Marshybank Ecological Reserve

Boundary Amendments

Current State

Marshybank Ecological Reserve is located about 90 kilometres southwest of Edson and conserves over 800 hectares that includes both upper foothills natural sub-region and the alpine and sub-alpine natural sub-regions.

The existing ecological reserve has limited public access, and no public roads. Access is limited to foot traffic using natural features (such as the river) and limited cutlines. Mature lodgepole pine and Engelmann/white spruce forests cover much of the area. Black spruce, willow/dwarf birch and meadow plant communities occur in depressions and valley bottoms.

The ecological reserve includes a west block and an east block. The area covered by the west block has a double designation as both an ecological reserve in 1987 and as a wildland provincial park in 2000, and is dually administered under *Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas, and Heritage Rangelands Act* and the *Provincial Parks Act.*

Proposed Changes

Proposed amendments to the Marshybank Ecological Reserve are to remove a double designation. The intent is to deregulate the west block from ecological reserve and maintain its wildland provincial park designation. The area would be solely designated as part of the Brazeau Canyon Wildland Provincial Park (BCWPP).

The proposed amendment would shift the location of the Marshybank Ecological Reserve east block to be contiguous with the BCWPP. This would result in an area of similar size to the existing east block to continue to be administered as an ecological reserve that would be contiguous with the BCWPP.

These boundary amendments would result in a revised boundary for the area with a net increase of about 40 hectares to the total area of the provincial parks and protected areas system.

Why Are These Changes Proposed?

Removing the double designation on the land base would support a clear, understandable land use system. The area would be managed as a wildland provincial park.

The shift in location of the east block will enable clearer access in the future and better reflect current landscape uses.

The proposed new area for the east block encompasses similar ecological values to the existing area, and by making it contiguous with BCWPP it will increase conservation area connectivity.

Indigenous Values

First Nation Consultation is being undertaken to discuss potential impacts on Treaty rights and traditional land uses and share information related to the proposed boundary amendments.

Future State

Collectively, these changes enable a more cohesive and clear approach to management of this area, and support both conservation values and economic development.

Access in the area will continue to be restricted to foot access to support backcountry experiences (camping, hiking), hunting, fishing and varied traditional land uses and Treaty rights.

How Can I Find Out More?

You can find out more about the provincial parks and protected areas system in Alberta by visiting https://www.albertaparks.ca/albertaparks-ca/management-and-land-use/parks-system/. If you have specific comments or questions related to this proposed boundary amendment, please email parks.engagement@gov.ab.ca.

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