route, terrain, ground and weather conditions.
- Be aware of trail and area closures so you can stay on designated trails and reduce your impact.

Report It:

- If you see anyone damaging or abusing Alberta's Crown land, phone 1-800-642-3800 (RAP line) or report it online at alberta.ca/ReportAPoacher.

Keep Wheels out of Water:

- Use bridges and designated water crossings and wash vehicles away from waterbodies to protect fish habitat, water quality and our drinking water.

Respect the Land:

- Think, plan and act with the environment in mind. Stewardship of the environment is a shared responsibility.
- Follow us to learn more: www.facebook.com/RespectTheLand.

Rules and Regulations on Crown Land

There are many ways to familiarize yourself with the provisions of regulations and statutes. Legislation is also available from Alberta Queen's Printer (qp.alberta.ca). Useful links include:

- Provincial Crown Land Use: refer to [Public Lands Act](#), [Public Lands Administration Regulation](#), and [Parks legislation](#)
- Campfires: refer to [Forest and Prairie Protection Act](#)
- Agricultural Public Land Access: refer to [Recreational Access Regulation](#)
- Off-highway vehicles (OHV): refer to [Traffic Safety Act](#) (Part 6) which establishes the legislative requirements for operating OHVs in Alberta. The Off-Highway Vehicle Regulation prescribes the operational requirements for off-highway vehicles in Alberta.
- Waste on Public Land: refer to [Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act](#)
- Fisheries: [Fisheries \(Alberta\) Act](#), [Fisheries \(ministerial\) Regulation](#), and [General Fisheries \(Alberta\) Regulation](#)

- Forestry: [Forests Act](#) and [Timber Management Regulation](#)
- Human-wildlife conflict: [Wildlife Act](#)

As a recreationist, it is important to become familiar with the laws under the [Public Lands Administration Regulation \(PLAR\)](#) and comply with:

- Orders, instructions and directions from Government of Alberta staff (officer).
- Instructions, prohibitions, and directions written in posted signs and notices.
- Actions that, in the opinion of the officer, are not dangerous to life or property, or detrimental to the management or use of any road, trail or route.

When you visit public land, remember to:

- Keep the land and amenities in a condition satisfactory to an officer.
- Remove all garbage for disposal at home or at an approved garbage disposal facility. Restore the land to a clean and tidy condition.



- Avoid cutting, removing or damaging any living trees or vegetation.
- Dispose of harmful materials (such as sediment, pollution, greywater or sewage) properly, not into water or onto ice of any watercourse or water body.
- Follow posted fire bans and closures.

Enforcement on Provincial Crown Land

Knowing what activities are allowed and what are not permitted when visiting public land is important. Highly specialized government staff are responsible for enforcing various provincial Acts and regulations on Alberta's provincial Crown land. This work is a collaborative effort involving all levels of government. Specific staff roles include:

Agriculture and Forestry

- **Wildfire Ranger:** Responsible for wildfire prevention, operations, detection and forest management programs.
- **Forest Officers:** Responsible for wildfire prevention, enforcement of fire bans, restrictions, permit and control orders.

Alberta Environment and Parks

- **Land Officers:** Responsible for provincial Crown land dispositions and the commercial side of public land use administered by Alberta Environment and Parks.
- **Environmental Protection Officers:** Responsible for enforcing rules regarding illegal dumping and pollution, and unlawful commercial activities on provincial Crown land.

- **Conservation Officers:** Fully equipped peace officers in AEP's Environmental Enforcement Branch with the authority and mandate to enforce all conservation laws, as well as other provincial and federal legislation (including Canada's Criminal Code). Conservation Officers are primarily focused on enforcement work, public safety and other key priorities on provincial Crown lands.

Justice and Solicitor General

- **Fish and Wildlife Officers:** Responsible for enforcing conservation laws and other provincial/federal regulations (such as Canada's Criminal Code and the *Controlled Drugs and Substance Act*). Part of the Sheriffs Branch – Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Services.
- **Sheriffs:** Responsible for road enforcement (i.e. highways) with minimal appointment for Crown land.

Other Enforcement Partners

- **Community Peace Officers:** May hold appointments to enforce Crown land legislation and traffic safety on some Crown land.

These staff and the RCMP work together to ensure public safety and to help protect our environment on provincial Crown land. Visitors to Crown land may come across government staff (officers) on patrols. During peak recreational periods, such as the spring and summer long weekends, additional government staff are brought in to support education and enforcement efforts with local search and rescue groups and the RCMP.

Did You Know?



The regulations in provincial parks and protected areas are different from those for provincial Crown land. For details about regulations in parks and protected areas, go to albertaparks.ca/regulations.

Specified Penalties and Tickets

One of the enforcement tools the province has is the ability to issue on-the-spot tickets for provincial Crown land offences. Enforcement officers have the discretion to issue tickets and/or require a court appearance for contravention of the regulations.

Some offences incur specific fine amounts, called a “specified penalty.” Specified penalty amounts for offences under the PLAR range from \$50 to \$1,200 depending upon the nature of the violation. Violations may include traveling off an OHV trail in a PLUZ, occupying a random camping site on public land for longer than 14 days, or disobeying a sign and/or notice. A violation may result in a court appearance. For example, operating a motorized vehicle in a natural waterway has a specified penalty amount, but if there is loss or damage to the river bed and shore, a court appearance may be issued and can result in a fine of up to \$100,000. Similar charges can also be laid under Alberta's *Water Act*. Other tools that enforcement officers may use are written warnings or requiring the person(s) responsible to repair any damage or loss.

Did You Know?



Registration and insurance is required for OHVs on provincial Crown land in Alberta. Alberta's *Traffic Safety Act* defines an OHV as: amphibious crafts, dune buggies, off-road motorcycles, quads and trikes. To register a vehicle, or for more information on out-of-province requirements, visit alberta.ca/RegisterVehicle. A CSA compliant helmet is also required when using an OHV for recreational use. For more information on operating an OHV on provincial Crown land, refer to [Motorized Recreation](#) section of this Guide.



Did You Know?



Laws are enforceable on provincial Crown lands and in the backcountry. This includes laws around impaired driving. For more information on the consequences and laws, visit alberta.ca/ImpairedDriving.

Activity	Rationale	Legislation
Abandoned Campfires: If you leave campfires unattended.	Campfire must be attended and properly put out. Soak stir it and soak it again to reduce wildfire risk.	<i>Forest and Prairie Protection Act</i>
Illegal Riding (Non-Compliant): If you ride on roads without proper insurance, proper muffler, spark arrestor or an approved helmet.	Ensuring a vehicle is compliant and on designated trails ensures your safety, and the safety of other users, as well as limits the impact on the environment and reducing wildfire risk.	<i>Alberta Traffic Safety Act</i>
Illegal Trails: If you operate an OHV in an area/trail that is not designated for that use in a PLUZ.	Staying on designated trails reduces rutting and soil compaction, which prevents erosion and changes to water runoff and vegetation.	Public Lands Administration Regulation
Wheels in Water: If you enter or occupy the bed and shore of a natural waterbody (which includes driving an OHV through a stream) without authority or right to do so.	Keeping wheels out of waterways protects aquatic habitat and the sources (e.g., headwaters and rivers) of our drinking water.	<i>Public Lands Act</i> Public Lands Administration Regulation
Equestrian Tethering Near Water: If you tether and graze your horse(s) within 100 metres of lakes or streams.	Tethering and grazing of horses away from water prevents water contamination and erosion of shorelines caused by trampling and overgrazing.	Public Lands Administration Regulation
Staying More Than 14 Days: If you exceed 14 days random camping in one spot on public land.	Limiting your stay prevents soil compaction and contamination, allowing for healthy vegetation growth.	Public Lands Administration Regulation
Garbage Dumping: If you leave garbage behind or dump it.	Taking garbage with you reduces soil and water contamination.	Public Lands Administration Regulation
Posting of Non-Authorized Signs: If you place a bill/poster/sign without authorization.	Signage can damage vegetation and may interfere with the safety and enjoyment of other users.	Public Lands Administration Regulation

For more information on specified penalties and ticket amounts, visit alberta.ca/PublicLandAccess.

For more information on compliance statistics and reporting, visit alberta.ca/ComplianceAssuranceProgram

Contact for Concerns

You can play a role in protecting fish and wildlife resources and our natural environment by observing and reporting harmful and illegal activity around you.

To report what occurred or is occurring, include the date, time, location, vehicle and licence plate number (if possible), description of the person or people causing the damage, your name and phone number.

When reporting an incident:

- You do not have to provide your personal information.
- Any personal information you provide is kept confidential.
- If possible, provide photos (you could be eligible for a reward for providing information on violations of Alberta's fish or wildlife laws—reward applied only to infractions).

Enforcement Officers want to know about these kinds of incidents:

- Suspicious hunting or fishing activity
- Wildlife emergencies (e.g., a bear encounter)
 - For a problem with an animal that is not an emergency, call your nearest Fish and Wildlife office during regular business hours or dial Report A Poacher. For office contact information visit: alberta.ca/FishAndWildlife.
- Serious provincial Crown land abuses
 - Driving a vehicle in the bed or shore of a natural water body.
 - Driving up and down a stream.
 - Not using a nearby established crossing, bridge or ford to cross a natural water body.
 - Creating tire ruts.
 - Taking a vehicle off trail in sensitive high alpine areas.

- Blocking existing trails.
- Clearing a new trail or access.
- Clearing live trees and other plants to create a camping spot.
- Building or inhabiting an unauthorized structure on public provincial Crown land.
- Leaving garbage behind.
- Abandoning vehicles or dumping household items such as refrigerators and sofas.
- Entering closed areas.
- If you see someone damaging provincial Crown land or poaching:
 - call Report a Poacher/Report Land Abuse at 1-800-642-3800 or submit a report online at alberta.ca/ReportAPoacher.
- If you see damage to provincial Crown land after the fact:
 - contact the Environmental Hotline 1-800-222-6514 and the information will be sent to an on-call response officer to attend within 24 hours.





LIMIT YOUR STAY TO 14 DAYS.

Albertans have been recreating on provincial Crown lands more than ever before. To ensure more Albertans have the opportunity to enjoy great camping spots, do not camp in one place on public land for longer than 14 days. Respect the land by abiding by this law and help reduce stress on vegetation, soil and wildlife.

alberta.ca/PublicLandsCamping

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A man and a young child are seen from behind, sitting on a wooden dock and fishing. The man is wearing a blue and white checkered shirt, and the child is wearing a light blue polo shirt. They are holding fishing rods that extend into a body of water under a clear blue sky.

CLEAN + DRAIN + DRY YOUR GEAR

Help stop the introduction of aquatic invasive species and diseases. Whether you're travelling around Alberta or out of province, be sure to CLEAN, DRAIN and DRY everything that's been in contact with the water before you come home – including your boat, waders and fishing gear.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON INVASIVE SPECIES, CALL:

1-855-336-BOAT (2628)

alberta.ca/CleanDrainDry

Alberta 

Stay Connected

Stewardship starts with you. Maintaining healthy landscapes and habitats will ensure provincial Crown land is able to support a range of recreational pursuits enjoyed by all visitors now and in the future. There are many ways you can be a steward of this valuable resource.

Start by learning ways to recreate with minimal impact to land and water. Find out actions you can take and be part of the community on [Respect the Land Facebook](#) page.

Recreationists can access information that will make their experiences positive. In addition to this guide, recreationists can also access current site-specific information by visiting alberta.ca/public-land-use.aspx, or by referring to information provided at kiosks in the area they're going to. If you would like responsible recreation resources or more information on where to recreate on Crown land, please contact Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) Outreach Services by calling **310-3773**.

If you are interested in stewardship volunteer opportunities on provincial Crown land, there are a variety of volunteer organizations throughout the province. Volunteers often play an important role in stewarding Alberta's Crown land through activities such as bridge and trail maintenance, habitat restoration and citizen science initiatives. If you are interested in volunteering with AEP, or connecting with a local recreation stewardship group, please contact your local AEP office. Find your local AEP office contact information by visiting alberta.ca/LandManagement.



Accessing Agricultural Leased Land

Before entering leased land, you must contact the leaseholder.

Detailed maps, leaseholder contact information and access conditions for leased land are found on the Recreational Access Mapping Tool: maps.alberta.ca/RecAccess/

When on agricultural Crown land, be courteous and remember to:

- Pack out litter and do not damage land or property
- Park vehicles so they do not block lease access
- Leave gates as they were found
- Ask the leaseholder's permission before lighting a campfire

Failing to follow these regulations can be costly, with penalties up to \$500.

Leaseholders can restrict or deny this access if:

- You wish to camp
- You are not on foot
- Livestock are present in the field
- A crop has not yet been harvested
- You wish to discharge a firearm or use explosives near livestock
- A fire ban is in effect
- A recreational management plan or government condition restricts use

Access to Provincial Grazing Reserves

Recreationists are welcome on grazing reserves, although there may be seasonal restrictions.

For more information visit:
alberta.ca/AgCrownLandsRecreation
or call 1-866-279-0023.

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Photo: Robert Mueller

5. Glossary and Acronyms

Backcountry: Area of land with limited to no recreation infrastructure, and limited managerial presence (park attendants, trail signage, etc.). Affords visitors the opportunity to experience solitude, isolation from human civilization, high personal risk, and challenge.

Boat Launch: A temporary or permanent structure that provides the means to access a waterbody by boat. Also known as: slipway, dock or launchway.

Crown Land: Provincial Crown Land is administered and managed by the provincial government. It includes public lands, parks and protected areas.

Day Use: Areas where infrastructure, services and amenities are designed to facilitate use of an area for single day activities and does not permit overnight use.

Disposition: A formal agreement between the Government of Alberta and a proponent (individual or company), giving rights to lands, resources or both.

Enforcement: The act of compelling observance of or compliance with a law, rule or obligation.

Ecological Reserves (ER): Established under the *Provincial Parks Act*. ERs are managed to conserve natural heritage in an undisturbed state for scientific research or education.

Green Area: Provincial Crown land managed for timber production, watershed, wildlife, fisheries, recreation and other uses. Agricultural use is limited to grazing where it is compatible with other uses.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV): A non-highway motorized vehicle used for cross-country travel on land or water, but does not include snow vehicles or boats. Includes quads, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), side-by-sides, four-wheel drive off-road vehicles (4x4 trucks), and motorcycles, whether electric or gas powered.

Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR): The Regulation that allows government to better manage our increasingly busy landscape to ensure the activities happening on provincial Crown land are sustainable. It does not apply to private land. The Regulation came into effect in 2011 and has since been amended. Access to agricultural public land is not regulated under PLAR, but is regulated under the Recreational Access Regulation.

Public Land Recreation Areas (PLRAs): PLRAs are areas of public Crown land declared to be a public land recreation area and described in Schedule 5 of the Public Lands Administration Regulation. Generally, these are small areas designated to manage high intensity recreational use and/or provide limited amenities for camping, staging and information sharing (e.g. kiosks, interpretive signage, regulatory signage, etc.). They are most often found as an access point to vacant public land or within an existing or proposed Public Land Use Zone.

Public Land Recreation Trails (PLRTs): A trail on public provincial Crown land designated under the Public Lands Administration Regulation for a recreational use.

Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ): A PLUZ is designated under the Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR) with a specified management intent. It may have additional regulations to support implementation of the management intent.

Lands are designated under the PLAR (187-2011) to accommodate and manage recreational uses while affording protection to sensitive areas, watercourses and waterbodies and maintaining key wildlife habitat.

Within a PLUZ, trails can be designated for specific recreational activities and areas can be managed with restricted access for conservation.

Provincial Recreation Areas (PRAs): Established under the *Provincial Parks Act*. PRAs are managed to support outdoor recreation and tourism as the primary intent. They often provide access to lakes, rivers, reservoirs and adjacent Crown land. PRAs support a range of outdoor activities in natural, modified and man-made settings.

Provincial Parks (PP): Established under the *Provincial Parks Act*. PPs are managed to conserve significant natural heritage; support outdoor recreation, heritage tourism and natural history appreciation activities compatible with environmental protection.

Recreational Purpose: means a use or activity, including without limitation the following, which is undertaken for a purpose other than a commercial purpose:

- Hunting as defined in the *Wildlife Act*
- Camping
- Fishing
- Boating
- Nature study, including viewing, drawing and photography
- Staging for air travel including hang-gliding and hot-air ballooning, but not including air travel by aerodromes within the meaning of the *Aeronautics Act* (Canada)
- Human-powered travel, including hiking, swimming, underwater diving, snorkelling, skiing, snowshoeing, skating and sliding
- Animal-powered travel, including dog-sledding, horseback riding, carting and tracking
- Use of any conveyance
- Snowmobile (Snow Vehicle): A motor vehicle, whether electric or gas powered, designed and equipped to be driven exclusively or chiefly on snow, ice or both.

Staging Area: An area designated to support recreational activities. These areas may provide variable levels of service and amenities including washroom facilities, information signage, parking, boat launches, garbage or other amenities.

Trail: A travel way that is passable by at least one or more of the following: foot traffic, livestock, watercraft, bicycles, in-line skates, wheelchairs,

cross-country skis, and off road (off-highway) recreation vehicles such as motorcycles, snowmobiles, ATVs and four-wheel drive vehicles.

Watercourse: The bed and shore of a river, stream, lake, creek, lagoon, swamp, marsh or other natural body of water, whether it contains or conveys water continuously or intermittently.

Watershed: The area of land that catches precipitation and drains into a larger body of water such as a marsh, stream, river, or lake. A watershed is often made up of a number of sub-watersheds that contribute to its overall drainage.

Wilderness Areas: Established under the *Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas and Heritage Rangelands Act*. Wilderness areas preserve and protect natural heritage while providing opportunities for non-consumptive, nature-based outdoor recreation.

Wildland Provincial Parks (WPP): Established under the *Provincial Parks Act*. WPPs are managed to conserve natural heritage and provide opportunities for compatible backcountry recreation. Remote wilderness, hunting, motorized access may be permitted.

Wildlife Management Units (WMUs): A geographical area prescribed in the Hunting Regulations (A.R 1993-147). The Province of Alberta is divided into a series of Wildlife Management Units (WMU) and wildlife within the boundaries of each WMU is managed by the Ministry of Environment and Parks (AEP) according to the regulations established in Alberta's *Wildlife Act*.





Soak it. Stir it. Soak it again.

Do your part to prevent wildfires. Last year 88% of wildfires were human-caused. Remember to fully extinguish your campfire and never leave it unattended. Soak it, stir it, and then soak it again.

1-866-FYI-FIRE
wildfire.alberta.ca

Alberta

A photograph of two wildlife officers in uniform sitting on a grassy hillside, looking through binoculars. In the background, a river flows through a valley with a small town visible in the distance.

REPORT A POACHER

www.reportapoacher.com

1-800-642-3800

Alberta Fish and Wildlife
officers work to conserve and
protect wildlife, fish, and
their habitats.

Call or report online 24/7.

Alberta Conservation Association in partnership with Government of Alberta

A logo featuring a stylized fish with a target symbol (crosshairs) over its body, indicating poaching.

A badge for an Alberta Fish and Wildlife Officer. It features the text "FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICER" at the top, the Alberta coat of arms in the center, and "ALBERTA" at the bottom with a small Canadian flag.



Leave nothing behind.

When you're camping, hiking or recreating on Alberta's Crown lands, make sure you dispose of all your waste properly, whether it's garbage, recycling, compost or human waste. Remember if you pack it in, it is your responsibility to pack it out and leave nothing behind. You will help protect water and soil from contaminants and ensure fish and wildlife have a waste-free habitat.

Do your part to respect the land.

alberta.ca/PublicLandsCamping

Alberta



Be **Water Safe** in the Mountains

Know and avoid danger

- **Obey all signs.** They are for your safety.
- **Stay on official trails and viewing platforms.** Do not go beyond barriers for photos - a nice selfie is not worth serious injury or death.
- **Keep a safe distance from water and waterfalls, and keep children within arm's reach.** These areas are very slippery and you can easily fall.
- **Do not enter rivers, fast-flowing streams and waterfalls.** Go to established areas for swimming – such as public beaches at lakes.
- **Consider the consequences if you fall in:**
 - » Cliffs, drop-offs, and currents are extremely dangerous – even for strong swimmers.
 - » The water is cold, powerful and weakens you quickly. Hypothermia happens fast.
 - » Remote mountain areas have poor or no cell phone service and are far from communities. It can take a long time for emergency services to get to you.





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