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County Council Approves Conservation and Recreation Plan for Saskatoon Mountain Area

On Monday, Council approved the Recreation and Conservation Plan for Saskatoon Mountain Area which will now be forwarded to the Province for approval.

Saskatoon Mountain Natural Area is currently a Provincial Natural Area. Among other recommendations, the Plan proposes redesignating it to a Provincial Recreation Area. Saskatoon Mountain Natural Area is under the management of Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. The County leases a day-use area. Provincial Recreation Areas support outdoor activities in a range of man-made and natural settings with the primary objective of promoting outdoor recreation. Some Provincial Recreation Areas are highly developed while others remain largely undeveloped.

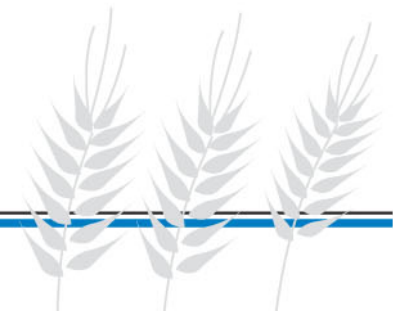
Over the past several decades the Natural Area has been enjoyed by a wide range of recreationists, such as equestrians, hikers, cross-country skiers, picnickers, people looking at the view, primitive weapons hunters, and all-terrain-vehicle (ATV) use.

The Plan has been developed with extensive public and stakeholder input that was collected and compiled by an independent third party consultant, O2 Planning + Design. The development of the Plan was a partnership between the County and the Province. Council's formal approval of the Plan will encourage the province to enact positive change in the management of the area.

“It's really a win-win situation – the Province will be able to protect the natural state of this invaluable piece of land while outdoor enthusiasts still have the privilege of using it,” says Leanne Beaupre, County Reeve and Parks Committee member.

Saskatoon Mountain is a remnant of the foothills boreal forest located on top of the highest point of land in the area, surrounded by agricultural land, and home to a diverse collection of plants and animals, many of which are not common in the Grande Prairie area.

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“The County is very pleased to move forward in planning the future of Saskatoon Mountain Natural Area,” says Beaupre. “Understandably many of our community members and visitors hold a lot of sentiment for Saskatoon Mountain Area. It would be very unfortunate to see this unique, beautiful and lush piece of land go extinct.”

To view the Saskatoon Mountain Conservation and Recreation Plan, please visit www.countygp.ab.ca. For more information please contact Megan Schur, County Parks and Recreation Manager at 780-532-9727 or mschur@countygp.ca.

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