



CONSTRUCTION CLOSURES

Canoe Meadows and Widowmaker

Bow Valley Provincial Park

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What is happening at Canoe Meadows and Widowmaker?

Under the approved Lower Kananaskis River – Barrier Lake Redevelopment Plan (2018) Alberta Parks is redeveloping Canoe Meadows Group Camp and Day Use Area and Widowmaker Day Use Area to modernize infrastructure, enhance site amenities, improve Lower Kananaskis River access, diversify camping options, and increase parking capacity. Starting March 1st, 2020 construction will begin for both of these sites. In order to ensure public and contractor safety as well as timely and cost-effective construction, full closures are being put in place for the duration of construction.

Closure Timelines

- ✓ **Canoe Meadows** | **March 01 to June 26, 2020**
- ✓ **Widowmaker** | **March 01 to May 22, 2020**

2. What do the construction closures involve?

The entirety of Canoe Meadows and Widowmaker will be fully closed to commercial and public recreation use activities for the duration of construction (see attached Closures and Alternative Access Map). This includes all access trails and points to the Lower Kananaskis River (LKR), parking, day-use, and overnight use at the group camp, in, at, thru, and around Canoe Meadows and Widowmaker.

- Do not attempt to access the closure area at, thru, or around the construction sites at any time.
- Follow construction signage and barricades.
- No parking nearby or along the highway ditches/shoulders.
- No river access along or walking upstream using the ~~river~~ trails *paddlers may safely walk using the riverbed/shoreline when water levels allow. **RIVERWALK @ CANOE MEADOWS OK**
- No access points for put-in or take-out at either sites.
- Stay out of the site at all times - no access or unauthorized personnel 24 hours/7 days a week.

We ask all paddlers to be patient and to fully respect the closures, construction signage, and barricades. Failure to obey may result in charges and in the contractor needing to stop work, which risks delays. Completing construction safely and efficiently is Alberta Parks' top priority. Cooperation by all users is vital for successful completion of the projects.

3. Why are closures being put in place and what alternatives were considered?

The construction closures are being put in place to ensure public and contractor safety as well as timely and cost-efficient construction.

Widowmaker will be closed for approximately two and a half months. Canoe Meadows will be closed for approximately four months. These timelines are aggressive and will minimize impacts to river users by targeting project completion prior to the busy summer season. In order to achieve these timelines a full closure is necessary. Partial closures can significantly extend project timelines, expose the public and contractor to unnecessary risks, and in addition, can substantially increase project costs.

Several alternatives to full closures were fully investigated including staggered construction, alternative river access points, and controlled site access. These alternatives were not reasonably feasible given the scope of major construction, heavy machinery, working crews, hauling trucks, construction traffic, public safety liability, and tight timelines to achieve the projects prior to the busiest summer months.

4. How will access to the Lower Kananaskis River be facilitated during the construction closures?

Kayakers, Surfers, and Canoeists – Barrier Visitor Centre

Kayakers, surfers, and canoeists will share access to the Lower Kananaskis River from the Barrier Visitor Centre for the duration of the construction closure at Canoe Meadows.

- Paddlers/river surfers should plan to put-in at the Barrier Visitor Centre and for those paddling down river, take-out at Seebe.
- There is no take-out **or** trail access permitted at Canoe Meadows.
- Paddlers may walk upstream using the riverbed/shoreline. *and River Walk*
- As everyone will be sharing the same access point during the construction closures, please anticipate that there will be congestion and plan accordingly.
- We ask all users to be patient and to consider car-pooling, reducing frequency of activities, and to paddle/surf alternative rivers.

Accelerated Construction at Widowmaker to Support Commercial Rafting Operators

There is **no river access** for commercial rafting operations or training during the Widowmaker construction closure.

However, concessions have been organized to accelerate construction for Widowmaker with a target completion date of May 22, 2020 to ensure minimal impacts to business operations. Operators will at maximum have to adjust schedules by two weeks.

5. What are the details of the project? What is being improved at each site?

A number of significant improvements will be completed at Canoe Meadows and Widomaker. Both sites will be refurbished and expanded to enhance visitor experience, modernize the site, improve functionality and public safety, reduce user conflicts, and address growing demands. Total project cost is \$2.8 million (Canoe Meadows: \$1.6 million and Widomaker: \$1.2 million). Below is a summary of overall and site-specific improvements. Please see attached Site Designs for additional details.

Overall Scope (Applies to Both Sites):

- ✓ Update Wayfinding and Signage
- ✓ Delineate River Access Points and Trails
 - Refurbish existing river access staircases
 - Establish and formalize accesses and trails throughout the project sites
- ✓ Improve Road Access
 - Refurbish and resurface (pave) existing road structures and surfaces
 - Construct new road structures and surfaces
- ✓ Expand and Re-surface Parking
 - Refurbish and resurface (pave) existing parking facilities
 - Construct new expanded parking facilities
- ✓ Redevelop Day Use Areas
 - Install new washroom facilities and day use area furnishings (e.g., picnic tables)

Canoe Meadows Day Use Area and Group Camp Scope:

- ✓ Construct new auto-accessible walk-in tent camping sites complete with dedicated parking area, washroom facility, food storage locker and site amenities (e.g. picnic tables and fire pits);
- ✓ Formalize public access trail from day use parking lot to the river (outside of group camp area);
- ✓ Replace and refurbish group camp facilities and amenities (e.g., group camp shelter, fire pits, and picnic tables);
- ✓ Expand day use parking lot and enhance day use area amenities (e.g. picnic tables, signage, bike racks, etc.);
- ✓ Refurbish and resurface (pave) day use parking lot and road surfaces
- ✓ Formalize and improve river access points and trails and;
- ✓ Supply and install gear drying racks and day use area change room.

Widomaker Day Use Area Scope:

- ✓ Expand day use parking lot and enhance day use area amenities (e.g. picnic tables, signage etc.);
- ✓ Refurbish and resurface (pave) day use entrance road, day use parking lot and road surfaces
- ✓ Repair and refurbish all existing river access points (e.g. staircases and trails) above and below the Widomaker feature to support put-in/take-out;
- ✓ Construct new gravel access road with turnaround loop, unloading area, washroom facility, vehicle parking and river access staircase that will be dedicated for commercial white water rafting operators.

6. How do I stay updated? Who do I contact for more information?

To stay up to date on construction advisories please visit:

<https://albertaparks.ca/parks/kananaskis/kananaskis-country/advisories-public-safety/>

For questions regarding the redevelopment plan email: kananaskis.projects@gov.ab.ca

Media Contact: AEP.Mediainquiries@gov.ab.ca