

Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park - Alberta

This high plateau stands above the prairie as an island of cool and moist forest. With its distinctive climate and mix of forests, wetlands and grasslands, it is home to an astonishing diversity of plants and animals. Over 220 bird species, 47 mammal species, and several species each of reptiles and amphibians — Cypress Hills is a wild and wonderful place.

1 Horseshoe Canyon Viewpoint

A panoramic view of the surrounding countryside to the north and northwest, including Medicine Hat and Quarry No. 4, which supplied clay for Medicine Hat's production of pottery, brick, and tile. Protective caprock, conglomerate, is exposed on this "U" shaped landslide.

2 Head of Mountain

The highest elevation (1466 m) in the Cypress Hills; provides a view to the southwest of the prairies and Montana's Sweet Grass Hills.

3 Willow Creek Burn

In 1934, the fire caused by a spark from a saw mill caused pine cones to explode from the high heat and release their seeds all at once. Pine seedlings came up thick as grass, resulting in the "dog hair" pine.

4 St. Margaret's Church

Built in 1907 - 08 and extensively restored in 1992, it is open year round and occasional non-denominational services are held.

5 Medicine Lodge Coulee

Eagle Butte Road passes through Medicine Lodge Coulee, an ancient glacial meltwater channel, which separates the Eagle Butte Ridge from the Cypress Hills.

West Driving Route - Follow the roads outlined in blue.

This 50 km loop explores the western side of Cypress Hills - Alberta. Visit the highest point in the Cypress Hills complete with spectacular viewpoints.

Note: Majority of route is gravel. This route begins and ends in Elkwater.

East Driving Route - Follow the roads outlined in burgundy.

This 60 km loop explores the eastern side of Cypress Hills - Alberta. Take a side trip and visit Fort Walsh N.H.S.C. and Cypress Hills - SK.

Note: Approximately one half of route is gravel. This route begins and ends in Elkwater.



1 Reesor Viewpoint

This panoramic view overlooks Reesor Lake below and the knob and kettle landscape to the north and northeast into Saskatchewan.

2 Reesor Lake

Managed as a rainbow trout fishery, this lake was formed by the construction of a dam across the valley's end, where two small lakes were located. Popular activities included fishing, camping, and hiking.

3 Police Point Slump

Continually eroding, this slump occurred in 1967, when the snow melted very quickly. Water seeped through the porous caprock, saturating and weakening the lower layers, triggering a massive landslide, or slump.

6 Survival Tree

This lodgepole pine continues to grow after 150 years of withstanding wind, drought, snow, ice, cattle abuse, and even being cut down!

5 Graburn Cairn

This cairn commemorates the death of 19 year old Constable Graburn in 1879, the first North West Mounted Police to be killed while on duty.

4 Battle Creek

Originating in the Cypress Hills, this creek meanders through the Graburn Flats to the Milk River, then onward to the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers before draining into the Gulf of Mexico.