

Castle

Provincial Park & Wildland Provincial Park

Important Note:

This interim Castle Park Guide is for the 2017 summer season only. Revisions will occur following approval of the Castle Parks Management Plan.

Welcome to the Castle Parks

Encompassing more than 105,000 hectares, the new Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park in southwest Alberta protect valuable watersheds and habitat for more than 200 rare species such as whitebark and limber pine, Jones' columbine, dwarf alpine poppy, grizzly bear, wolverine, westslope cutthroat trout, and harlequin duck. Sharing borders with the Waterton Biosphere Reserve to the east, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park World Heritage Site to the south, the Crownsnest Pass to the north, and British Columbia's Flathead River Valley to the west, the Castle parks are linked by wildlife corridors and are an essential part of the Crown of the Continent ecosystem.



Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park were established on February 16, 2017, and are managed according to Alberta's *Provincial Parks Act*.

A draft Castle Parks Management Plan plan has been developed and will be finalized in 2017. Please take a moment to understand the new priorities, rules and regulations for enjoying this important landscape, and show your support through responsible use, stewardship, and communication with our staff.

Parks Activities

The Castle parks offer a wide variety of frontcountry and backcountry experiences. Hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing, scrambling, climbing and mountain biking are some of the activities you can enjoy in the area. Off Highway Vehicle use continues to be allowed on all trails previously designated for this purpose for the 2017 season.

Visitor Information and Services

Visitor information is available at www.albertaparks.ca/castle, at kiosks located throughout the parks, and by speaking with any of Alberta Parks staff by calling 403-627-1165.

Local communities in the Castle area offer a wide range of tourism and retail services to complement your visit. Please support local businesses at the Castle Mountain Resort, Beaver Mines, Pincher Creek, and the Crownsnest Pass and let them know about your visit to the Castle parks.

We encourage you to visit other tourism attractions in the area, such as the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, Waterton Lakes National Park and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump (UNESCO World Heritage Sites), Remington Carriage Museum, Beauvais Lake and Chain Lakes Provincial Parks, and Lundbreck Falls, Chinook and Oldman Dam Provincial Recreation Areas. Tourism information is available at the Beaver Mines Store, Kootenai Brown Pioneer Village in Pincher Creek, the Crownsnest Pass and Pincher Creek Chamber of Commerce, and at the Sentinel Travel Alberta Visitor Information Centre located near the Alberta / BC border.



Camp Responsibly

The Castle parks offer diverse camping experiences in frontcountry and remote backcountry settings. All camping in the Castle parks requires a permit, and the daily checkout time is at 2 pm. The maximum stay in any campsite is 16 consecutive nights. All camping in the Castle parks is first come, first served, except the Syncline Group Camp, available by reservation only.

Campgrounds in Castle Provincial Park

Visitors to the Castle are encouraged to camp in the designated campgrounds. These facilities are well established and some sites have been upgraded prior to 2017. All campgrounds are serviced with outhouses, waste and recycling bins, picnic tables, and fire rings.

Campsites at Beaver Mines Lake, Castle River Bridge, Castle Falls, and Lynx Creek are available first-come first-served, and can be registered for up to 16 nights.

Additional camping opportunities are available nearby at Beauvais Lake Provincial Park, Lundbreck Falls, Island Lake, Maycroft, Chinook and Oldman Dam Provincial Recreation Areas, and at Waterton Lakes National Park.

Campground	# of Sites	Services	Notes
Beaver Mines Lake	96	basic	first come, first served
Castle Falls	46	basic	first come, first served
Castle River Bridge	30	basic	first come, first served
Lynx Creek	18	basic	first come, first served
Syncline Group	2 group areas (max. units 15 and 20)	basic	reservations required

Informal Camping Areas in Castle Provincial Park

As shown on the park map, nine areas have been identified to provide additional camping opportunities in Castle Provincial Park.

Permit Conditions

The following permit conditions apply to camping in camping areas 1-9 in Castle Provincial Park in 2017:

- Camping must be within areas as identified on maps and/or within marked areas.
- Camping units must be positioned at least 15 metres away from the traveled portion of a maintained roadway, but not more than 200 meters from the roadway unless otherwise posted on-site.
- Only valid permit holders may drive off of the highway to access their registered campsite.
- Clearing of vegetation is not permitted.
- Camping areas must be grassed or previously disturbed; new disturbance is not permitted.
- Best practices suggest that campsites should be at least 30 metres away from moving water, a wetland, or a standing water body.
- Wood may not be cut within these designated camping areas.

Camping may not exceed 16 days and each camping unit must display a valid permit.

- All fires must be fully contained in fire pits and must not be left unattended.
- All food and garbage must be stored in bear-proof containers or vehicles.
- Garbage receptacles are provided at designated locations and in formal campgrounds.
- Toilets are available at designated locations and in formal campgrounds. 'Cat holes' are no longer allowed.
- OHVs are only permitted on signed and designated trails.
- All campers must have a valid permit, available at self-registration kiosks and many nearby retailers.

All permits in camping areas 1-9 must be deposited at self-registration kiosks or given to a uniformed staff member. There is no fee for the permit in 2017.

Backcountry Camping in Castle Wildland Provincial Park

Undesignated backcountry camping is allowed within the Wildland Provincial Park, providing that the campsite is at least 1 km from any designated facility. Please leave no trace by packing your supplies in and your garbage out, and dismantle fire pits. For more information on safe and responsible backcountry camping, visit: <https://www.albertaparks.ca/kananaskis-country/advisories-public-safety/backcountry-safety/backcountry-camping-safety>



Recreate Responsibly

Trails

In 2017, all trails in the Castle parks will be assessed to inform the development of a trails strategy. Be aware that most trails are not yet improved, and natural hazards are prevalent.

Hiking & Biking

Hikers are free to explore both the Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park. Bicycles are allowed on all trails unless otherwise posted. Caution is advised as most trails are not yet improved, not regularly maintained, and many are shared by motorized and non-motorized recreationalists.

Horses

Hikers are free to explore both the Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park. Bicycles are allowed on all trails unless otherwise posted. Caution is advised as most trails are not yet improved, not regularly maintained, and many are shared by motorized and non-motorized recreationalists.

Horses are not permitted in named campgrounds but are permitted in camping areas 1-9. Be advised that all designated trails are not yet improved, not regularly maintained, and are shared by motorized and non-motorized recreationists.



Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV's)

Signs identify all designated OHV trails in the Castle parks. OHV's are allowed on designated trails only. If there is no sign on the trail, it is not a designated OHV trail. Caution is advised that designated trails are not yet improved, not regularly maintained, and are shared by many motorized and non-motorized recreationalists.

Off-highway vehicles (OHV's) **allowed**:

- quads
- motorcycles and related 2- or 3-wheeled
- snowmobiles
- side-by-sides

Off-highway vehicles (OHV's) **not allowed**:

- amphibious vehicles
- manufactured highway motor vehicles (whether or not they are registered as an off-highway vehicle).

Highway Vehicles

All vehicles (cars, trucks, Jeeps, SUVs) registered for highway uses are only allowed on highways and maintained roadways that access the Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*. No highway vehicles are allowed on any part of the designated trail system without written authorization.

Know the Rules

In accordance with the *Provincial Parks Act*:

- Every person within the Castle parks shall comply with the lawful orders and instructions of a Conservation Officer.
- Every person within the Castle parks shall comply with the instructions, prohibitions and directions contained in signs and/or notices.
- Motorized users will stay on designated trails.
- No cutting, removing, or damaging live trees or any other vegetation unless in possession of a valid permit.
- Campfires must be attended at all times and extinguished before leaving your site.
- Do not deposit harmful materials into any watercourse.
- An enforcement officer may order a person to refrain from doing anything that, in the opinion of the officer, is dangerous to life or property or detrimental to the management of or use of any road, trail or route within that zone.
- Pets must be kept on a leash or under physical control at all times.

Every off-highway vehicle (OHV) operating in the Castle parks must have:

- Valid registration and insurance;
- A subsisting licence plate that is securely attached to the OHV and visible to other drivers;
- Tail lamp on the vehicle rear capable of emitting a red light visible from at least 60 metres (185 feet);
- At least one white headlamp securely attached on front capable of illuminating an object or person at least 60 metres (185 feet);
- Exhaust muffler with spark arrester;
- Helmets, by law, are required for off-highway vehicle use on public land as of May 15, 2017; and
- Operators of OHV's under 14 must be supervised by an adult.

To operate an OHV in the Castle parks, people from another jurisdiction must:

- Be able to produce valid financial responsibility card and certificate of registration and proof of residency consistent with the off-highway vehicle regulation of the *Traffic Safety Act* of Alberta.
- Follow the rules regarding registration of the vehicle and the display of license plates are required by their home jurisdiction produce valid proof of insurance.
- If you have been in Alberta for more than 30 days, all Alberta requirements apply.

Know Before You Go

It is your responsibility to become familiar with the activities allowed in this area before you visit. Refer to the information and map in this publication for further details, pick-up or download the Alberta Parks regulations brochure, look for park information kiosks, and contact us if you have any questions. Visitors who do not follow the rules could be fined or charged under provincial legislation. Contact information is printed on the back panel of this publication.

Alberta Parks Regulations

Regulations under the *Provincial Parks Act* are enforced by Conservation Officers (Peace Officers in the Province of Alberta). Conservation Officers work with local police authorities to ensure the safety of park visitors. Familiarize yourself with the regulations that apply. An Alberta Parks regulations brochure and the *Provincial Parks Act* are accessible online, or from Alberta Parks staff.

Firearms & Hunting

Like all Wildland Provincial Parks, hunting will continue to be permitted in the Castle Wildland under current regulations. These same regulations will also apply to Castle Provincial Park in the short term, including the 2017 hunting seasons.

In the longer term, a review will be undertaken to determine wildlife management priorities in the Castle Provincial Park. This review will likely lead to a tailored plan (and may include a wildlife management unit with specific allocations) to meet conservation objectives in the park. While some restrictions may be introduced, hunting will remain an important tool for managing wildlife populations.

Under Provincial Parks General Regulation: "firearm" means any device that propels a projectile by means of explosion, spring, air, gas, string, wire or elastic material or any combination of those things.

Provincial Park – Possession or discharge of firearms is not allowed without a permit. A system for issuing these permits is in development. Contact 403-627-1165 for more information or visit: www.albertaparks.ca/albertaparksca/visit-our-parks/activities/hunting/firearms-discharge-permits

Wildland Provincial Park – Hunters with a valid licence and tags to hunt in the Wildland Provincial Park under the *Wildlife Act* do not need a discharge permit. If a hunter is in possession of that firearm within the Provincial Park during their stay or as they travel to the Wildland Provincial Park, they will need a permit. A hunter who accesses Castle Wildland Provincial Park without crossing the Castle Provincial Park would not need a discharge permit.

Hunters shall ensure that their firearm is unloaded and dismantled or completely enclosed in a case or covering, unless that person is engaged in an activity in which the discharge of a firearm is allowed under the *Wildlife Act* and discharge permit. No target practice is ever allowed by a discharge permit in either Castle park.

Liquor

In accordance with the *Alberta Gaming and Liquor Act*, consumption of liquor is restricted to a temporary dwelling situation inside a registered and permitted campsite or camping area only.

Be Wildlife Smart

The Castle area is an important refuge and movement corridor for wildlife, including grizzly and black bears, wolverines, wolves, cougars, moose and elk. All wildlife can be unpredictable and precautions should be taken when viewing them or recreating in their habitat. Try to avoid surprise encounters with wildlife by making noise, storing wildlife attractants such as food, garbage and pet food in a secure vehicle or bear/wildlife proof container, keeping children close to adults, and keeping dogs on a leash. Avoid areas where wildlife have been feeding or resting and report your encounters and sightings to parks staff. Remember to carry bear spray, which is available for purchase at retailers in the Castle area. Additional information on wildlife safety is available online, at park kiosks, or from Alberta Parks staff.



Respect the Land & Water

Working together we can ensure the area is conserved for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

- Fish and wildlife need a healthy aquatic system, and this watershed provides drinking water to many communities in southern Alberta and beyond. Please consider the impact you may have on water in the Castle.
- Keep wheels out of water. Driving in natural waterbodies such as streams and rivers adds undue stress to fish and the environment, is against the law, and could lead to substantial fines and enforcement actions.
- Only cross wetlands, creeks or rivers at bridges or lawful crossings. On designated trails, streams without a bridge may be crossed by proceeding slowly along the shortest route possible to minimize environmental damage.
- Stay on the designated trails and respect other users in the area.
- Leave no trace of your visit and dispose of all trash at appropriate centres once you leave the area.

Safety & Emergency Communication

The Castle area offers wilderness settings ranging from accessible frontcountry to remote backcountry. Cellular phone communication throughout the Castle area is not available, so please ensure that you have properly planned your experience and emergency communications before you arrive.

- Provide family or friends with your detailed trip plans, including emergency protocols if you do not report back.
- Most of the Castle area does not have cellular phone service. Pay phones are located at the Beaver Mines Store, Beaver Mines Lake (Camp Impeesa), Castle Mountain Resort (T-bar Pub and the Day Lodge during regular business hours), and in the nearby communities.
- Emergency contact information is listed on the back panel of this publication.

Firewood & Fires

Before your visit, please check www.albertafirebans.ca for current notices.

Provincial Park Campgrounds – Fires are only allowed inside a receptacle or facility designated and supplied for that purpose. Firewood is available for purchase from roving campground attendants, and at retailers in nearby communities. Do not bring firewood from another province into Alberta. Collection of wood or any dead vegetation for burning must be authorized by a Conservation Officer or a permit.

Wildland Provincial Park – Traceless camping practices are required (clean up all evidence after using the area). Collection of dead wood for fires is allowed. Visit: <https://www.albertaparks.ca/kananaskis-country/advisories-public-safety/backcountry-safety/backcountry-camping-safety/>, or search "know before you go" at www.aep.alberta.ca.

Flood Damage

Extreme flooding has left many trails in poor condition. Some trails may be closed due to construction. Please use caution.



Contact Us

Alberta Parks Office

- Web: albertaparks.ca/castle
- Phone: 403-627-1165
- Toll free: 310-0000

Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)

- Phone: 911

Conservation Officer

(Public Safety, Enforcement, Other Urgent Issues)

- Phone: 1-844-HELP-PRK (1-844-4357-775)

Fire Bans in Alberta

- Web: albertafirebans.ca
- Phone: 1-866-FYI-FIRE (1-866-394-3473)

Report a Forest Fire

- Phone: 310-FIRE (310-3473)

Report-A-Poacher and Public Lands Abuses

- Phone: 1-800-642-3800

General Alberta Parks Information

- Web: albertaparks.ca
- Phone: 1-866-427-3582

Media Inquiries

Alberta Environment and Parks

- Phone: 780-427-8636
- Email: AEP.MediaInquiries@gov.ab.ca

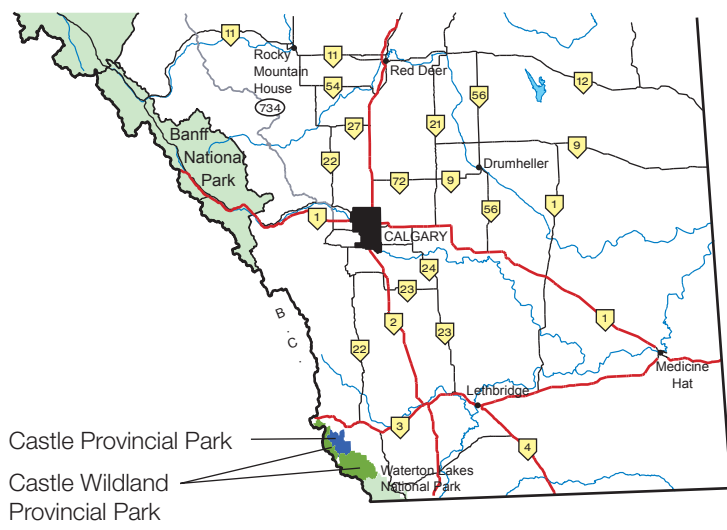
ISBN: 978-1-4601-3431-3 (Print)
978-1-4601-3432-0 (PDF)

Revised June 1, 2017



Getting There

Use the maps within this publication to find your way to and through the Castle parks. Key roads to and within the area are Hwy 774, Adanac, Sartoris and O'Hagen Roads.



Castle Provincial Park & Wildland Provincial Park
Designated Summer Trails 2017

Map Legend

Castle Wildland Provincial Park

Castle Provincial Park

Campgrounds (within Castle Provincial Park)

Camping Area 1

Designated Summer Trails

Hiking Routes

Boat Launch

Campground

Day Use

Equestrian

Fishing

Group Use Campground

Hiking

Information and Self-Registration Kiosk

OHV Staging Area/Parking

Parking

Picnic Shelter

Gates

Trail Intersections

Locality

Town/Village

Private Land

Alberta Parks

Ecological Reserve

Fire Lookout

Mountain

Pass

Lakes/Rivers

Rivers/Streams

Access

Roads-Paved

Roads-Gravel

Roads-Unimproved

Townships

North Arrow

Caution: Under the Backcountry Trail Flood Rehabilitation Program, trails in the area may be temporarily closed due to construction. Please be aware of construction projects on trails and avoid temporary closure areas – for more information visit: backcountryflood.alberta.ca.

Designated Trails in the Castle Parks

Hiking, Bicycles and Equestrian uses - all trails/access open unless otherwise posted
Off-highway vehicles are permitted on designated and posted summer trails in the Castle parks in 2017. Designated summer trails are accessible from May 1 to November 30 unless otherwise indicated on the map and/or signs posted in the area.

Designated Trails and Roads in the Castle Park

	Trail Sign	Map Symbol	Explanation	What Type of Motorized Vehicle Am I Driving				
				All Highway Vehicles	Side by Side	Quad	Motorcycle	Snow Vehicle
Trail Classification								
Designated Motorized Summer Trails			Open May 1 - Nov 30					
Road Classification				Only on-highway vehicles permitted.				
On-highway vehicles only are permitted on these roads.	No trail signage		Public Highways and Licence of Occupation Roads					

Note: Trail access may be amended, modified or closed by a Conservation Officer in response to fires, fire hazard, flooding, wildlife or other environmental and safety concerns. Please ensure you have the current information on the area to which you are travelling and obey all posted signs and notices.

Trail Signs

Follow directions on signs as posted.

directional arrow

intersection marker number (corresponds with numbers on map)

end of trail sign

designated motorized summer trails

Liability Disclaimer - This brochure is provided for information purposes and to advise you of many of the rules relating to trail use. **Use of the trail system is entirely at your own risk.** The trails have not been classified by degree of difficulty and little or no maintenance is done on these trails; natural and man-made hazards may exist. The trail system can be difficult and physically challenging and conditions may change due to weather and other factors. For example, trails that may be easy to traverse under dry or frozen conditions may be hazardous and/or impassable under spring thaw or wet conditions. It is up to users of the trail system to learn the necessary skills for their safe enjoyment and to exercise caution in potentially hazardous areas.

