

Frequently asked questions:

Big Hill Springs Provincial Park Refurbishment Project

What is the Big Hill Springs Provincial Park Refurbishment Project?

In May 2020, the government approved funding for the Big Hill Springs Provincial Park Refurbishment Project that includes upgrades to parking areas, picnic sites, trails and site signage.

Details include:

- Paving and formalizing parking in the main lot and entrance road.
- Creating an upper picnic area above the creek.
- Defining the footprint and tread of the main creek trail.
- Creating a new viewpoint loop on the north side.
- Creating a new viewpoint loop at the end of the main creek trail and the south side.
- Refreshing information on the trailhead kiosk.
- Installing interpretive signage along the main creek trail and new north side viewpoint.
- Installing way finding signage for the picnic area and trail system.
- Refurbishing the lower creek site picnic area.
- Decommissioning the existing south side trail that is currently located outside the park boundary.
- Decommissioning all informal desire trails.
- Replacing and establishing fencing to identify the park boundary.

Why is Alberta Parks decommissioning the south side trail?

Sections of the existing trail that gains the bench and forested area on the south side is located outside the park boundary. For unknown reasons, the trail was constructed partially on private land. Over the years park visitors have trespassed on the private land from the park, at times cutting cattle fences and leaving garbage.

What did Alberta Parks consider before decommissioning the trail?

Alberta Parks has tried a number of approaches to reduce trespassing through decommissioning desire trails, fixing cut fencing and posting boundary signage. However, visitors continue to trespass. Alberta Parks looked at a number of options to move the trail inside the park, however steep slope trail construction (including steel structures and supports) coupled with historic resource protection requirements, resulted in a prohibited cost. As an alternative, Alberta Parks is providing a high trail on the north side that provides views of the park and down the valley.

When will construction start?

Schedule

- Construction start date is planned for the first week of August.
- Duration – through project construction and revegetation until summer 2021 (one year).

To ensure visitor safety, construction efficiency and revegetation success, we will close the park for all uses.

Please check back to the website to stay up to date on the construction and closure information.

What do the construction closure involve?

The closure during construction will impact all recreational uses occurring in Big Hill Springs Provincial Park including picnicking and hiking.

Do not attempt to access the closure area any time.

Why are closures being put in place and what alternatives were considered?

The construction closure is to ensure visitor and contractor safety as well as timely and cost-efficient construction.

Due to the small size of the Park, all visitor facilities (parking, picnic and trails) will be under construction at the same time. Alberta Parks determined that closing the park is the best alternative for ensuring visitor safety, project efficiency and revegetation success.

What are the Alberta Parks alternatives for picnicking and hiking activity in the area?

Alberta Parks manages a number of parks and protected areas that offer hiking and picnicking in the Calgary region within 20 to 60 drive time from Big Hill Springs Provincial Park.

These include:

- Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park
- Fish Creek Provincial Park
- Brown-Lowery Provincial Park
- Bragg Creek Provincial Park
- Allen Bill Provincial Recreation Area
- Elbow River Provincial Recreation Area
- Cobble Flats Provincial Recreation Area
- Ghost Reservoir Provincial Recreation Area
- Pine Top Provincial Recreation Area
- Sibbald Viewpoint Provincial Recreation Area

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word "Alberta" in a stylized, cursive script font, followed by a small square icon.