

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL PROVINCIAL PARK

Causeway Bridge Replacement

Where is the work occurring?

Work is occurring on the causeway bridge that provides access to Big Island of Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park (Sir Winston Churchill PP). Please refer to the map for where you will encounter closures.

What is the project?

As part of the project Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors will be replacing the causeway bridge. Alberta Forestry and Parks recognizes the importance of this project, which will:

- Reconstruct the Causeway Bridge.
- Full replacement of bridgerail and guardrail.
- Replacement of pedestrian walkway.
- Armor shoreline to mitigate erosion around bridge abutments.
- Maintenance dredging to regain the navigation channel.
- Achieve operational and maintenance efficiencies.

Why is Alberta Forestry and Parks undergoing this bridge replacement project?

The Alberta Government is committed to improving high-traffic recreational areas across the province. This project will ensure the infrastructure at Sir Winston Churchill PP meets current standards and supports positive visitor experiences.

In June 2023, Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors notified Alberta Forestry and Parks that the causeway bridge did not meet inspection standards, and a load capacity limitation was put in place to limit the stress on the structure. The existing infrastructure cannot safely support modern traffic needs, including maximum weight limits, and its deteriorating condition increases maintenance demands and safety risks.

In an effort to mitigate on-going site challenges and address patterns of use, the scheduled work occurring at Sir Winston Churchill PP during November 2025 to March 2026 will aim to improve the visitor experience, reduce ecological impacts, improve public and wildlife safety, and address maintenance and operational efficiencies.

What are the operation and maintenance efficiencies being created?

The causeway bridge replacement will provide the following operation and maintenance efficiencies:

- Efficiencies in accessing the park over the replaced causeway bridge.

- Shoreline protection to reduce erosion due to wave and ice action and fluctuating water levels.
- Regaining navigation channel under bridge for operations and increased visitor experience.

What does the area closure include and how long will construction take?

Construction is expected to begin November 2025 through early March 2026.

Refer to the attached area closure map for additional details on active advisories of construction closures.

Visitors looking for recreation alternatives can call the Alberta Parks Information Line at 1-877-537-2757.

***DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

What measures are in place to minimize impacts to the environment?

An environmental assessment report was completed for the project and reviewed by a qualified Biologist. Actions such as Rare Plant Surveys and Wildlife/nest Sweeps were completed as part of the planning phase and will also occur again prior to work beginning to ensure wildlife and critical habitats are not adversely impacted. The work will also comply with the requirements of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada as well as regulations of the Water Act (Alberta).

What are alternative recreation/camping options for Sir Winston Churchill PP?

The comfort camping opportunities available at Sir Winston Churchill PP will not be affected during the construction period of November 2025 to March 2026. It is planned that group and individual camping (which are available annually as of May Long weekend) will not be affected, as access to Big Island will be permitted to the public by early March 2026 onwards for the operational camping season.

Alternative recreation activities during November 2025 to March 2026 are available in Lakeland District at Beaver Lake Provincial Recreation Area (Group Area) and Shaw Lake Day Use Area in Lakeland Provincial Park. Both areas offer trails for non-motorized use for activities like hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing.

How does this construction affect my trip to Sir Winston Churchill PP?

Big Island of Sir Winston Churchill PP will not be assessable via the causeway bridge once construction begins in November 2025 for recreational use. Plan your trip ahead of time, review the Alberta Parks website for site specific advisories. Or call the Alberta Parks Information Line at 1-877-537-2757 for more information.