

Bighorn Country Proposal



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Improving Bighorn Country for a Growing Alberta

Bighorn Country contains some of the greatest unrealized tourism potential in Alberta for its unique ecosystems and stunning landscapes. It is a source of clean drinking water and home to a large variety of plants and animals, including rare and at-risk species.

To conserve this landscape and manage social and economic activity in the area, the government is proposing the designation of a new Wildland Provincial Park and new, expanded or amended parks, recreation areas, and Public Land Use Zones.

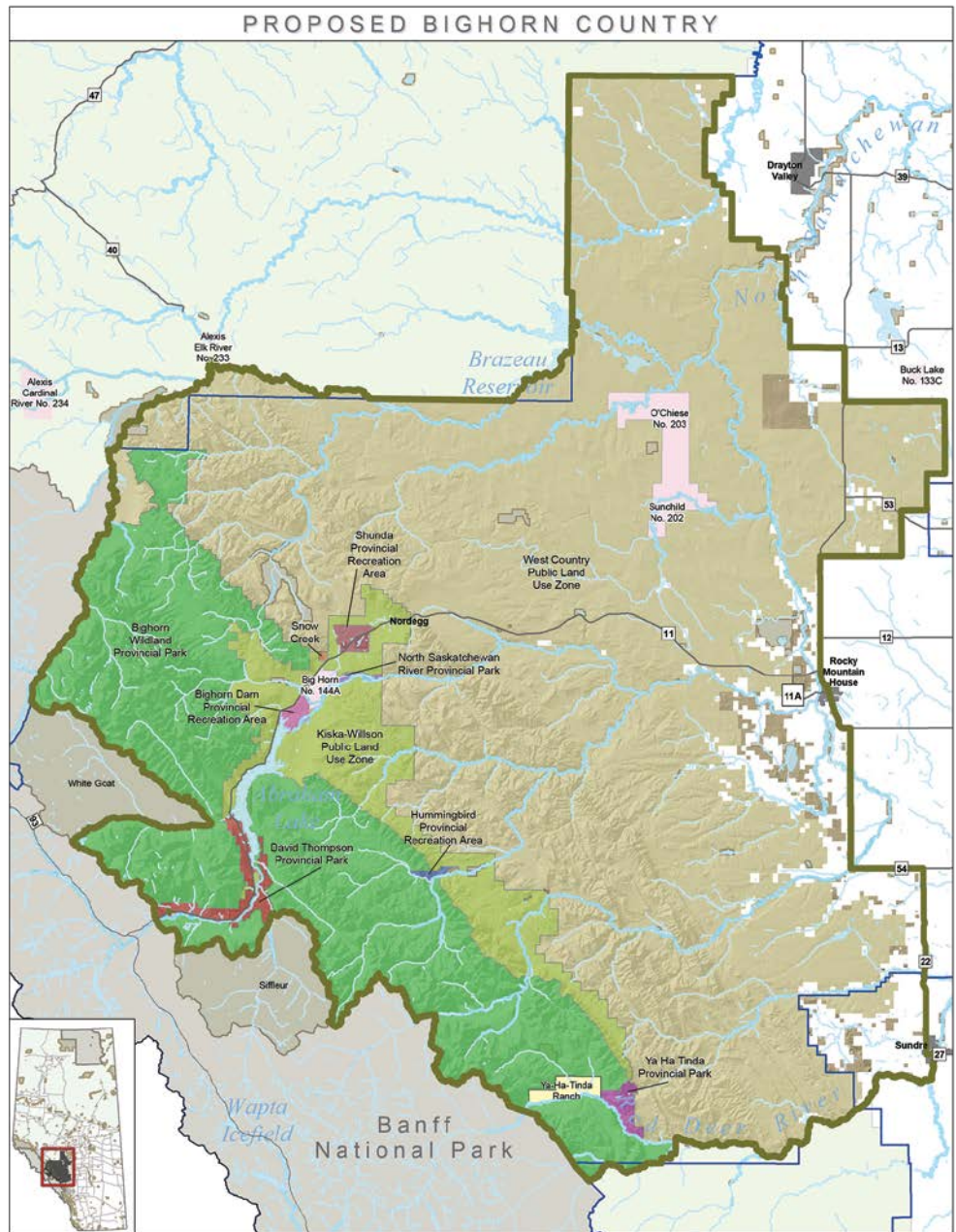
Changes to land designations in Bighorn Country would better protect headwaters and biodiversity, provide high-quality outdoor recreation, and support unrealized tourism potential.

Indigenous cooperative management could also be explored in parks and protected areas, in addition to supporting continued traditional Indigenous activity on the land.

Tourism Development

Tourism is an important contributor to the region's economy and Bighorn Country possesses unrealised tourism potential.

Modifying existing land designations could provide for different types of tourism development. Combined, these could support new opportunities, directly benefitting businesses and the local economy. Appropriate commercial recreation and tourism development could be identified through the parks planning process, including public consultation and engagement.



Bighorn Wildland Provincial Park

- Would conserve nature and allow low-impact backcountry recreation activities and services provided by both the public and private sectors.
- Focus on high-quality hunting, fishing and other nature-based recreation experiences.
- Equestrian and off-highway vehicle use would continue, where appropriate, on designated trails.

Snow Creek Provincial Recreation Area

- Minor expansion would allow development of winter tourism activities, potentially including a Nordic ski trail system.
- Could provide a staging area for snowmobiles to access adjacent trails.

Kiska-Willson Public Land Use Zone

- Would continue to provide a large network of trails for motorized and non-motorized use.
- Would continue to support exploration for, and development of, coal, limestone and other resources.
- The northern portion would provide commercial recreation and tourism opportunities, while the southern portion would focus on low-impact backcountry recreation and tourism.

West Country Public Land Use Zone

- Trails and camping areas would remain open. Future recreation management planning is needed to thoughtfully manage impacts of recreation activities on other land uses and the environment.
- Would continue to permit industrial uses, such as forestry and energy, and existing public land recreation areas would remain.
- Recreation planning may include new trails, staging areas and other infrastructure, including support for commercial recreation and tourism development.

Bighorn Dam Provincial Recreation Area

- Focus would be on providing trails, staging areas and campgrounds to suit different recreation and tourism uses.
- OHV and snowmobile use would be permitted on designated trails, and a staging area would link campgrounds to the existing trail network in surrounding areas.

Hummingbird Provincial Recreation Area

- An important campground and staging area that provides access to the Bighorn Wildland Provincial Park or the Kiska-Willson Public Land Use Zone.
- Focus would be on providing trails, staging areas and campgrounds to suit different recreation and tourism uses.

Shunda Provincial Recreation Area

- Would expand and consolidate Fish Lake and Goldeye Lake Provincial Recreation Areas.
- Focus would be on maintaining, enhancing and providing new facilities and infrastructure to suit diverse recreation and tourism uses.

David Thompson Provincial Park

- Would incorporate the Thompson Creek and Kootenay Plains Provincial Recreation Areas and the Kootenay Plains Ecological Reserve.
- Would offer a number of front country experiences and connect visitors with the Bighorn Wildland Provincial Park.
- Focus would be on developing services, facilities and infrastructure to support current and future demand for recreation and tourism opportunities while prioritizing conservation.

North Saskatchewan River Provincial Park

- Would protect important natural landscapes that are unique to Bighorn Country.
- Would provide opportunities for water-based recreation, hiking, mountain biking and equestrian uses.
- Parks management planning would help determine the need for specific trails and infrastructure to support conservation, recreation, tourism and education.

Ya Ha Tinda Provincial Park

- Ya Ha Tinda Provincial Park contains diverse landscape types and a wide range of experiences.
- It is an important staging area for the Bighorn Wildland Provincial Park, providing access for equestrian and other recreational uses.

Have Your Say Today

Visit talkAEP.alberta.ca today to give us your feedback on the Bighorn Country proposal.

Consultation will be open from November 23, 2018 to January 31, 2019. Over this period, we will gain your input on the future of the Bighorn area.

If we proceed, further consultation would be held to inform recreation and management planning.

What do the designations mean for me?

	Provincial Parks	Wildland Provincial Park	Provincial Recreation Areas	Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ)	Public Land Recreation Area (PLRA)
Visitor Experience	Protected areas where the primary purpose is the conservation of nature. Offers wide range of nature-based recreational opportunities.	Protected areas where the primary purpose is the conservation of nature on large, healthy landscapes with opportunities for backcountry/wilderness recreation and experiencing nature in a relatively undisturbed state.	Primary purpose is the provision or support for nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities with some potential for local tourism and education opportunities.	Designated areas of public land established under the Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR) to assist in the management of natural resources and recreational land uses.	Designated areas of public land established under the Public Lands Administration Regulation (PLAR) to assist in the management of high intensity recreational use.
Permitted Uses					
Hunting	Limited to a minority of sites where clearly permitted – check regulations	Yes	Limited to a minority of sites where clearly permitted – check regulations	Yes	Yes
Recreational Off-highway Vehicles	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails
Auto Access Camping	Yes, in designated areas	No	Yes, in designated areas	Yes, must camp at least 1km away from PRAs and PLRAs	Yes
Backcountry Camping	Yes, in designated areas only	Yes, undesignated only permitted if no closer than 1 km from designated area	Yes, in designated areas only	Yes, must camp at least 1km away from PRAs and PLRAs	Yes
Commercial Trail Riding	Yes, via permits	Yes, via permits	Yes, via permits	Yes, via permits	Yes, via permits
Equestrian Use	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes	Yes
Fishing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hiking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Climbing/Caving	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Snowmobiling	Yes, on designated trails and areas	Yes, on designated trails and areas	Yes, on designated trails and areas	Yes, on designated trails and areas	Yes, on designated trails and areas
Mountain Biking	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes, on designated trails	Yes	Yes
Water Based Recreation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Commercial Forestry	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Coal, Metallic and Industrial Minerals (Crown Owned)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Existing Petroleum and Natural Gas (Crown Owned)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Petroleum and Natural Gas (Crown Owned)	Yes, but with no surface access	Yes, but with no surface access	Yes, but with no surface access	Yes	Yes
Freehold Minerals	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Existing Sand and Gravel	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
New Sand and Gravel	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Existing grazing	Yes via permits	Yes via permits	Yes, via permits	Yes	No
New grazing	Subject to grazing suitability assessment	No	Subject to grazing suitability assessment	Yes	No

This information is intended as a general guide to some of the regulations under the *Provincial Parks Act*, *Public Lands Act* and a variety of other provincial and federal legislation that applies to land use activities in Alberta.

The GOA is committed to respecting the constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous Peoples.