

Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park

Affirming conservation of wetlands and wildlife

What is Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park?

Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park is located on the western edge of St. Albert and Edmonton. Over 1,100 hectares in size, it contains Big Lake, which makes up over half of the park's total area, being eight kilometres in length and three kilometres wide at the widest point.

This park is recognized as globally significant due to its diverse bird population and is designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA). It is particularly valuable to waterfowl and shorebirds.

It provides day use and access to nature-based recreation such as hiking, wildlife viewing and bird-watching.

Why is this area important?

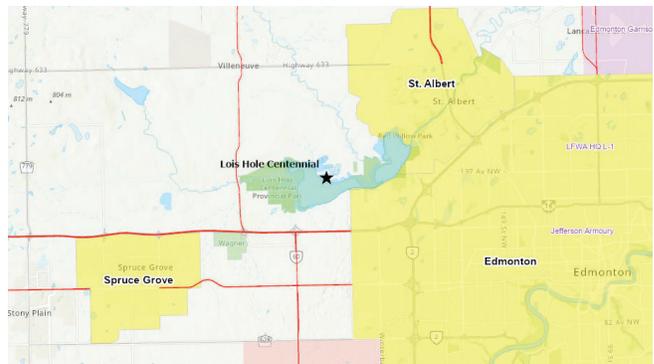
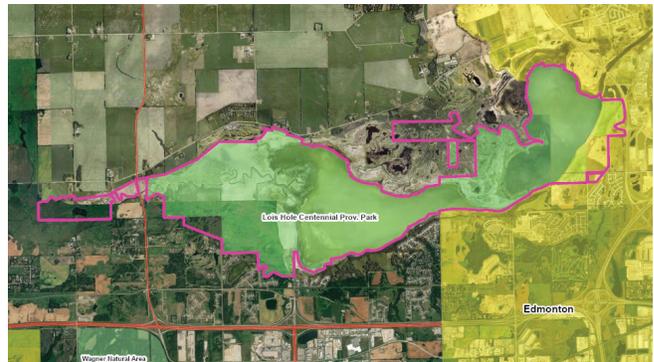
Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park supports local recreation and connects a large population (>1 million) of Albertans to nature. The addition of 238 hectares reinforces the provision of important habitat for birds, particularly shorebirds and waterfowl, that require lakeshores for food and nesting cover. Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park is internationally recognized for its role in supporting a diverse, healthy bird population.

Partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada has enabled the construction of interpretive boardwalks that showcase the ecological significance of wetlands. In addition, wildlife viewing platforms enable bird and wildlife observations. The park is guided by a comprehensive management plan that provides strategic direction.

Local stakeholders have strongly supported this site and have expressed support for this expansion. In particular, the Big Lake Environment Support Society (BLESS) has been a strong advocate for enduring conservation of the Big Lake wetlands and the species and processes that the area encompasses.

Why was there no consultation before this park was expanded?

This land was privately owned, and no reduction in public use has occurred with the expansion of this existing Provincial Park.



What activities are permitted?

Recreation Use

Recreation opportunities at Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park are limited to nature-based, day use activities that are compatible with conservation of this important wetland and bird habitat.

Birding, wildlife viewing, interpretive hiking along the boardwalk and geocaching are common, permitted activities.

Land Use

Surface access for new petroleum and natural gas, mining and mineral extraction, coal development, surface materials extraction and commercial forestry are not permitted.

Summary

The expansion of Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park adds titled lands to the existing park located just outside of Edmonton. It reinforces conservation of Big Lake and its associated wetlands that provide vital habitat and nesting cover for waterfowl and shorebirds.

Due to its proximity to large urban areas, the expansion of this Provincial Park is well suited to connect Albertans and visitors to nature, provide settings for low-impact, nature-based recreation and improve quality of life for all who visit.