

# Chapter 25

## Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area



*Assessment and Recommendations for Visitor Services*

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Figure 25.1  
Location of Crescent Falls  
Provincial Recreation Area.

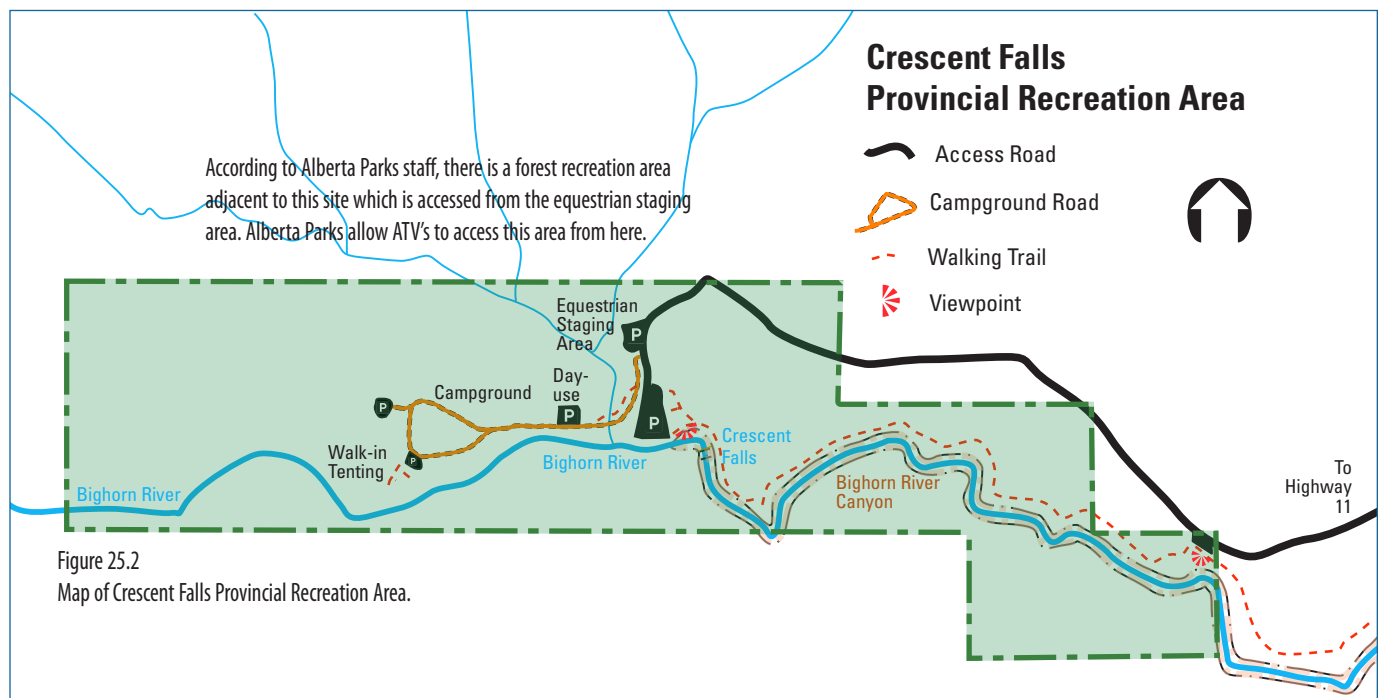
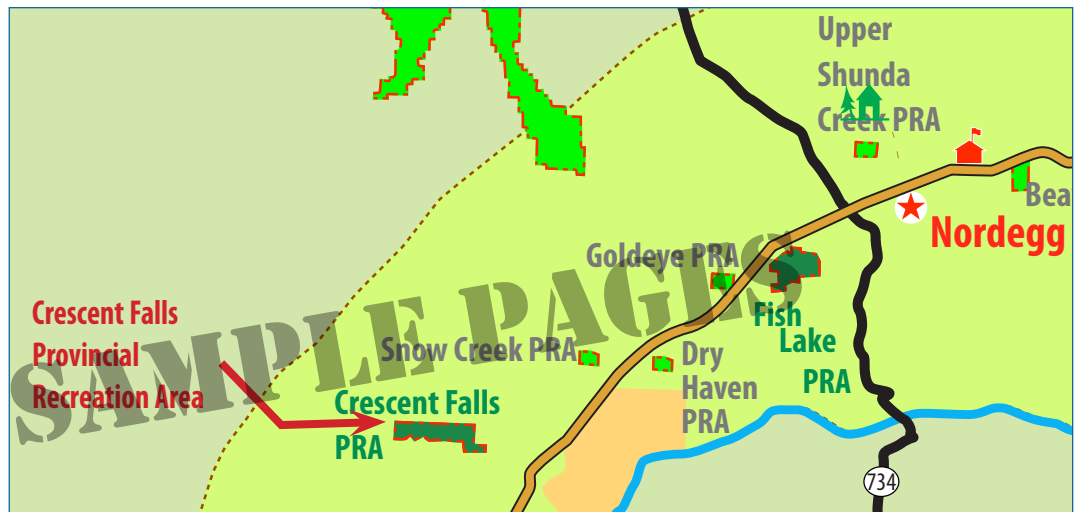


Figure 25.2  
Map of Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area.

## Introduction

This chapter consists of two sections:

### Section 1: Features Summary

This is a review of key features and processes that can be found about Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area. Visitor Services staff can use this section (plus Background Paper 2: Features Inventory: Big Picture Aspects) as a first stop for information for use in interpretation and information/orientation programming.

### Section 2: Program Statements and Implementation

This is a review and recommendations for Visitor Services Programming in ten areas of core competency:

1. Research
2. Information Orientation
3. Assisting Park Management
4. Interpretation
5. Education
6. Stewardship Involvement
7. Recreation Programming
8. Collaboration and Partnership
9. Tourism
10. Marketing

Visitor Services staff can use this section to make decisions on Visitor Services programming over the next five years.

## Key Constraint

### Staff

Lack of staff at this site is a major constraining factor for developing the overall Visitor Services program. Staffing will limit what can be achieved over the next five years. In some cases core tasks can only be achieved with addition of highly skilled staff.

### Information

Currently there is a lack of information about the site's features, especially its viewable geology. The recreation area also lacks detailed information about visitors activities, background and interests. Until these deficiencies are addressed, it will be difficult for Visitor Services staff to develop effective interpretation.

### Infrastructure

The two viewpoints in the recreation area are well placed and well built. However, most of the recreation area's infrastructure is old and not up to current Alberta Parks standards. The trail that runs along the rim of the Bighorn River Canyon connecting the two viewpoints is in poor condition in many places with significant safety issues. Improved, up-to-date infrastructure will make it possible for Alberta Parks staff to develop effective information/orientation and interpretive programming.

## Site Overview

Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area is located approximately 22 km west of Nordegg on Hwy. 11, then 6 km north on the recreation area's access road—see Figure 25.1. It is a small 262 hectare parcel of land that encompasses a section of the Bighorn Rivers including Crescent Falls and the first kilometre or so of the upper Bighorn River Canyon. According to the Alberta Parks website, the campground has 29 sites including several sites for equestrian riders who use the equestrian staging area. See Figure 25.2 for the general layout of the recreation area.

Key recreation activities include sightseeing, hiking, camping and ice climbing. The site is also used as an equestrian and ATV staging area for access to trails on nearby public lands. Currently, except for camping, the extent and timing of these recreation activities is not known.

General information about natural and cultural features of Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area is very limited. It has no biophysical inventory or management plan.

### What Are Provincial Recreation Areas

According to the Alberta Parks website ([www.albertaparks.ca/aboutparks.aspx](http://www.albertaparks.ca/aboutparks.aspx)), Provincial Recreation Areas are managed with facilitation of outdoor recreation as the primary objective.

Many play a significant role in management of adjacent Crown lands and waters by localizing the impact of overnight camping and serving as staging areas for recreation activities on crown land.

Some Provincial Recreation Areas are intensively developed, while others such as Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area remain largely in a rustic state.

## Section 1

### Features Summary





## Features Review

### Geology

#### Foothills

Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area is located in the Upper Foothills Subregion of the Foothills Natural Region. The foothills are a band of parallel, northwest-southeast trending low ridges and valleys typical of southwestern Alberta. They form a 20 to 50 km. wide transition zone between the more rugged, higher elevation, Rocky Mountains and the rolling, lower elevation Boreal Forest Natural Region (see Background Paper 2 for more details).



Figure 25.3 The Bighorn River Canyon from the viewpoint about 1 km downstream of Crescent Falls.

#### Bedrock

The recreation area includes the upper section of the Bighorn River gorge which provides some excellent views of the top strata of the area's bedrock. Views of exposed bedrock ridges can be seen from the viewpoint on the northeastern edge of the recreation area (see Figure 25.3) and the viewpoint overlooking Crescent Falls (see Figure 25.4) and along an unnamed trail that follows the northern rim of the Bighorn River Canyon (see Figure 25.6).



Figure 25.4 View of a bedrock strata at top of Crescent Falls where the Bighorn River Canyon begins.



Figure 25.6 View of a bedrock strata from the canyon-rim trail.

### Geological Importance of the Crescent Falls Area

Marilyn J. Nelson at the Royal Alberta Museum developed a method to recognize and understand the significance to Alberta's earth science sites and to evaluate and compare them (*A Method for Assessment of the Significance of Geological Sites*, 2008, Royal Alberta Museum, [www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/vpub/geology/english/home.htm](http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/vpub/geology/english/home.htm)).

In this paper Nelson identifies detailed evaluation criteria for assessing the geological significance, degree of threat to the resource and education/interpretation value. She then applied these criteria to 35 significant geological sites in Alberta, including Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area.

Crescent Falls PRA	Score	Classification
Geological Significance	29/50 (0 = no value, 50 = high value)	Moderately Significant
Degree of Threat	9/40 (0 = no value, 40 = high value)	Low Threat
Protection Priority	Site does not require protection, preservation, or maintenance at the present time	
Interpretive Value	55/60 (0 = no value, 60 = high value)	High Interpretive Potential

## Rock Formations that Can Be Observed

The Edmonton Geological Survey provides some information about the local bedrock (Willem Langenberg and Rick Richardson. 1991. *Geology, Coal Mining and Coal-Bed Methane Potential of the Nordegg Area, Alberta*. Thirty-Third Annual Field Trip Edmonton Geological Society Alberta Geological Survey.).

Three geological formations can be observed:

### Gladstone Formation

This lower Cretaceous Formation is equivalent in age and structure to the oilsands-bearing McMurray Formation in northeastern Alberta. It was formed at a transition area between a well drained alluvial plain (containing thin deposits of coal) with a wet coastal plain (containing thicker coal deposits).

### Moosebar Formation

This formation contains a mixture of fully marine deposits and shoreline and beach deposits.

The lower Moosebar Formation consists of a series of fine-grained mudstones interbedded with sharp based siltstones and thin sandstones. It is interpreted to have formed in an offshore environment in which storm events periodically deposited thin sand layers. The upper Moosebar has more sandstones.

### Torrens Member

This member consists of very thick layers of fine grained sandstone. Scour surfaces with pebble deposits and small trace fossils may be present. This was probably formed in open ocean but there may have been periods of sea-level change which is evidenced by some shoreline deposits.

## Viewpoints

### Eastern Viewpoint

This site is located along the access road and provides incoming visitors with their first view of the Bighorn River Canyon. According to Langenberg and Richardson (1991) the viewpoint provides excellent views of the Gladstone Formation (Figure 25.7) featuring channel sandstones interbedded with thin layers of coal and carbonaceous shale.

### Crescent Falls Viewpoint

Langenberg and Richardson (1991) state that the area around Crescent Falls provides a superb views of the combined Gladstone-Moosebar-Torrens formations (Figure 25.8). They claim that it is one of the best and easiest accessible section of the Moosebar Formation in Central Alberta.

Langenberg and Richardson (1991) provide a diagram showing a section that describes the rock formation that can be viewed adjacent to Crescent Falls in some detail (see Figure 25.10 on the facing page).



Figure 25.7 View of mostly Gladstone bedrock strata at the eastern boarder viewpoint.



Figure 25.8 View of all three major bedrock strata at the Crescent Falls viewpoint.



## Hydrology

The recreation area lies within the North Saskatchewan River drainage basin. The Bighorn River, flowing from east to west, bisects the recreation area. A small unnamed seasonal stream joins the Bighorn River just west of the main parking area next to the Crescent Falls Viewpoint. The road accessing the main campground passes through this stream (see Figure 25.11).

Both the Bighorn River and the unnamed stream are subject to sudden very high water levels during the early summer snow melt and after rainstorms in nearby high country.

Figure 25.11

The two river systems in Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area: Bighorn River (left) and unnamed mountain stream (centre). →

Note the ford where the recreation area's campground access road crosses the unnamed stream in the flood plain of the Bighorn River (photo below). ↘



## Waterfall and Canyon

The Bighorn River shows its erosive force where it cuts deeply through the sedimentary bedrock strata. This is best seen at Crescent falls and downstream where the river has cut a deep canyon (see Figure 25.12 below).



Figure 25.12

Crescent Falls is at the head of the Bighorn River Canyon. The falls and deep canyon illustrate the erosive power of this river.

Alberta Parks photo.

**Table 25.2**

**Moth and butterfly species collected in one evening by C. D. Bird**

Family Tineidae - Clothes Moths <i>Monopis spilotella</i>
Family Oecophoridae - Oecophorid Moths <i>Depressariodes nivalis</i>
Family Coleophoridae - Casebearer Moths <i>Coleophora</i> sp.
Family Momphidae/elachistidae - Momphid and Elachistid Moths <i>Unnamed species</i>
Family Gelechiidae - Gelechiid Moths <i>Unnamed species</i> <i>Chionodes sattleri</i> <i>Chionodes obscuruscella</i>
Family Yponomeutidae - Yponomeutid Moths <i>Kessleria pannassiae</i>
Family Tortricidae - Tortricid Moths <i>Olethreutes</i> sp. <i>Eana argentana</i> <i>Eana osseana</i>
Family Lycaenidae - Blues and Coppers <i>Plebejus saepiolus</i> (Greenish Blue)
Family Nymphalidae - Fritillaries and others <i>Vanessa cardui</i> (Painted Lady) <i>Phyciodes cocyta</i> (Northern Pearl Crescent)
Family Geometridae - Inchworm or Geometrid Moths <i>Macaria signaria</i> (Pale Marked Angle) <i>Protoparmia porcelaria</i> (Speckled Carpet) <i>Cabera erythemaria</i> (Yellow-dusted Cream Moth) <i>Campaea perlata</i> (Pale Beauty) <i>Scopula inductata</i> (Soft-lined Wave) <i>Dysstroma walkerata</i> <i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i> <i>Xanthorhoe abrasaria</i> <i>Xanthorhoe ramaria</i> <i>Xanthorhoe fossaria</i> <i>Xanthorhoe munitata</i> (American Carpet) <i>Epirrhoe alternata</i> (White-banded Toothed Carpet) <i>Venusia cambrica</i> (The Welsh Wave) <i>Eupithecia cretaceata</i>
Family Arctiidae - Tiger Moths and Others <i>Parasemia plantaginis</i> (Black and White Tiger Moth)
Family Noctuidae - Owlet or Noctuid Moths <i>Polychrosis esmeralda</i> (Delphinium Cutworm Moth) <i>Syngrapha angulidens</i> <i>Panthea acronyctoides</i> (Black Zigzag) <i>Apamea commoda</i> (Southern Quaker) <i>Lasionycta secedens</i> <i>Lasionycta perplexa complex</i> <i>Euxoa divergens</i> (Divergent Dart) <i>Diarsia dislocata</i> (Dislocated Dart) <i>Graphiphora augur</i> (Soothsayer Dart) <i>Eurois occulta</i> (Great Grey Dart) <i>Eurois nigra</i> (Great Black Dart) <i>Xestia mixta</i> <i>Xestia perquiritata</i> (Divided Dart)

## Wildlife

### Mammals, Birds and Amphibians

There appears to have been no studies of wildlife living in the recreation area. It can be assumed that mammals and birds typical of the Upper Foothills Natural Subregion can be observed here.

### Insects

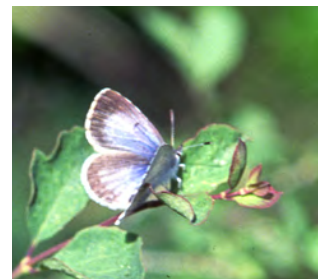
In August of 2005, C. D. Bird conducted a one-night sampling of moths in conifer forest of the recreation area (Bird, C.D., 2005. Moths Collected at the Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area, 13 August 2005. Alberta Lepidopterists' Guild). He collected 38 species of moths and butterflies. He concluded that most of the species encountered are "characteristic of coniferous woods of the Subalpine Zones in the mountains and of boreal areas".

Bird acknowledges that many more species are present in the area but to document them would require sampling every week from spring to fall.



Figure 25.17

Wildlife that likely live in the area include black bear, American dipper, and blue butterfly (Family Lycaenidae).





## Historical and Culture Features

There is currently little information about historical or cultural features in the recreation area.

### Historic Bighorn Trail

One point of historical interest comes from the Alberta Wilderness Association which notes that Crescent Falls is the starting point of the historic Bighorn Trail. This trail leads to Wapiabi Gap and onto the Blackstone Gap. In 1994 the Alberta Wilderness Association proposed that an extension from the Blackstone, over the Chungo Gap to the boundary of the Rocky- Clearwater Forestry Land Use Zone. (Bighorn Wildland: Background Information, Alberta Wilderness Association, [http://albertawilderness.ca/issues/wildlands/areas-of-concern/bighorn/archive/200109Bighorn.pdf/at\\_download/file](http://albertawilderness.ca/issues/wildlands/areas-of-concern/bighorn/archive/200109Bighorn.pdf/at_download/file)).

According to the Hinton Voice Newspaper (*Stories from the Big Horn (High Divide) Trail*, <http://hintonvoice.com/stories-from-the-big-horn-high-divide-trail-p1013-403.htm>), the Bighorn Trail was built in the early 1900s by the Dominion of Canada Forestry Service, as a pack trail used by forest rangers to patrol the forested areas along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains in the 1920s through to the 1950s.

### The Bighorn Coalfield

According to the Rocky Mountain House Chamber of Commerce website: Where the Adventure Begins ([www.wheretheadventurebegins.com/scenicfalls.htm](http://www.wheretheadventurebegins.com/scenicfalls.htm)):

*In 1907, Martin Nordegg was guided by D.B. Dowling, of the Geological Survey of Canada, to the Bighorn coalfields. Dowling had located the coal and mapped the area the previous year. Coal claims, were in unsurveyed territory. Applying for any land claim required that it be surveyed, and the claims tied to a survey post or to a fixed spot.*

*...The Bighorn coalfields were staked in 1907, and location given, by using the rocks above Bighorn (Crescent) Falls as the "immovable starting point". These Bighorn coal lands, which included the double waterfall now known as Crescent Falls, were purchased outright. This coalfield...became part of the Brazeau Collieries holdings in 1909, but they were never developed.*

*...In later years, after the mining town of Nordegg was closed, the name, Bighorn Falls, was changed to Crescent Falls... to avoid confusion with another Bighorn Falls, located in the YaHa Tinda area near Sundre.*

## Infrastructure

In general much of the infrastructure is aging and in need of updating and upgrading (see Figure 25.2 for map showing the location of the main infrastructure features of the recreation area).

### Access

The 6 km access road to the recreation is narrow with steep sections that may challenge some small vehicles pulling large cap trailers and wide camper vans and buses. The gravel base is well maintained and is in good condition.

The recreation area road that accesses the dayuse area and campground fords an unnamed stream just upstream of it's junction with the Bighorn River. This ford can be inundated by high water resulting from spring melt and summer rainstorms.



Figure 25.18 Stream ford at lower water flow.

### Entry Sign



The entry sign, located at the junction of Highway 11 and the recreation area access road. It is aging and covered with messages and graffiti. Additional signs are placed nearby in a random fashion and the foreground is overgrown with brush. The sign and site needs to be upgraded to Alberta Parks Sign Program standards.

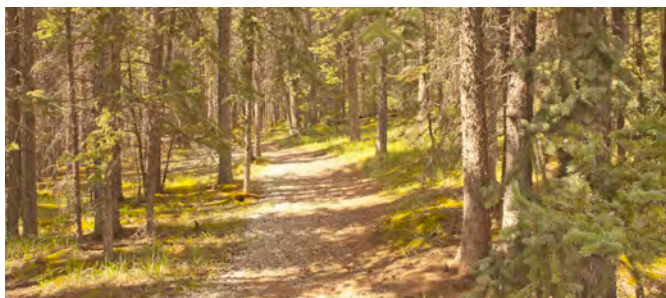


Figure 25.27 Section of gravel-based trail near the Bighorn River Canyon Viewpoint.



Figure 25.28 Most of the trail has no base and exhibits sections of erosion.

### Trails within the Recreation Area

The main trail within the recreation area follows the rim of the Bighorn River Canyon from the parking lot beside the Crescent Falls Viewpoint to the Bighorn River Viewpoint near the eastern border of the property (see Figure 25.26).

Parts of the trail are well maintained gravel base (see Figure 25.27). However the majority has no base and exhibits extensive erosion and some braiding (see Figure 25.28).

The trail affords excellent views of the Bighorn River Canyon (see Figure 25.29). Unfortunately there are few signs advising walkers of the dangers of the areas's steep slopes and cliffs (see Figure 25.30). The one weathered danger sign encountered near Crescent Falls does not conform to current Alberta Parks Sign Program standards (see Figure 25.31).

SAMPLE PAGES

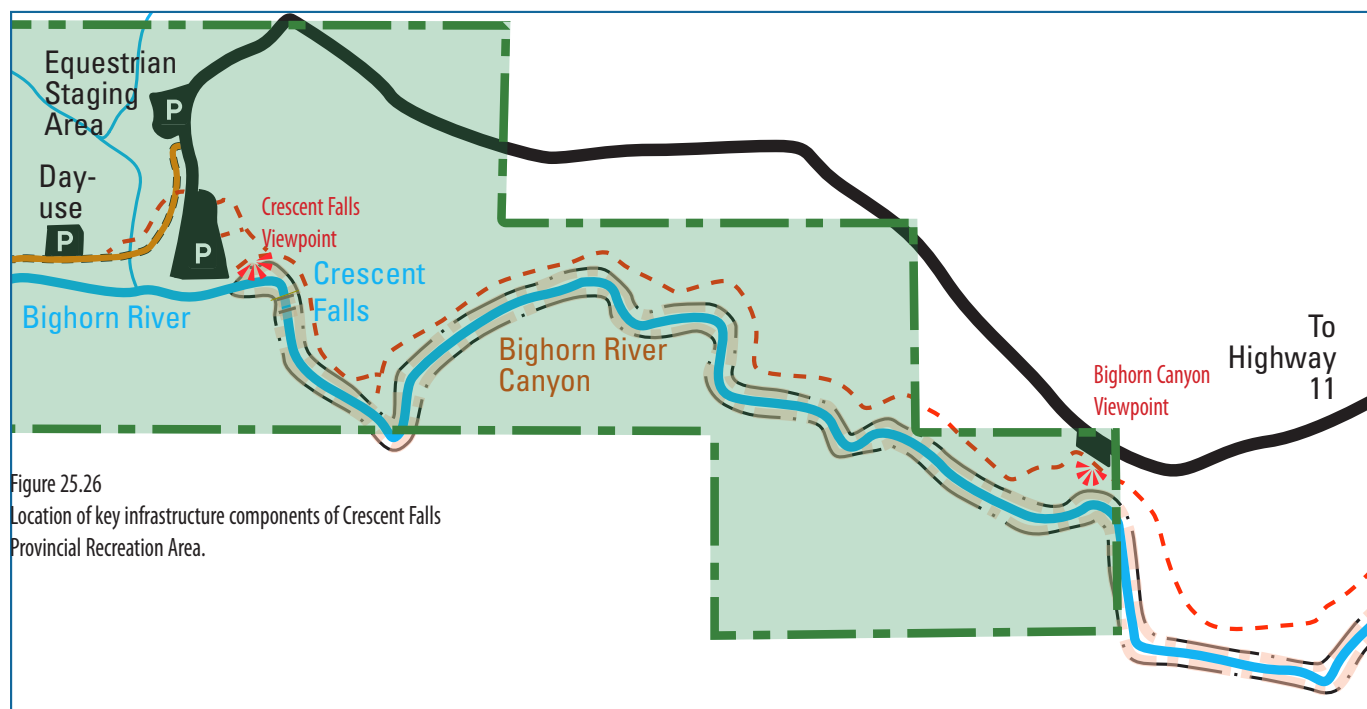


Figure 25.26  
Location of key infrastructure components of Crescent Falls  
Provincial Recreation Area.



## Section 2

### Program Statements and Implementation



# 1. Research

## Introduction

### Current Conditions

#### Biophysical Research

There does not appear to be a specific biophysical study of this recreation area.

Some information about the geology of the area is available from the Edmonton Geological Society and some information on plants and insects has been collected by others (see the Geology, Vegetation and Wildlife entries in Section 1 of this chapter).

In the area of history and cultural importance of the area there is also only a trickle of information (see Section 1 of this chapter).

#### Visitor Research

Apart from general campground statistics there do not appear to be any studies of recreation area visitors that provide information needed to develop user profiles.

## Implementation Recommendations

### Natural History Research

Focus research on the following :

#### Geology

Preliminary information suggest that there are significant opportunities to feature the geology of the area because of the significant exposures of sedimentary bedrock and coal.

1. Work with experts in the Alberta Geological Survey, the Edmonton Geological Society, and the royal Alberta Museum to identify:
  - key geological features and processes that can be observed from the recreation area's two viewpoints and at points along the canyon-rim trail
  - other locations in the recreation area where unique geological features can be observed that currently can not be seen at existing viewpoints or along the current trail system
  - hazard areas where existing trails and lookouts may be located on unsafe locations where land may slump or slide into the Bighorn River canyon
    - work with experts to identify procedures to avoid danger to visitors or to mitigate these dangers

#### Vegetation

1. Work with experts in the University of Alberta's Vascular Plant Herbarium and the Alberta Conservation Information Management System to complete the study and mapping of the recreation area's plant species and communities:

#### Wildlife

1. Work with experts in local universities, the Alberta Conservation Information Management System and local and regional nature clubs to develop and maintain a listing and mapping of bird, mammal, amphibians and invertebrates observed in the Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area:



## Anthropology/Human History

1. Encourage and enable academic researchers to include Crescent Falls in any studies being conducted in the Nordegg area.
2. Encourage and enable research of the history of:
  - the Historic Bighorn Trail
  - the Bighorn Coalfield
  - First Nations use of the area
3. Work with local First Nations communities to identify traditional knowledge of the area and current uses by First Nations people:

## Research on Visitor Use

Focus research on the following areas (see Chapter 3: Best Practice in Visitor Analysis).

### Visitor Monitoring

1. Continue to gather information on visitation numbers and seasonality of use:
  - continue to record campground statistics
  - begin to record dayuse statistics year round
    - vehicle counts in the dayuse area
  - install people counters on all trails in the recreation area
    - data collection year-round (winter will show cross-country skiing use)
  - work with social science experts to develop and deploy methods for counting and profiling people who use the recreation area as a staging point for equestrian and ATV use of trails in adjacent public lands

### Visitor Profiling

1. Develop profiles of all major user groups of this recreation area:
  - develop relationship with social science researchers
    - look for experts who understand Alberta Parks as and agency and nature-focused park users (see Preliminary List of Social Science Research Experts, in Chapter 20)
  - work with social science experts to develop and deploy effective techniques for developing accurate profiles of visitors
    - determine the percentage of multiple repeat visitors
  - use data gathered determine media and approaches for engaging these types of visitors

Each year, analyze these data to identify:

- trends in uses
- level of use
- seasonality of use
- changes in visitor profiles

## Research Local Recreation Opportunities

1. Work with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Travel Alberta and Travel Nordegg to develop and maintain an up-to-date catalogue of trails accessible from Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area.
  - this information will be formatted and made available to users of visitors to the recreation area

## 2. Information/ Orientation

### Introduction

Accurate, up-to-date information/orientation is important for first time visitors and for multiple repeat visitors. As well, consistent design and look and feel of signs, brochures and other Alberta Parks materials ensure that visitors recognize that they are visiting an Alberta Parks property.

The recreation area's information/orientation materials need to be upgraded and updated.

### Implementation Recommendations

As soon as time and budget allow Visitor Services staff will:

1. Develop a recreation area map. This will include:
  - Alberta Sign Program standards including use of Alberta Parks colours, font families, wordmarks and layouts
  - location of recreation area boundaries
  - location and names of all trails in the recreation area plus length, degree of difficulty and estimated time to travel
    - include safety warnings and tips when necessary

These maps will be located at all information kiosks and bulletin boards in the park and on all information/orientation brochures.
2. All recreation area boundaries will be signed using designs outlined in the Alberta Parks Sign Program manual.
3. All information/orientation signs will be planned and monitored following the system set out in the Alberta Parks Sign Program manual.
4. Gather information about and map locations of nearby trails and recreation opportunities adjacent to the recreation area
  - to be made available to visitors via a range of media that can include: Alberta Parks website and Facebook pages, brochures, posters etc.

### 4. Interpretation

#### Introduction

Low staff levels, and the presence of several other popular sites in the David Thompson Corridor that require visitor services makes it likely that Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area will have very limited interpretation services. And that those that are provided will be non-personal. A further option for delivery of interpretation programming may include partnerships

with groups located in the Nordegg area to develop and deliver some interpretation programming on-site. See Section 8. Collaboration and Partnerships below for more information.

The latter option is likely to be limited. Alberta Parks staff have indicated that some groups in the Nordegg area lack the capacity to meet Alberta Parks programming standards.

#### Plan

##### Target Audiences

##### Lack of information

There have been no direct studies on visitors to this recreation area. There are several key questions that must be answered by research in order for Visitor Services staff and/or partners to develop programming that focuses on the needs and interests of site visitors.

- Are most visitors are campers, or day visitors, or people using the recreation area as a staging area for equestrian and ATV activity off-site
- How many are multiple repeat visitors who have camped here over many years, and/may come several times in a year

##### Remote Visitors

Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area has a beautiful waterfall and an impressive small-scale canyon. This site has some potential to attract a small following of remote visitors interested in the area's scenery.

##### The Planning Process

All new interpretation programs must follow the standard planning process identified in Chapter:11: Visitor Services Program Implementation. A Program Planning Form must be used by Alberta Parks staff or by partners and contractors who develop interpretive programs.

#### Interim Interpretive Themes for Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area

Themes and subthemes provide focus and structure and help to identify major areas of Visitor Services effort. Interim interpretive themes and subthemes for Visitor Services in Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area are listed on the following page.

##### Why Interim Themes and Subthemes?

Unfortunately key information about the area's geology and history are not available (see recommendations in segment 1. *Research* of section 2 of this chapter). As a result, permanent interpretive themes and subthemes cannot yet be fully developed. Instead, interim themes and subthemes have been created as place holders until research is completed and more accurate themes and subthemes can be developed by Visitor Service staff.

##### Using Themes and Subthemes

Themes guide the development of both personal and non-personal services.

Each theme is broken down into several subthemes which are usually stated as simple sentences. Subthemes guide Visitor Services staff in developing accurate, relevant and timely Visitor Services offerings. They provide more focus. Most Visitor Services offerings will include several subthemes from one or two themes (see the recreation area's interpretive themes and subthemes on the facing below).

##### Using Themes and Subthemes in Planning and Evaluating Visitor Services

All Visitor Services offerings must fit into the matrix of themes and subthemes. When developing a new program, Visitor Services staff will choose between one to three themes as the guidelines for developing the focus of a Visitor Services offering. For adding further structure, several subthemes can be used to develop the Visitor Services offering.

Another way of thinking is that themes and subthemes are the main learning objectives for the target audiences/participants. Visitor Services staff will then use information from the features inventory and develop activities to support these learning goals.

### Deliver

As with other properties in the David Thompson Corridor, development and delivery will be severely limited by staff availability. The limited Visitor Services staff available to work at Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area will concentrate mostly on non-personal interpretation programming.

Development and delivery of some interpretation programming could be done by partners.

Choice of medium and method must be made by Visitor Services staff based on:

- fit to the needs, interests and profile of target participants
  - this will require gathering of information about the recreation area's visitors (see recommendations in Section 1. Research of this chapter)
- cost-effectiveness of the medium
  - cost vs numbers of participants engaged
- durability of medium used
- fit to a remote site with few staff
  - e.g., are there staff available to maintain the interpretive program?

### Evaluate

Evaluation of all interpretation programming should be done annually by a team of Alberta Parks staff. Best practice in evaluation goes well beyond collecting information about participant satisfaction. It requires assessment of success in reaching planning objectives concerning cognitive (learning information and developing skills) behavioral and attitudinal objectives identified in the program plan.

Alberta Parks is developing a new program evaluation system. This should be used as soon as it is available.

### Support

All interpretation initiatives in this recreation area are dependant on Alberta Parks staff being available either to develop, deploy and evaluate programming directly or to coordinate, assist and mentor partners contracted to develop programs. Also, Visitor Services staff with competency in interpretation will also be required to evaluate programming delivered by partners.

The budget for this site should include a line item identifying funds available for development, deployment, maintenance and evaluation of interpretive programming.

As with staff at other sites in the David Thompson Corridor, Visitor Services staff involved with programming at Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area will require regular professional development and training to keep up-to-date with current technology, techniques and learning theory.



### Implementation Recommendations

#### Address Missing Critical Success Factors

##### Research

1. Encourage and enable research on natural history and cultural history of Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area (see Section 1 Research of this chapter). Research on the area's geological features and processes is the highest priority.
2. Encourage and enable research on visitors and remote program audiences with partners such as Travel Alberta and/or through contracts with social science research experts (see sidebar on this page). Focus on campers and dayuse visitors
  - current numbers
  - duration of stay
  - percentage of multiple repeat visitors
  - place of origin
  - activities they take part in
    - in the recreation area
    - outside the recreation area

##### Process

1. Visitor Services staff, partners and contractors must use a program planning form for all new interpretive programs.
2. Develop an effective evaluation system for each area of interpretation (non-persona, personal, outreach to remote audiences).
  - use the current Alberta Parks evaluation form as a start

##### Staffing

1. When budget allows, hire a full-time Visitor Services officer in charge of developing programs for the western half of the David Thompson Corridor (concentrating on Kootenay Plains Ecological Reserve, White Goat Wilderness Area and Siffleur Wilderness Area but including Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area).

##### Staff Professional Development

1. Visitor Services staff in the David Thompson Corridor will need to attend workshops and conferences in the field of heritage interpretation and be members of national and regional professional associations.

## On-site Interpretation Opportunities

### Personal Interpretation

Current low Alberta Parks staffing precludes on-site personal interpretation in the foreseeable future.

### Non-Personal Interpretation

1. As soon as possible, (i.e. when research on the area's geology and when visitor profiles are completed) develop interpretation materials for the two viewpoints.
2. Within the next five years, based on research on the area's geology and geological processes, develop an interpretive trail guide for the canyon-rim trail that integrates with the interpretation at the two viewpoints.
  - note that the recommended geological research may indicate that need for additional viewpoints and side trails associated with the canyon-rim trail
  - decisions on media and methods used for this project must be made after studies on the number of trail users, visitor profiles and a geological features inventory are completed
3. If data on the recreation area's use as a staging area for equestrian trail riding and ATV use is high, consider working with partners to develop interpretive trail guides for the most popular trails on adjacent public lands.
4. Work with partners such as the University of Alberta, the Alberta Lepidopterists' Guild local and regional nature clubs to complete and maintain species lists of plants and animals found in the recreation area.
  - this could include citizen science projects such as IceWatch and PlantWatch

SAMPLE PAGES

## 5. Education

Alberta Parks staff indicate that a small number of school groups may camp in Crescent Falls Provincial Recreation Area's group camp. These numbers are not recorded.

### ➡ Implementation Recommendations

Although the area may have high potential as a location for study of geology, current lack of safe trail infrastructure and lack of staffing make it unlikely that Alberta Parks will be able to deliver personal or non-personal school programming at this site.