

Decision to Re-classify Redwater and North Bruderheim Natural Areas as Provincial Recreation Areas and Amend Boundaries

What We Heard

With significant input received through approximately 140 responses, the feedback has been analyzed and grouped by theme.

A majority of comments spoke positively or negatively about the proposed prohibition of off-highway vehicle use at North Bruderheim Natural Area, and not specifically about the proposed reclassification or boundary expansion. Responses were received from a range of individuals, including recreational and park users, local community and business members and stakeholder groups.

The primary concerns raised included the potential loss of recreational opportunities, environmental damage due to recreational use, and conflicts between park users and local landowners.

| What We Heard | Response |
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| This is a great move forward in an attempt to protect and conserve the land while providing controlled and responsible recreation. | <p>Reclassification of the sites to provincial recreation areas (PRA) provides a better set of tools to manage recreational use in an environmentally responsible way, and it clearly identifies the value of these areas for outdoor recreation activities that are in high demand in the Edmonton region.</p> <p>In addition to the reclassification, we have expanded the sites by adding approximately 388 hectares of land to Redwater PRA and approximately 261 hectares to North Bruderheim PRA. This public land was reserved for inclusion into the sites for several decades and its addition to the parks will help manage recreation use on adjacent land.</p> |
| There is a need for increased enforcement and management to help control use at the sites. | <p>We will work closely with local municipalities and the local RCMP to manage motorized recreation at both sites. Recreation will be better managed through site upgrades, signage and enforcement. Under the new classification, public safety will be improved by establishing hours of use, minimizing fire risks by prohibiting random camping and random fires, and enforcing the <i>Gaming and Liquor Act</i>.</p> <p>Hunting will continue to be permitted in both sites. However,</p> |

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| | <p>under the new classification, visitors will require a firearms discharge permit prior to hunting. Hunting activities will remain consistent with the current Guide to Hunting Regulations and all applicable Provincial and Federal legislation.</p> <p>The Redwater Riders Club acts as stewards for the Redwater site, and has assisted the province in managing OHV use through information, education and voluntary compliance. Parks Division staff will continue to support the Redwater Riders Club on the ongoing management of the OHV Trails within the Redwater PRA.</p> |
| <p>The re-classified sites should accommodate non-motorized recreational use such as equestrian, hiking, skiing and nature-viewing.</p> | <p>Future planning will be undertaken to determine future facility upgrades at Redwater and North Bruderheim PRAs and will consider the needs of site users. Future facility development could include formalized parking and staging areas, and designated trail development.</p> |
| <p>Motorized recreation is a significant recreational opportunity and strong contributor to the provincial economy, and these sites are some of the few left in the capital region for legal riding.</p> <p>Alternative management methods should be employed as a first step prior to closing the North Bruderheim site to motorized recreation.</p> | <p>Based on feedback, motorized recreation will be permitted at both Redwater and North Bruderheim PRAs, and will be better managed to address public safety concerns, and help to mitigate any environmental impacts.</p> <p>In 2011 and 2012, we expanded conservation officer patrols in the area, and we will continue to work with the local municipalities and RCMP to manage recreational use. Increased management presence may include installing signage, designated trail and infrastructure development, enforcement and education.</p> |
| <p>The areas need to be carefully preserved for future generations.</p> <p>The areas should be designated for low-impact recreation only.</p> | <p>Managed as provincial recreation areas, the sites will have a better set of tools to manage recreational use.</p> <p>Under the new classification, future facility or infrastructure development will require Environmental and Historical Resource assessments, and designated trails will ensure that sensitive areas such as watersheds are avoided.</p> <p>Use patterns and levels at both sites will be carefully monitored over the coming seasons to determine if newly implemented management controls are effective at reducing site impacts.</p> |