

Lower Kananaskis River Facility Redevelopment Proposal *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. What is being proposed for the Lower Kananaskis River area?

The redevelopment proposal includes a series of enhancements to upgrade and expand recreational facilities along the Lower Kananaskis River. There are four facility nodes within this planning area – Canoe Meadows, Barrier Lake Visitor Information Centre, Widowmaker and Barrier Dam.

The key objectives of the proposal include ensuring proper balance of facility development, recreational access and conservation; reducing congestion at day use sites; improving river access for recreational users; increasing camping opportunities; and enhancing the Canoe Meadows site to accommodate special events, river recreation, and to act as a multi-function camping area.

You can view the Lower Kananaskis River Facility Redevelopment Proposal at www.albertaparks.ca/consult.

2. What is a conceptual design?

The Lower Kananaskis River Facility Redevelopment proposal is a conceptual design, which is the first phase of the planning process of any development. It broadly outlines current facilities, assesses future needs and recommends upgrades and/or expansions that support the vision and objectives for the sites. The conceptual design will help you to visualize the proposed changes to recognize the anticipated benefits and to identify any potential issues. The concept design stage allows for more flexibility and adaptation through discussion and revision prior to moving forward with detailed design work.

3. Why is this proposal needed?

Many of the recreational facilities in Kananaskis Country were planned and built in the 1970s and 1980s when the population of Alberta was much smaller, and Albertans engaged in different recreational activities on the landscape. In recent years, Alberta has grown to a population of more than three million people, with more than one million of those people living in close proximity to Kananaskis Country. The recreational facilities that were built over thirty years ago are often at, or over capacity, and are out-of-date.

Once implemented, the new and redeveloped facilities described within this plan will begin to address the needs and expectations of Albertans today.

4. Where is the Lower Kananaskis River located and what values does it protect?

The Lower Kananaskis River is located within Bow Valley Provincial Park and flows into the Bow River. The planning area is approximately 80 kilometres from Calgary, along Highway 40 and just south of Highway 1.

The planning area is located within the Montane sub-region, which is characterized by open forests mixed with grasslands. The forests in the planning area are dominated by aspen stands on the terraces above the river, and by spruce forests on the slopes.

The Bow Valley Protected Areas Management Plan, which was approved in 2002, designates the planning area as a facility zone with potential for future expansion. Archaeological and environmental studies were completed in 2010 to inform the planning process for the Lower Kananaskis Facility Redevelopment Proposal. Results from these studies were a key input during the planning of the proposed facility redevelopments to minimize impacts to environmental and archaeological features.

5. What recreational opportunities does the area offer?

The area is a popular day-use and overnight destination, and is recognized for its river-based recreational opportunities. There is a growing number and diversity of river users on the Lower Kananaskis River, which includes kayakers, canoeists and surfers, as well as companies offering rafting and a variety of river recreational activities.

Canoe Meadows has an existing group camping area, and the other three facility areas are day-use only. Canoe Meadows is the location of a kayak slalom course maintained by the Alberta Whitewater Association and the group-use area often hosts special events associated with the slalom course. The Barrier Lake Visitor Information Centre includes a small day-use area and a trailer dump station. Widow Maker is a popular 'put-in' site for river users. The parking lot at Barrier Dam is a popular trail-head for hikers and bikers who use the site to access trails to the northwest of Barrier Lake, as well as a place for visitors to access the lake itself.

6. How and when will the proposal be implemented?

Implementing the entire Redevelopment Proposal will take time and resources, however a key consideration will be the ability to partner with both the private and non-government sectors in the development and operation of facilities. The advantage of this proposal is that each site can be developed independently of each other and can be phased in over several years. After Albertans' comments have been considered and a final plan developed, further work will be necessary to determine funding models for construction and operation of the approved facilities, and the priority for construction of the facilities.

7. How can I comment on the proposal?

Public input is encouraged and important. Send in your comments, suggestions and concerns by clicking on the online comment button below, or you can mail in your feedback to the address below. Feedback must be submitted by April 25, 2011.

Online: [Online Survey](#)

By Email: ParkNews@gov.ab.ca

By Mail:

Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation
Lower Kananaskis River Facility Redevelopment Proposal
2nd floor, Oxbridge Place
9820-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2J6

8. What happens after the public consultation has ended?

All comments will be considered and the proposal will be updated as appropriate. A summary of public comments and the final proposal will be posted on www.albertaparks.ca/consult once approved.