

CITY OF ST. ALBERT

Development of the Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park Master Plan 2019

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Presented by:

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Human Resources, Safety and Environment

History of Park

- Park was designated in 2006 in honour of the late Lieutenant Governor the Honourable Lois Hole
 - High value aquatic habitat and woodlands
 - Encompasses the former Big Lake Natural Area (formed in 1999)
 - Designated an Important Bird Area (over 235 bird species present)
 - Big Lake encompasses 59% of the park's total area – one of the largest wetlands in the Central Parkland Natural Subregion



Significant Features

- Bird's foot delta- one of 3 in the province
- Fern forest- rare community type (S1S2 ranking) – 84 species of vascular plants
- Extremely biodiverse riparian, semi-aquatic and aquatic habitats
- Home to several listed species
- Indigenous artifacts, historical use dating back 5,000 years



Photo: Dragomir Drajs Vujnovic

History of the Project

- Park planning was initiated in 2012, and put on hold until 2013
- 2012 Vision Statement:
 - *Big Lake is a wetland resource treasured by the surrounding region and recognized locally and internationally as a model for integration of residential development with the preservation and enhancement of a natural wetland environment; and for the delivery of world-class education and heritage tourism programs.*



Management Vision – 2016-2017

- *Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park protects a unique and important wetland ecosystem and connects people to nature through educational and low-impact nature-based experiences*
- *The park models how biodiversity and urban development can exist in harmony, and facilitates community engagement in environmental stewardship and nature appreciation*



LHCPP Management Plan - 2019

Purpose:

- To provide a long-term and comprehensive framework to guide both park operations and developments
- To protect natural and cultural values
- Provide a place for Albertans to connect with nature
- Help address land use management conflicts



Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park



Management Plan | February, 2019

Alberta

Key Stakeholders in Plan Development

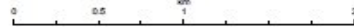
- Big Lake Environmental Support Society
- Ducks Unlimited
- Municipal Stakeholders (St. Albert, Edmonton, Parkland County, Sturgeon County)
- Enjoy Center and Hole Family
- Alberta Resource Recovery Center Working Group
- Nature Alberta
- Educational institutions, post secondary academic institutions
- North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance
- Indigenous communities (Treaty 6 and Métis Locals, Métis Nation)

Zoning Framework

- Dividing the park into spatial units based on coarse ecological values, management objectives, and permitted uses:
 - Natural landscape zone (default)
 - Wilderness zone – left undisturbed by human activities (not present in LHCPP)
 - Special protection zone – access or use may be restricted
 - Facility zone – related to visitor experience
- Management of special protection zones may include seasonal closures through Ministerial Order to protect birds

Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park Map 2 - Park Zoning

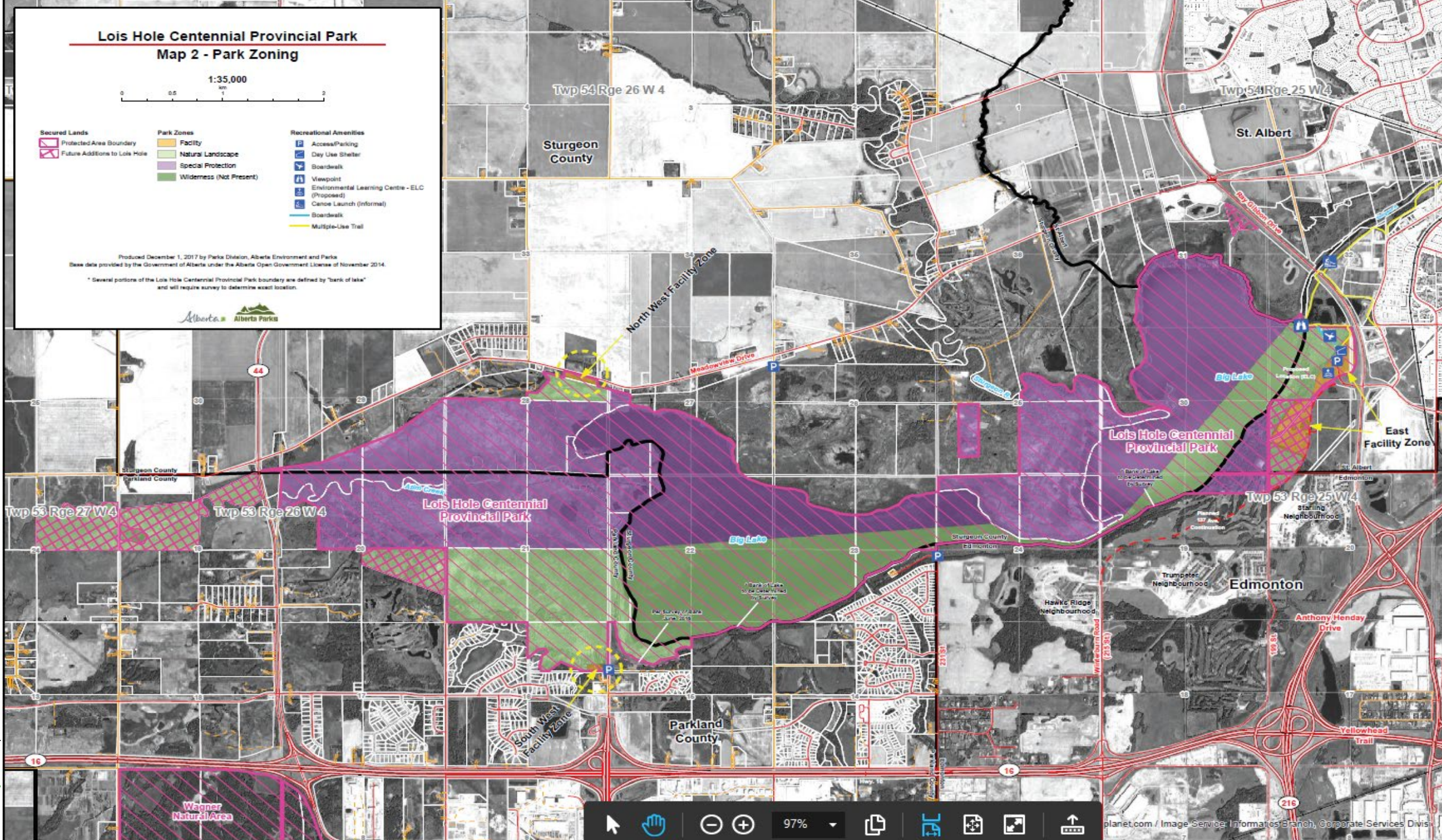
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|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Secured Lands | Park Zones | Recreational Amenities |
| Protected Area Boundary | Facility | Access/Parking |
| Future Additions to Lois Hole | Natural Landscape | Day Use Shelter |
| | Special Protection | Boardwalk |
| | Wilderness (Not Present) | Viewpoint |
| | | Environmental Learning Centre - ELC (Proposed) |
| | | Canoe Launch (Informal) |
| | | Boardwalk |
| | | Multiple-Use Trail |

Produced December 1, 2017 by Parks Division, Alberta Environment and Parks
Base data provided by the Government of Alberta under the Alberta Open Government License of November 2014.

* Several portions of the Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park boundary are defined by "bank of lake" and will require survey to determine exact location.



Tools Used in Plan Development

Biodiversity Assessment

- 2010 – Conference of the Parties for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Strategic plan developed with 20 global biodiversity targets ('Aichi Targets')
- Canada is a signatory to the plan – adopted a suite of 19 national targets
- Lois Hole Park – screened using IUCN standards and is eligible to be reported as an IUCN Category II Protected Area
 - To be managed for ecosystem protection and recreation



Convention on
Biological Diversity



PAME Assessment

- Suite of tools to assess management effectiveness based on a global standard framework called “protected areas management effectiveness” (PAME)
- Assessment of values and design risks at both local and system-wide scales:
 - Assessment of stressors and threats
 - Evaluation of management systems and processes
 - Evaluation of delivery of objectives according to site values

PAME Assessment

- Pilot assessment completed on LHCPP
- Results used to inform the management objectives and identify site values
- Identified knowledge and research gaps
- PAME “report card” developed

CONSERVATION VALUES	Addressed in Management Plan Section:
Ecosystem Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captures one upland theme, and 3 freshwater theme natural landscape types 	3.0
Special or Unique Habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant essential habitat: internationally significant Important Bird Area • Essential bird habitat for a wide diversity of water birds • One ecologically rare and ecologically diverse plant community 	3.2, 3.3
Special Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One regionally significant landform: Sturgeon River birdsfoot delta 	3.0
Species of Concern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several species listed as sensitive or conservation concern are found here • All species of conservation concern occur in other areas of the North Saskatchewan region 	3.3
Ecological Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One regionally significant wildlife corridor • Knowledge gap: Natural ecological functions and disturbance regimes including flood cycle is unknown 	3.2, 3.4
Hydrologic Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared to the surrounding land base, there is a relatively low level of watershed disturbance within LHCPP • Very small proportions of the Atim and Sturgeon watersheds are within LHCPP • Knowledge gap: Lotic connectivity 	3.6
Park Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area within the park is largely undisturbed • The park protects a relatively large land base for the parkland region • Buffers between the park and highly disturbed adjacent land are very small 	3.9

Key Threats

- Human disturbance to wildlife and ecological function through recreational activities
- Pollution
- Residential and commercial development
- Agriculture
- Transportation corridors
- Invasive species

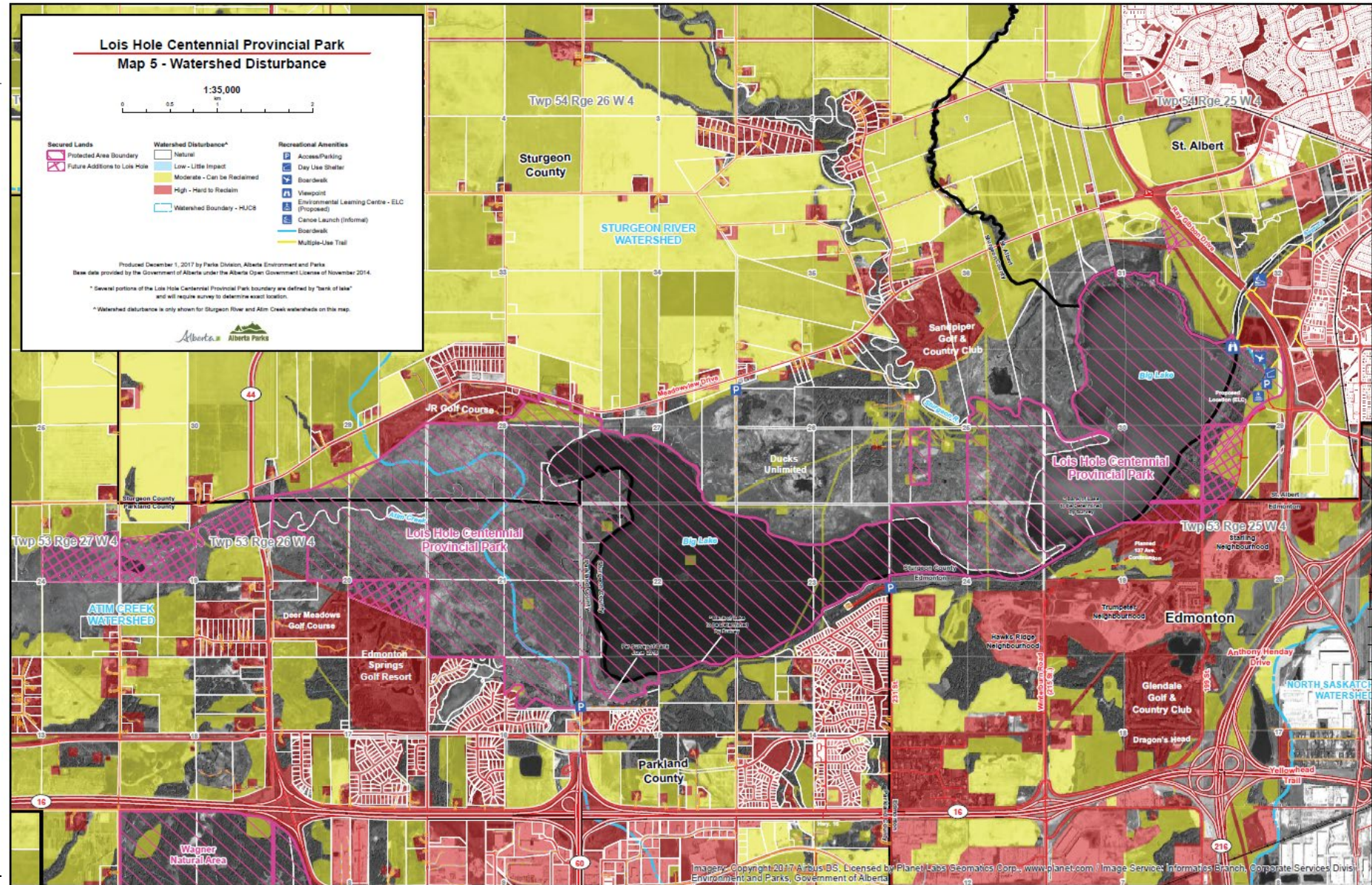


Watershed Disturbance

Blue = little impact

Yellow = moderate impact, can be reclaimed

Red = High, hard to reclaim



Plan Objectives and Strategies

Categories		
Environmental monitoring	Water resources	Low-impact nature-based land recreation
Ecosystem function and biodiversity	Climate change	Water-based recreation
Ecological connectivity	Cultural use and historic resources	Nature-based play
Invasive species	Adjacent land use development	Community wellness
Partnerships and collaboration	Indigenous peoples	Natural Sciences
Visitor experience	Marketing and promotion	Research, monitoring and adaptive management

Indigenous Peoples

- Priority is to maintain First Nations treaty rights for fishing at Big Lake
- May be interest in other activities:
 - Collection of medicinal and ceremonial plants and other materials
 - Conducting ceremonies
- Requires education through cultural awareness education programs
- Development of relationships
- Ensuring access to the park
- Protection of ceremonial and cultural sites

Facility Development Potential

- Existing interpretive boardwalk (DU)
- Potential for:
 - Trails with regional connectivity
 - Day-use facilities
 - Campground
 - Environmental learning center



Facility Development Potential

- Environmental Learning Center:
 - In 2010, Tourism, Parks and Recreation signed a MOU with the City of St. Albert and Beaverbrook Developments
 - For the donation of lands for an educational center
 - To be developed by Tourism, Parks and Recreation
 - Timing based on availability of funding
 - At time of plan, potential for partnership with Alberta Climate Change Office for feasibility study
 - Status??

Implementation and Review

- Alberta Parks will prioritize objectives and strategies and identify timing and resource requirements
- Management actions to be implemented over next 10 years
- Further consultation as needed
- Success of implementation relies on the participation of all surrounding communities
- Formal review in 2029

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Plan link:

https://www.albertaparks.ca/media/6495952/lois-hole-provincial-park-management-plan_feb-20-2019.pdf

