

Frequently asked questions:

## David Thompson Corridor Parking and Areas Construction Project and Area Closure

### Bighorn Dam Public Lands Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area

Where is David Thompson Corridor?

David Thompson Corridor (DTC) is located on Highway 11 between Nordegg and Banff.

What is occurring?

A capital project known as DTC Infrastructure Safety Upgrades will see investment of \$12.3 million to upgrade 13 sites along the corridor.

The second phase of the project commenced in June 2023 and will see construction in two locations: Bighorn Dam and Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area (PRA). Construction within these sites will take place between June 2023 and July 2024.

The first phase of the project is complete. A number of upgrades were completed from summer 2022 to summer 2023. Construction work was phased to allow access to the various PRA and Public Lands (PL) sites. From east to west sites included: Coliseum Mountain, Allstones Lake, Abraham Slabs, Hoodoo Creek, Coral Creek, Pinto Lake, Preachers Point, Cavalcade, Kinglet/Tuff Puff, Wildhorse and Owen Creek.

Why is this work needed?

Over the past decade, there has been a steady increase in visitation and usage of the various sites along the DTC. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the visitation numbers increased dramatically and all sites were overwhelmed, with safety issues highlighted. This project will increase the capacity of the sites to handle the higher visitation numbers and to mitigate various safety issues. The work at Bighorn Dam and Crescent Falls PRA will help address some of the issues identified, to ensure visitors can safely use the facilities and enjoy the natural beauty found in David Thompson Corridor.

What will the work entail?

The work at Bighorn Dam seeks to formalize and upgrade the access road system with the site, increase rustic camping access, formalize parking areas, install toilets, install signage, develop new highway crossing for Terishshner trail and install a new Terishshner connector trail with a parking area for staging.

The work at Crescent Falls PRA seeks to enlarge the parking areas, upgrade access roads down to the lower area, install a new pedestrian trail, install a new

vehicle crossing, upgrade safety access to view the falls, formalize and upgrade day use area, increase signage, and install additional toilets and bear proof garbage bins.

Will Forestry and Parks be closing both of the sites?

Bighorn Dam will be open partially throughout the site in 2023, from April to December. The closure will be phased so the site and various trails can be accessed. Minor works will recommence from April to June 2024.

Crescent Falls PRA will be closed from June 2023 to July 2024. As there is only one way to access the falls, there is no safe way to phase the construction of the project. Alternative places to visit throughout the David Thompson Corridor include Siffleur Falls, Allstones Lake and Coliseum Mountain among other locations.

Will the closures be all at once or phased?

Construction for Bighorn Dam will be phased and signage will be placed on site prior to area closures starting in April 2023 to June 2024. Signage will be removed when no work is occurring on site.

Construction for Crescent Falls PRA cannot be phased and the site will be closed for the duration of construction, from June 2023 to July 2024.

What does the closure include?

During the construction closure at Crescent Falls, no access is permitted, and the site will be closed from Highway 11. The closure at Bighorn Dam will be limited to construction zones. Visitors need to follow signage on site and stay out of the construction work zones. Signage on site with appropriate barriers will be installed at a number of visible areas, to ensure the closure is known and communicated.

Can I access trails from other parking lots?

Access is not permitted on trails leading to or within Crescent Falls PRA. Alternate parking and staging areas are available for trail access along Highway 11 (i.e. Siffleur Falls, Allstones Lake, Coliseum Mountain, etc.).

How long will construction take?

The construction upgrades of the two sites will be completed over 13 months, from June 2023 to July 2024. The duration accounts for limited ability to complete work over the winter, and phasing to allow visitor access within Bighorn Dam. Crescent Falls will remain fully closed to visitors for the 13-month period, during the construction phase.

What happens if I get caught in the site closure?

Sites under construction will be marked clearly with signage and visitors are asked to follow the closure postings. If visitors are on site, they will be asked by the construction crew to vacate the site for their safety as it is an active

construction site. All sites are monitored by Conservation Officers and Forestry and Parks staff.

Why can't this work be done in the off-season instead of the busy summer season?

Construction during the winter is very difficult in the David Thompson Corridor area due to weather and cold temperature conditions.

What else is being completed in the DTC area?

The DTC Infrastructure Safety Upgrades project recently completed Phase 1, which included the formalization of rustic camping, highway access and parking at 11 sites, with construction fully completed as of July 2023. The sites recently completed include, from east to west: Coliseum Mountain, Allstones Lake, Abraham Slabs, Hoodoo Creek, Coral Creek, Pinto Lake, Preachers Point, Cavalcade, Kinglet/Tuff Puff, Wildhorse and Owen Creek. These sites are great alternatives to visit during the construction closures at Bighorn Dam and Crescent Falls.