

Decision to re-zone a portion of Hilliard’s Bay Provincial Park

What We Heard

Between February 10 and April 9 of 2012, Albertans were invited to share their feedback on a proposal to re-zone a portion of Hilliard’s Bay Provincial Park. We want to thank everyone who provided feedback on the proposal as the input we collected was incredibly valuable.

Input was received by approximately 210 responses. The feedback has been analyzed and grouped by theme.

Over half of the comments received were supportive of the proposal, with approximately one third of the respondents not in favor of the proposal. A small percentage of respondents were classified as neutral, either making observations or requesting specific mitigative measures without specifying a positive or negative position.

Responses were received from a range of individuals, including park users, local community members, and stakeholder groups.

What We Heard	Response
Shaw’s Point Resort is a well-run, family-oriented facility that I support	<p>Shaw’s Point Resort is one of northern Alberta’s largest private campgrounds and currently contains 399 seasonal campsites, 250 overnight campsites, a convenience store and restaurant, cabin and boat rentals, four boat launches and two inland marinas.</p> <p>Shaw’s Point Resort provides unique products and services that are not available elsewhere in the Parks system and is a well-known commodity in the region’s tourism industry.</p>
The region needs more recreational accommodation that will increase tourism and economic development	<p>Shaw’s Point Resort plans to add 120 new campsites for seasonal camping. Recent recreation and tourism studies indicate that the demand for seasonal camping opportunities far exceeds supply in Alberta.</p> <p>In 2012, two existing campground loops (73 sites)</p>

	<p>in Hilliard’s Bay Provincial Park were electrified and widened to better accommodate modern camping units.</p> <p>This recent work at Hilliard’s Bay Provincial Park, along with the proposal by Shaw’s Point Resort, will provide more accommodation, increasing the tourism potential and economic development of the region.</p>
<p>It is inappropriate to use park land for private profit.</p>	<p>The private sector has a long history of use and management of park lands across the province for tourism, recreation, sport and economic benefits. Examples include campground operation, golf course operation, ski hills operation, guiding and outfitting.</p> <p>As per the <i>Plan for Parks</i>, Alberta Parks encourages private sector involvement that will enhance visitor opportunities.</p>
<p>Parks should be left natural and should limit the loss of conservation-oriented lands within the Park</p>	<p>Alberta Parks’ mandate is to protect landscapes, landforms and species within protected areas as well as provide recreation opportunities for Albertans.</p> <p>Hilliard’s Bay Provincial Park encompasses a mature northern boreal forest and a sandy shoreline along one of Alberta’s largest lakes. Facilities at the park include a large campground, three group use areas, a day use area and boat launch. The park is 2324.9 hectares in size, and the re-zoning represents less than one per cent of a transfer of lands from a Natural Environment Zone to a Facility Zone. The re-zoning aims to strike a balance in providing additional recreation and tourism opportunities, the changing needs of Albertans, and conservation of lands.</p> <p>Many of the comments received supported the need to strike a balance between conservation and recreation. As a result, Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, along with Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, will work together to identify high-value ecological areas in the region to be added to the Alberta Parks system</p>

	in the future.
Lesser Slave Lake has enough development on it	<p>Collectively, Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park, Lesser Slave Lake Wildland Park and Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park protect over 65 kilometers of shoreline and riparian habitats associated with Lesser Slave Lake.</p> <p>The park re-zoning is in-land and does not include shore lands associated with Lesser Slave Lake. The Shaw's Point Resort proposal would contain development to an area that already has significant development and associated recreation facilities.</p>
If this proposal is approved it will set a precedence for private development in other parks	<p>Any future development proposals will be assessed on their individual merits and compatibility with the interests of Albertans, park management objectives and the <i>Plan for Parks</i>.</p> <p>The private sector has long been partners in the use and management of park lands across the province on projects such as campground operation, recreational facility operation, and guiding and outfitting. As per the <i>Plan for Parks</i>, Alberta Parks encourages private sector involvement that will enhance visitor opportunities.</p>
The Shaw's Point proposal has not planned sufficiently for contingencies such as fire and security.	Alberta Parks will ensure that standards for contingency planning are upheld through its lease development and agreement processes.
The Shaw's Point Proposal and rezoning will further limit or restrict public access to Lesser Slave Lake.	<p>Shaw's Point Resort had originally proposed to lease an additional 8 acres of land adjacent to Lesser Slave Lake, which would not have been rezoned, but would have been developed by Shaw's Point Resort for recreation use, such as walking trails and picnic areas.</p> <p>This 8 acre parcel of land will no longer be considered as part of a lease with Shaw's Point Resort. This specific parcel of land will continue to provide public access to Lesser Slave Lake and will be managed to preserve and protect known cultural and historical resources.</p>
First Nations should have been	Local First Nations that expressed an interest in

<p>consulted.</p>	<p>the Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park re-zoning were invited to participate in the public consultation process.</p> <p>The Government of Alberta recognizes and respects the treaties, and the constitutional rights under treaties to hunt, trap and fish for food on all unoccupied Crown land. The land in question is not unoccupied, as it has been a provincial park since 1978 and hunting and trapping are not permitted. While fishing is permitted in many provincial parks, there are no water bodies in the 50 acre parcel of land that will be rezoned.</p>
<p>Further environmental studies are needed prior to moving forward</p>	<p>Over the next several months, municipal regulatory approvals, an environmental review, and a final campground design will be completed. Once that process is done, the department will look to approve the project.</p>