

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposal to Re-zone a Portion of Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park

1. What is being proposed?

Alberta Parks is proposing to rezone 50 acres of Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park from a natural environment zone to a facility zone. Rezoning is the first step towards considering a proposal from Shaw's Point Resort to lease this land and develop 120 seasonal campsites as well as provide public space for recreational activities.

2. What is park zoning and how does it relate to this proposal?

Zoning is a tool that is developed during management planning for a park. The current zones in Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park were developed and approved in the management plan dated 1999.

The Alberta Parks zoning framework is used to classify areas within a site based on the ecosystem, preservation requirements, and ability and suitability of the site to provide opportunities for visitor use. For example, an activity that is allowed in a particular class of protected area may not be appropriate across a site's entire land base. Zoning allows specific areas within a site to be managed differently.

A natural environment zone is intended for dispersed outdoor recreation such as hiking, and wildlife viewing. This zone encompasses natural environments and provides opportunities for appreciation and enjoyment of natural heritage values through a variety of outdoor recreation, education and interpretive opportunities. Much of the land base within provincial parks is typically included within the natural environment zone.

A facility zone is used in provincial parks and provincial recreational areas and may include facilities and visitor services that support both day use and overnight accommodation. This zone allows for recreation activities that are more intensive and require more infrastructure, such as campgrounds.

3. Why is the re-zoning being proposed?

Alberta Parks has received a proposal from Shaw's Point Resort to lease land from Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park for the development of seasonal campsites.

As a first step in the consideration of the proposal, Alberta Parks is asking the public for their input on the rezoning.

4. Why is the proposal being considered?

The proposal is in line with Strategy 3 (Provide Recreation Opportunities) in Alberta's Plan for Parks. One aspect of this strategy is to encourage innovative private sector involvement in parks to enhance diversity and visitor opportunities.

As well, recent tourism studies have shown a high demand for seasonal camping opportunities in Alberta, and particularly in the north. This high demand is demonstrated by the over-capacity and waiting lists for seasonal campsites at Shaw's Point Resort.

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5. What is Shaw's Point Resort proposing?

They are proposing to lease 58 acres of land from Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park in order to expand their resort operations. In a 50 acre parcel they propose to develop 120 seasonal campsites. This parcel of land is within a natural environment zone, and would need to be rezoned as a facility zone to further consider the proposal.

The remaining 8 acres of land is adjacent to Lesser Slave Lake, and would not be re-zoned in order to protect the lakeshore's natural characteristics and heritage resources. With this parcel, Shaw's Point Resort is proposing to enhance and reclaim disturbed areas to create a natural area for public recreational use, such as for walking trails and picnic areas.

6. Where are Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park and Shaw's Point Resort?

They are both located on the northwest shore of Lesser Slave Lake in northwestern Alberta about 40 kilometers northeast of High Prairie. Shaw's Point Resort is adjacent to the southwest corner of Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park.

Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park is 2329 hectares in size, encompassing a mature northern boreal forest and a sandy shoreline along one of Alberta's largest lakes. Park facilities include 189 campsites, three group use areas, a day use area and a boat launch. Almost 95% of the park is zoned a Natural Environment zone.

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.

7. How does this proposal fit into Alberta's *Plan for Parks*?

Through implementing the *Plan for Parks*, the Government of Alberta is committed to creating additional recreational opportunities for Albertans, encouraging innovative private sector involvement and generating opportunities to upgrade and develop additional campgrounds and facilities. For more information on Alberta's *Plan for Parks*, please visit www.tpr.alberta.ca/parks/p4p.

9. What happens after the consultation period ends?

A decision regarding the proposal will be made after the 60-day public consultation period is over and all comments have been reviewed. The public feedback gathered during the consultation will be considered along with site management, public safety and further environmental reviews before making a final decision.

A summary of public comments will be posted on www.albertaparks.ca/consult once a decision has been reached.