

# Castle Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park

## Alberta Parks Summer Guide



**Please Note**  
This Castle Park Guide is for the summer season from May 1 to November 30, 2023.

## Welcome to the Castle Parks

With more than 105,000 hectares, Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park protect vital habitat for more than 200 rare species. The parks border Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park World Heritage Site to the south, the Crowsnest Pass to the north, the Waterton Biosphere Reserve to the east, and British Columbia's Flathead River Valley to the west. The Castle Parks are a part of the Crown of the Continent ecosystem, an international region with dramatic landscapes and important wildlife corridors.

### Know Before You Go

Stay safe in the Castle Parks. Please review the differences between a Provincial Park and a Wildland Park designation by visiting [albertaparks.ca](http://albertaparks.ca). Conservation Officers enforce the regulations under the Provincial Parks Act to protect the park and support the safety and enjoyment of its users.

#### Please remember:

- Before your visit, check [albertaparks.ca/advisories](http://albertaparks.ca/advisories) and [albertafirebans.ca](http://albertafirebans.ca) for current notices
- Stay on designated trails and respect other users in the area
- Leave no trace of your visit and dispose of your trash in marked bins
- Do not put any foreign materials into any watercourses (e.g., fuel, soap, body waste, grey water)
- Do not cut, remove or damage trees or any other vegetation unless you have a permit
- Read and follow signs and notices

### Biking

Non-motorized bicycles are allowed on designated trails; please see map for specific trails. Use caution as most trails are not yet improved, not regularly maintained, and many are designated as multi-use. Electronic bikes (E-bikes) are permitted on OHV trails only.

### Equestrian

Horse back riding supports a traditional, quiet and accessible way to visit Castle Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park. Equestrians have an opportunity to ride multiuse trails through native ecosystems, fescue grassland, montane forest right up to the sub alpine at Grizzly Lake and beyond.

The grassland in Castle Provincial Park and Wildland is allocated for cattle grazing and wildlife. *Horse grazing is not permitted.* Hay and other feed must be brought in for the duration of your horses' stay. All feed must be cleaned up thoroughly and stored in a manner so it will not blow away or scatter from the campground or day use areas. Hay will carry seeds from invasive agronomic species such as smooth brome, non native fescue, Kentucky bluegrass as well as invasive species such as downy brome and even knapweed. Processed feed such as alfalfa or timothy/alfalfa cubes and pellets are less likely to spread any invasive agronomics or invasive species.

**Syncline Trail Network** is available for equestrians May 1 – November 30 annually.

**Grizzly Lake Staging** (unimproved road) is available for small horse trailer parking (very tight turnaround) when the south castle gate opens June 15 – November 30th annually.

**South Castle Staging Area**, located near DCA 1, is also available for horse trailer parking.



In the comfort of a cabin at Beaver Mines Lake campground, experience the beautiful setting of Castle Provincial Park

It is up to you to be familiar with appropriate activities wherever you are exploring. Be aware of what activities require permitting. Permits are required for:

- Camping in the provincial park
- Tree Cutting and Firewood Collection
- Hunting and Discharging a firearm
- Special Events, Guiding and Instructing, Filming

### Safety and Emergency Communication

Plan ahead. There is limited to no cell phone reception in most of the Castle Parks.

#### Please remember:

- When traveling in the backcountry, bring appropriate equipment, emergency provisions and

- Head lamp on the front of the vehicle capable of emitting a white/clear light of sufficient intensity to illuminate a person or object from at least 60 metres (185 feet)
- Tail lamp on the vehicle rear capable of emitting a red light visible from at least 60 metres (185 feet)

### Highway Vehicles

All vehicles (cars, trucks, Jeeps, SUVs) registered for highway uses are only allowed on highways and designated roadways within the Provincial Park and Wildland Provincial Park. No highway vehicles are allowed on any part of the designated trail system without written authorization.

The O'Hagen road is open to highway vehicles May 1 to November 30; it transitions to a tracked OHV designated winter trail system December 1 when gates across the road on both ends are closed.

South Castle Road is open to highway vehicles mid-June to November 30. This unmaintained road, with a challenging turn around, ends at the Grizzly Lake Staging area. Large horse trailers are asked to use South Castle Staging Area.

## Camping

Castle Provincial Park has more than 330 campsites in four campgrounds, ten comfort cabins, two group camps, seven designated camping areas, and equestrian camping. Castle Wildland Provincial Park has incredible backcountry camping opportunities. The maximum stay for all camping opportunities is 16 consecutive nights with a daily checkout time of 2 pm.

Campers in the Castle Parks, with the exception of Castle River Bridge, need to bring their own drinking water and grey water totes to manage their waste water. Grey and black water totes and holding tanks need to be disposed of at sewer dump stations only. Backcountry campers in Castle Wildland should learn to use, and consider bringing water filters and chemical water purifiers.

review safety information

- Provide family or friends with your detailed trip plans and what to do if you do not report back on time
- Emergency contact information is listed on the back of this publication

### Visitor Information and Services

With rugged peaks, lush valleys, clear lakes and secluded meadows, the Castle area is a great location to engage in outdoor recreation, education and nature appreciation.

Visitor information is available at [albertaparks.ca/castle](http://albertaparks.ca/castle). Look for kiosks located throughout the parks.

To enhance your experience in the region, we encourage you to visit nearby attractions, such as the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, Remington Carriage

### Campgrounds

Castle Provincial Park has a wide range of campgrounds and campsites to suit many camping styles. Many of the campsites have been widened in recent years to accommodate larger RV units. All campgrounds are serviced with outhouses, waste and recycling bins, picnic tables, and fire pits.

To reserve campsites, group camps or comfort cabins, and to access advisories and other information, please go to [reserve.albertaparks.ca](http://reserve.albertaparks.ca). For a brief summary of the available campsites and their services, please refer to the chart on the map.

For the duration of your stay, your registered campsite must be occupied by an accommodation unit. Motorhomes and campervans should give notice to campground staff if a site will be intermittently unoccupied during their stay.

First come, first serve camping (for over 150 camping units) is available at Lynx Creek and the Designated Camping Areas. Equestrian camping has 10 sites. DCA 7 is closed for construction work until 2024.

Camping fees are in effect for all Designated Camping Areas (DCA). The DCAs have improvements such as garbage, formal shared fire pits and outhouses. Please check the website for opening dates and any advisories.

Additional camping opportunities are available nearby at other provincial parks and recreational areas, such as Beauvais Lake, Lundbreck Falls, Island Lake, Chinook, and Oldman Dam.

Museum, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Waterton Lakes National Park and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.

Tourism information is available at the Kootenai Brown Pioneer Village in Pincher Creek and at the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre.

## Recreate Responsibly

### Be Wildlife Smart

Rich with biodiversity, the Castle area contains important habitat and wildlife corridors for many species. You may encounter grizzly and black bears, wolverines, wolves, big horn sheep, cougars, moose and elk. All wildlife can be unpredictable and precautions should be taken when in their habitat.

- Store all attractants, such as food, garbage and pet food, in a secure bear/wildlife proof container
- Stay well back from bears and other large species
- Avoid surprise encounters on trails by making noise
- Keep children close to adults
- Carry bear spray and learn how to use and store it safely
- Pets must be kept on a leash (2 metres) or in a cage, supervised and under physical control at all times
- Clean up after your pet

### Parks Activities

The Castle Parks offer a wide variety of front country and backcountry experiences. Please see trail map for detailed information on the places to go and permitted uses.

### Hiking Trails

Discover sweeping vistas and scenic landscapes by hiking the trails throughout the Castle parks. Be aware that some trails may be closed for improvements or reclamation work and that natural hazards may impact trail experiences.

### Backcountry Camping

Backcountry tent camping is allowed within the Castle Wildland Provincial Park, providing that the campsite and fire is at least 1 kilometre from any facility, road and at least 50 metres from any trail. Please practice traceless camping methods including dismantling fire pits and packing out all your supplies and garbage. Backcountry camping permits are not required.

**Vehicle camping is prohibited in the Wildland Provincial Park. Camping at staging areas and day use parking lots is prohibited.**

## Alberta Parks Regulations

### Hunting

As it did when it was Public Land, Castle Provincial and Wildland Provincial Parks still retain hunting year round, with an increase in activity in the Fall. Hunting is prohibited within 183 meters (200 yards) of any park building or facility zone, such as campgrounds, visitor centres, parking lots, staging areas, picnic/backcountry shelters, fire lookouts, water pumping stations or research stations. Target practice within the parks is not permitted.

All hunters must have a valid hunting license and a firearm discharge permit. To review the rules and download a free discharge permit, visit [albertaparks.ca/castle](http://albertaparks.ca/castle).

*It is your responsibility to review the permit conditions before heading into the park to hunt.*

## Contact

**Campsite Reservations**  
Phone: 1-877-537-2757  
Web: [shop.albertaparks.ca](http://shop.albertaparks.ca)

**General Provincial Park Information**  
Toll Free: 1-877-537-2757  
Web: [albertaparks.ca](http://albertaparks.ca)

**Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)**  
Phone: 911

**Illegal Activity/Public Safety (24/7)**  
Phone: 310-LAND (5263)

**Fire Bans in Alberta**  
Phone: 1-866-FYI-FIRE (394-3473)  
Web: [albertaparks.ca/firebans](http://albertaparks.ca/firebans)

**Report a Forest Fire**  
Phone: 310-FIRE (3473)

**Report-A-Poacher**  
Phone: 1-800-642-3800



[albertaparks.ca/castle](http://albertaparks.ca/castle)  
Photo Credit: Travel Alberta  
Updated April 2024

### Liquor and Cannabis

According to the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act, consumption of liquor is restricted to a temporary dwelling situation inside a registered and permitted campsite or camping area only and to some specifically designated provincial day use area picnic sites where liquor is permitted. Visitors can now enjoy an alcoholic beverage of their choice in select day-use area picnic sites from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm. In the Castle Region, these day use areas include Beaver Mines Lake, Syncline North and Syncline South.

Adult visitors may consume cannabis in their registered campsites and in public areas where tobacco is permitted. Cannabis use is not allowed in motorized vehicles (i.e. cars, trucks, SUVs and vans) unless the vehicle is used as a temporary dwelling at a campsite.

### Firewood and Fires

#### Provincial Park

- Fires are only allowed inside a receptacle or facility designated for that purpose
- Please buy your firewood locally to reduce the chance of introducing forest pests
- Collection of wood or any dead vegetation for burning must have prior authorization by a Conservation Officer or a Tree Cutting permit

#### Wildland Provincial Park

Collection of dead wood for fires is allowed for immediate use and otherwise requires a permit for removal. Traceless camping practices are required (clean up all evidence after using the area).

# Castle Provincial Park & Wildland Provincial Park Designated Summer Trails 2024

Valid for May 1 to November 30

## Map Legend

	Castle Provincial Park		Syncline Trail Network
	Castle Wildland Provincial Park		Towns and Villages
	Private Land		Mountain
	Livingstone PLUZ		Pass
	Other Provincial Parks		Lakes
	Ecological Reserve		Rivers / Streams
	Campground		Roads - Paved
	Backcountry Campground		Roads - Gravel
	Group Use Campground		Alberta - British Columbia Border
	Equestrian Campground		Hiking Trail
	Day Use Area		Resource Routes - Non Motorized
	Fishing		Multi-Use Trail / Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Trail
	Staging / Parking		** Permitted OHVs: Side x Sides, Quads, Motorcycles, and Power - assisted bikes, including E-bikes
	Trailhead		Designated Camping Areas
	View Point		MD of Crowsnest Pass
	Washrooms*		

\* Pit toilets available at most day use, camping and staging areas

Campground	# of Sites	Services	Notes
Syncline Group A	11	Power	Reservation Required
Syncline Group B	10	Power	Reservation Required
Beaver Mines Lake	5 Cabins	Comfort Camping	Reservation Required
Beaver Mines Lake	81	Basic	Reservation Required
Castle River Bridge	5 Cabins	Comfort Camping with Power	Reservation Required
Castle River Bridge	25	Power	Reservation Required
Castle Falls	46	Basic	Reservation Required
Lynx Creek	27	Basic	First Come, First Serve
Equestrian Campground	10	Basic	First Come, First Serve
Designated Camping Areas	# 1-5,7	Basic	First Come, First Serve

Please check: [shop.albertaparks.ca](http://shop.albertaparks.ca) for reservations

#	Trail	Designated Use	#	Trail	Designated Use
1	Syncline Trail Network		11	North Lost Creek	
2	Great Divide Trail North		12	South Lost Creek	
3	Gardiner Creek / Great Divide Connector		13	Great Divide Trail South	
4	Mount Ptolemy		14	Middle Kootenay Pass	
5	Andy Good Base		15	Grizzly & Ruby Lakes	
6	North York Creek / Plane Crash		16	North Drywood Falls	
7	Syncline Brook		17	Bovin Lake	
8	Gardiner Creek		18	Table Mountain	
9	MacDonald Pass		19	Barnaby & Southfork Lakes	
10	North Kootenay Pass		20	South Castle Valley	

\*\* Electronic bikes (E-bikes) are permitted on OHV trails only

