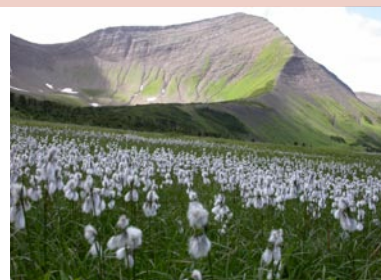
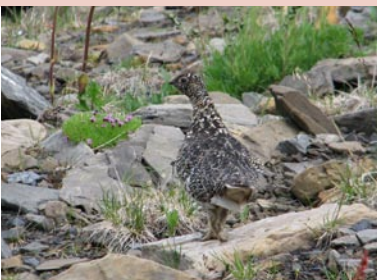


Alberta Parks

Kakwa Wildland Park

... Rocky ridges and sparkling waters



Kakwa Wildland Park is a remote, rugged place of incredible beauty with tree-carpeted valleys, swift clear creeks and high mountain ridges. The park was established in 1996 and is approximately 650 square kilometres in size.

Location/Access

Kakwa Wildland Park is 160 kilometres southwest of Grande Prairie. For travel beyond Lick Creek (roughly 10 kilometres from the park's northern boundary) a four-wheel drive vehicle is essential. Visitors should check ahead with Alberta Parks in Grande Prairie to confirm road conditions.

Kilometre 0:

Grande Prairie – go south on Hwy. 40 then west on Hwy. 666.

Kilometre 11:

Grovedale – road is paved for approximately 16 kilometres beyond Grovedale; from there, it is a maintained gravel road used heavily by industry.

Kilometre 138:

Two Lakes Provincial Park – three campgrounds (Gunderson Meadow, Pine Hollow & Moberly Flats) provide rustic camping

facilities including fire pits, picnic tables, privies and potable water.

Kilometre 149:

Lick Creek – only 4-wheel drive vehicles are suitable on the unmaintained trail from here to Kakwa Falls; there are creek crossings and wet areas along this route.

Kilometre 160:

Kakwa Wildland Park boundary.

Kilometre 164:

Deadhorse Meadows equestrian staging area.

Kilometre 168:

Kakwa day use area and Kakwa Falls viewpoint.

Site Description

Kakwa Wildland Park is located in the alpine and subalpine subregions of the Rocky Mountain Natural Region. The park's complex array of natural features includes mountains, foothills, meadows, streams and rivers.

Peaks include Kakwa and La Creche mountains and Mount May. Sulphur Ridge and Coal Ridge form the park's northern boundary and there are

numerous unnamed peaks and ridges in the park as well.

Kakwa Falls, Alberta's tallest waterfall, is a spectacular 30 metres high. Other falls in the park include Lower Kakwa Falls, located east of the main falls; and Francis Peak Creek Falls, over which there's a natural bridge.

There is evidence of glacial outwash in the park's numerous emerald-coloured kettle lakes. The lower valleys are forested with lodgepole pine and there's subalpine fir at higher elevations. Three-hundred-year-old Englemann spruce grow in some of the park's high southern valleys and large stands of krummholz (stunted subalpine fir growing at tree line) occur around La Creche Mountain. At least 450 vascular plant species are found in Kakwa; 30 of these are considered rare in Alberta and 28 are at the extreme edge of their range.

Wildlife species in the area include woodland caribou; elk; bighorn sheep; mountain goats; moose; mule and white-tailed deer; grizzly and black bears; wolves; wolverines; lynx; and red fox.

Kakwa Wildland Park

Cultural History

Native families from the Jasper area were the first to live and trap in the Kakwa/Two Lakes area. Trappers and outfitters from around Grande Prairie discovered the area's attractions in the 1930s. Since then, the area has been used by trappers, outfitters and outdoor recreation enthusiasts (mostly from the Peace Country) who appreciate its wilderness character. A folk history project capturing memories of those who know the area well was completed in 2002. There are audio tapes of these recollections, stories and informal histories at the Grande Prairie Museum.

Summer Recreation

Trail riding & hiking:

- Roughly 100 km of trails have been mapped in the park. Trails are not well-marked, nor are they maintained or patrolled, so park visitors should plan trips carefully and be prepared for all conditions.
- Some trails require fording streams; in high water, fords may be dangerous or impassable.
- Because the trail into Kakwa is not suitable for heavy vehicles hauling horse trailers, it is preferred that equestrian users stage outside the park at Lick Creek.
- Hiking along mountain ridges affords spectacular views; however, getting to these ridges is difficult – always carry a map and compass or GPS and be prepared for emergencies.

Off-highway vehicles:

- Four-wheel drive vehicles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are only permitted on the trail to Kakwa Falls.

Camping:

- Deadhorse Meadows staging area provides privies and fire pits; visitors must pack out their garbage.
- Random camping is permitted anywhere in the park, except within one kilometre of Deadhorse Meadows and within one kilometre of Kakwa Falls day use area.
- Open campfires are permitted; however, please keep fires small and use only dead wood.

Day use:

- The day use area near Kakwa Falls is equipped with picnic tables, fire pits, fire wood and privies.
- From the day use area, it is a 1.2 km hike to the falls viewpoint; ATVs are not permitted on the viewpoint trail.

Fishing & hunting:

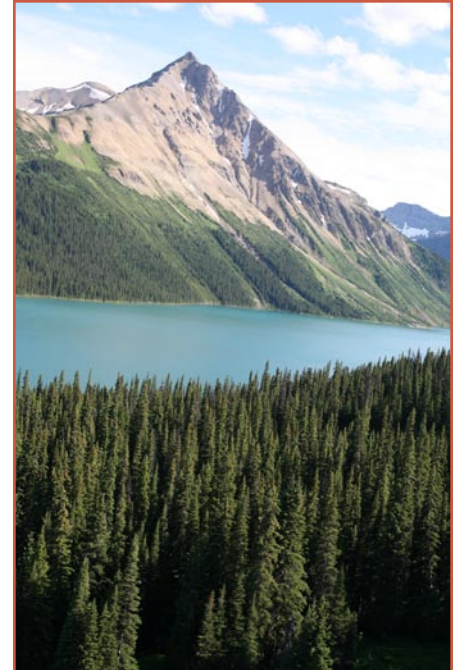
- The "Alberta Guide to Sportfishing Regulations" provides information about closures, catch and release, size restrictions and catch limits for rivers and streams in Kakwa. Bull trout is "catch & release only".
- Hunting is permitted; Alberta hunting regulations apply. Carrying and discharging of firearms are permitted only during open seasons under the Wildlife Act or under permit from a conservation officer.

Winter Recreation

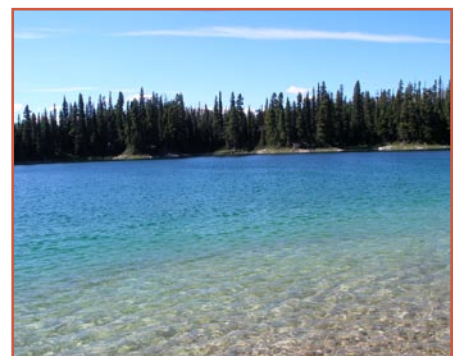
Snowmobiles are permitted on the trail to Kakwa Falls and on two routes west into British Columbia (along the Kakwa River and on the trail west from Deadhorse Meadows). These trails provide access to snowmobile areas in British Columbia. (For information about Kakwa Provincial Park in B.C. visit www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/explore/parkpgs/kakwa.html). Permits are required for winter snowmobile camps in Kakwa Wildland Park. Off-trail snowmobile use is prohibited.

Backcountry Safety

- Never travel alone.
- Be prepared for backcountry travel – bring extra clothing and gear such as food, matches, first aid kit and emergency blanket, even on day trips.
- Be knowledgeable about your route; obtain maps; keep track of where you are at all times by map and compass or GPS.
- Study the topographical features of your route and determine how many days your trip will take; be realistic about the amount of time you have and your physical capabilities.
- Inform family, friends or authorities of your intended route, camping spots and estimated return time.



Kakwa Wildland Park forms part of Willmore-Kakwa Interprovincial Park, designated through an agreement between the Alberta and British Columbia governments in April 2006. In addition to Kakwa Wildland Park, the new interprovincial park includes Willmore Wilderness Park (also located in Alberta) and British Columbia's Kakwa Provincial Park. This interprovincial park recognizes that the three parks share common mountain and foothills ecosystems and that cross-border visitation is common. British Columbia and Alberta parks staff will work together on park planning, resource and visitor management, and other activities to the benefit of park ecosystems and park visitors.





When visiting Kakwa Wildland Park

- Weather conditions in the mountains are unpredictable – be prepared for sudden and unexpected changes.
- Be cautious when fording streams and rivers – they can be dangerous, especially when stream flows are high.
- It is recommended that backcountry travelers use camp stoves; camp stoves are lightweight, compact and efficient, and they leave no scars in the backcountry. In the event a wood fire becomes necessary, know how to properly construct a wood fire in the backcountry. Use only dead wood lying on the ground (trees in subalpine areas grow very slowly and should never be used for campfires); make sure your fire is out and cold to the touch before retiring for the night and before leaving camp. Never leave your campfire unattended.
- For horses, supplemental feed such as hay, grain pellets and alfalfa cubes can be used to prevent over-grazing. Supplemental feeds should be stored in sealed containers to prevent tampering by wildlife. Please note that using hay as a supplemental feed has the potential to introduce noxious weeds into the backcountry – grain and alfalfa pellets are recommended.
- Leave no trace of your visit – pack out everything you pack in.
- Be respectful of wildlife; familiarize yourself with wildlife safety techniques.

Bear safety:

- Make plenty of noise when approaching blind corners, dense shrubs and streams, and when moving into the wind.
- It is best to leave your pet at home; however, if you do travel with a pet, keep it on a leash at all times (loose dogs can attract and irritate bears).
- Always keep your group together.
- If you see signs of bear activity (i.e. fresh diggings along trails, bear scat, claw marks on trees), go back the way you came.
- Never store food or toilet articles (toothpaste, soap, deodorant, etc.) in your tent.

- Ensure that your cooking area is well separated from your sleeping area to prevent food odour contamination; never sleep in clothes worn while preparing food. Cooking and food storage areas should be at least 100 metres away from your tent.
- Seal garbage in plastic bags; never burn or bury food scraps; always pack out your garbage.
- If possible, hang food, garbage and equipment high in a tree to discourage bears from investigating them.
- Keep young children close at hand, especially at night, dusk and dawn.
- At night, use a flashlight and move cautiously in and around your campsite.

Did you know...

- Kakwa is a Cree word for porcupine.
- Approximately 40% of the park is above tree line.
- Bull trout spawn in the area's cold mountain streams. You can identify bull trout by the absence of black spots on the dorsal fin – “no black, put it back”.
- Woodland caribou spend summers in alpine areas and migrate to lower elevations northeast of the park in the winter.
- Woodland caribou are an “at risk” species in Alberta.
- A spearhead was found on the saddle of La Creche Mountain that dates back approximately 8000 to 10,000 years.
- Brown lemmings have been found in the park, only the second time the species has been observed in Alberta.

For more:

Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation & Culture
Parks, Conservation, Recreation & Sport Division

Northwest Area Office

Room 1301 Provincial Building

10320-99 Street

Grande Prairie, Alberta

T8V 6J4

Phone: 789-538-5350 (to call toll-free from anywhere in Alberta dial 310-0000)

For information about other protected areas in Alberta call 780-427-3582 (toll-free 1-866-427-3582), or visit www.albertaparks.ca.

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