

# Willmore Wilderness Park

If you're looking for hiking, horseback riding and backcountry camping in a remote, spectacular mountain setting, Willmore Wilderness Park is for you. More than 750 km of trails bisect this 4,597 km<sup>2</sup> park, bounded on the south by Jasper National Park and on the west by the Continental Divide marking the Alberta/B.C. border. Here you can venture for days or more than a week – up mountain flanked valleys, into side basins and along wildflower-strewn ridges – often without seeing other humans.

Chances are good, though, you'll see wildlife. With its many windblown, grassy slopes and sheltering subalpine forests, this wilderness is home to some 20 per cent of Alberta's bighorn sheep and mountain goats, as well as to elk, woodland caribou, black and grizzly bears, moose, cougars and wolves.

Many of the park's well-established trails follow in the historic footsteps of Aboriginal hunters, fur traders, coal miners and trappers. Scattered throughout the park are remains of old cabins and grave sites, some dating back to the late 1800s.

Given the distance from the nearest community, visitors to Willmore Wilderness Park should be experienced, well equipped backpackers or riders, who have planned their trips carefully. Valley bottom trails are often muddy or thick with willows and brush, though park staff, outfitters and the Willmore Wilderness Foundation are working to clear a number of overgrown trails. None of the river crossings are bridged, and those on foot should be prepared for fording cold mountain streams. Backcountry campsites are primitive sites often without toilets or bear poles. For those not wishing to venture into the park on their own, outfitters can be hired to lead trips on horseback or to carry supplies and establish camps for those on foot. For more information on trips to and trails in Willmore, consult the **Willmore Wilderness Park** map, available from Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation.

Willmore Wilderness Park has three major staging areas for both hikers and horseback riders, all reached off Highway 40 to the park's east. From south to north they are Rock Lake Provincial Park, Big Bear Provincial Recreation Area and Sulphur Gates Provincial Recreation Area, the latter just outside Grande Cache. The most popular of the three is Rock Lake, along the Wildhay River, which provides access to the heart of the park via a couple of main, valley routes: the winding **Mountain Trail** and **Indian Trail**.



For those with only a few days to explore, **Seep Creek Trail** soon heads north off **Mountain Trail** to provide quick entry into alpine country with plentiful wildlife and extensive views. Further along, **Mountain Trail** bends southwest and climbs to **Eagle's Nest Pass**, offering a fine base camp for day-trip explorations of the surrounding alpine lakes and ridges. **Mountain Trail** then heads northwest along the Rock Creek and provides access, via **West Sulphur Trail**, to higher alpine terrain.

While most trips into Willmore are multi-day expeditions, there are a few exceptions. The 2.5 km trail from Sulphur Gates staging area to scenic **Eaton Falls** makes a nice half-day outing, and the 18.5 km climb to the panoramic views of **Adams Creek Lookout** from Big Bear Provincial staging area is a reasonable overnight trip.

# Grande Cache Area

Located 143 km northwest of Hinton, Grande Cache is perched on a lofty plateau surrounded by forested foothills, some 20 mountain peaks and valleys that harbour two rivers, numerous small lakes and a number of waterfalls that can be reached on foot. It's a recreational paradise for trail and waterways users and a great place for viewing wildlife and wildflowers. And for hardcore runners, there's the infamous annual **Canadian Death Race**, a 125 km, 24-hour race that follows well-defined trails over a couple of mountains north of town.

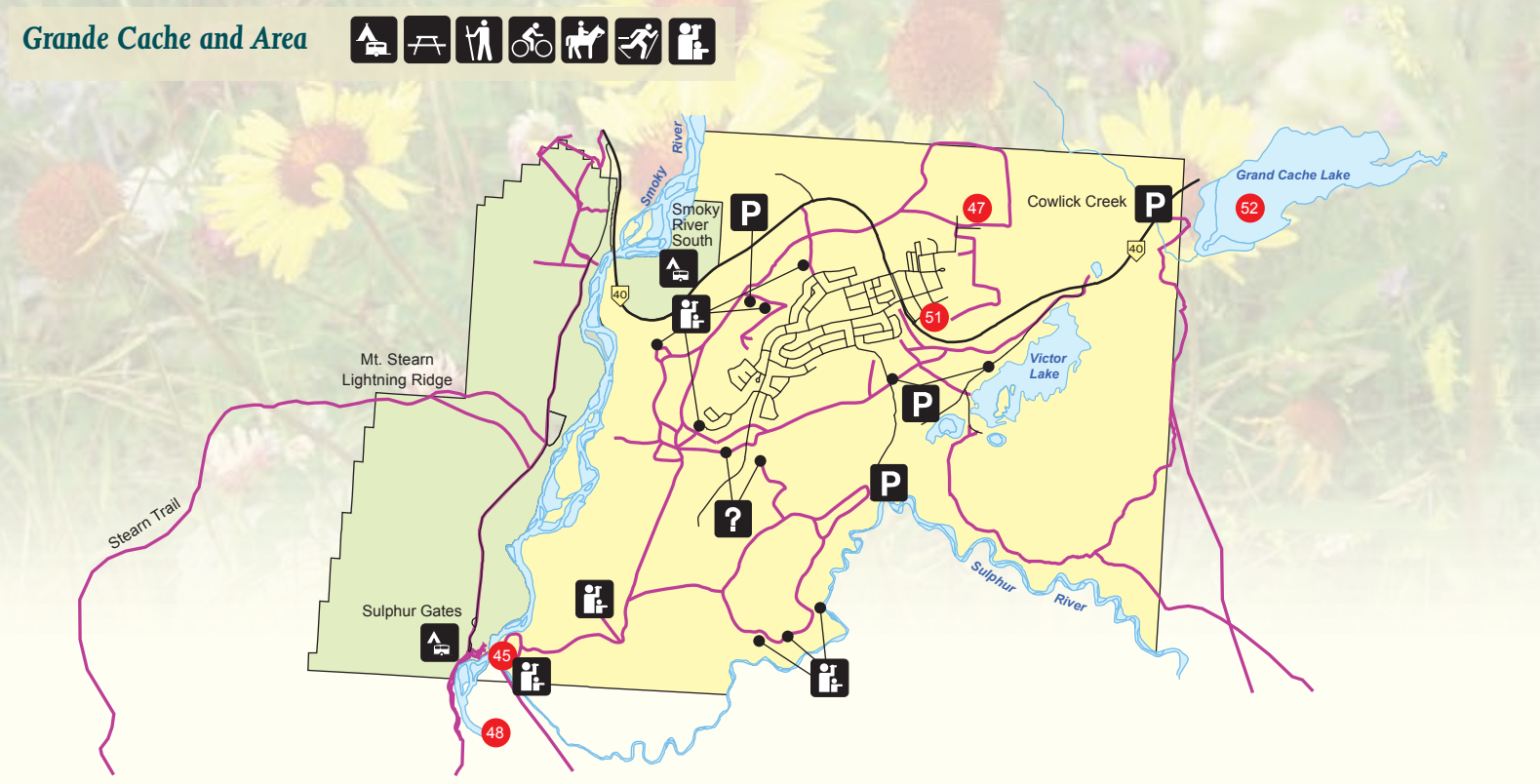
The town of 4,000 people offers a full range of tourist services and attractions. Check the Grande Cache Tourism and Interpretive Centre<sup>31</sup> (888-827-3790) for information on area events and attractions. Just outside the centre, Birds Eye View Park features an interpretive trail.

In Grande Cache, the 12 km (return) **Griffith Trail** loops around town through rolling, scenic terrain and can be hiked or biked. The nearby, 7 km **Sulphur Rim Trail** is another multi-use track that follows the deep gorge of Sulphur Canyon<sup>45</sup>. Grande Cache is also the northern gateway to Willmore Wilderness Park and its hundreds of kilometres of superb hiking and equestrian trails.



For stiffer hikes to panoramic viewpoints, head southwest of town to the Sulphur Gates Staging Area<sup>48</sup> and hike the 6.5 km trail up **Mount Stearn** or the 10 km route up the adjacent **Lightning Ridge**. Advanced mountain bikers can tackle the **Grande Mountain Loop** (20 km, stunning views) or grind up **Mount Hamell** (20 km).

The Smoky River Nordic Ski Club<sup>49</sup> grooves 6 km of cross-country ski trails (including 1 km of night-lit skiing) at the **Grande Cache Campground and Golf Course**<sup>47</sup>. At **Pierre Grey's Lakes Provincial Park**, east of Grande Cache along Highway 40, there's 18 km of looped ski trails and a warm-up shack.

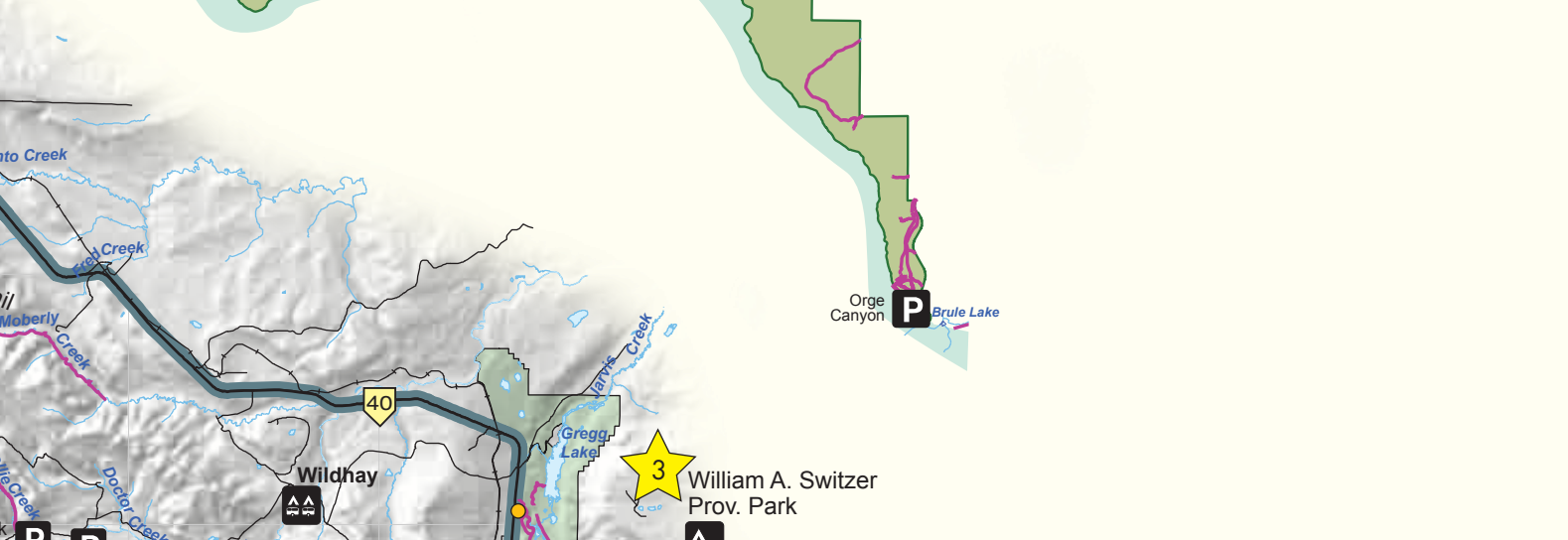


# Rock Lake-Solomon Creek Willand Provincial Park



A major staging area for Willmore Wilderness expeditions, the 331 km<sup>2</sup> Rock Lake-Solomon Creek Willand Provincial Park is worth exploring in its own right. Located 70 km north of Hinton, the park protects one of Alberta's most diverse upper foothills ecosystems, featuring mountain peaks, grassy slopes, dense forests and wet meadows. The area is a significant wildlife movement corridor and provides critical winter range for elk, deer and bighorn sheep.

An extensive network of multi-use, non-motorized trails winds through the park's forest and valleys and along **Mumm** and **Solomon Creeks**, following abandoned roads, old pack and fur trade trails and Aboriginal routes. One popular hike explores the deep canyon and sinkholes along the **Ogre Canyon Trail**, accessed via a grazing lease. Most park trails are not regularly maintained, and most stream crossings are not bridged.

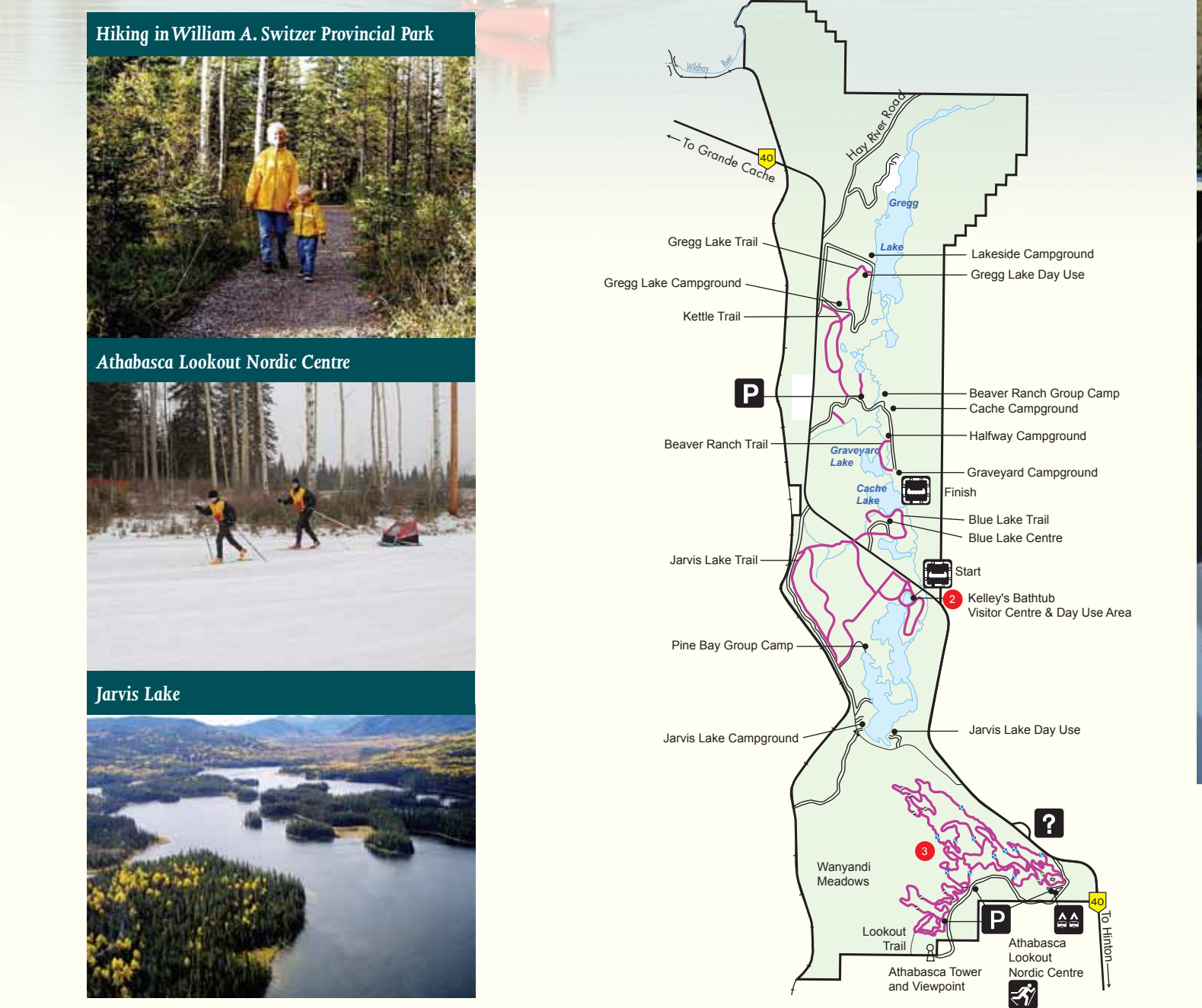


# William A. Switzer Provincial Park

**William A. Switzer Provincial Park** is set in rolling foothills 25 km northwest of Hinton. A park highlight is the **Athabasca Lookout Nordic Centre**<sup>1</sup>, one of the finest cross-country ski facilities in Alberta, with 35 km of hilly forested trails and including a biathlon range and two warm-up shelters and a natural luge run.

Throughout the year, the park's Kelley's Bathub Visitor Centre<sup>2</sup>, to the near north, is a staging point for a network of trails for hikers, skiers and cyclists. The **Jarvis Lake Trails** run for 13 km through rolling hills, meadows and mixed-wood forests, while the 2.5 km **Friendly Vistas Trail** gravel trail (wheelchair accessible) follows the shores of Jarvis Lake to a wetland, with viewpoints along the way. Popular short loop trails east of Highway 40 include **Kettle** (3.5 km), **Blue Lake** (3 km) and **Beaver Ranch** (1.5 km).

**William A. Switzer** [Icons: wheelchair, stroller, dog, horse, bicycle, motorcycle, snowmobile]



The Alberta Trail Mapping Partnership is made possible through the combined efforts of and funding from the following organizations, under the auspices of the Alberta Recreation Corridor and Trails Designation Program: Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation; Alberta Sustainable Resource Development; Alberta TrailNet Society; Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association; Alberta Snowmobile Association.

# Hinton and Athabasca Ranch Area



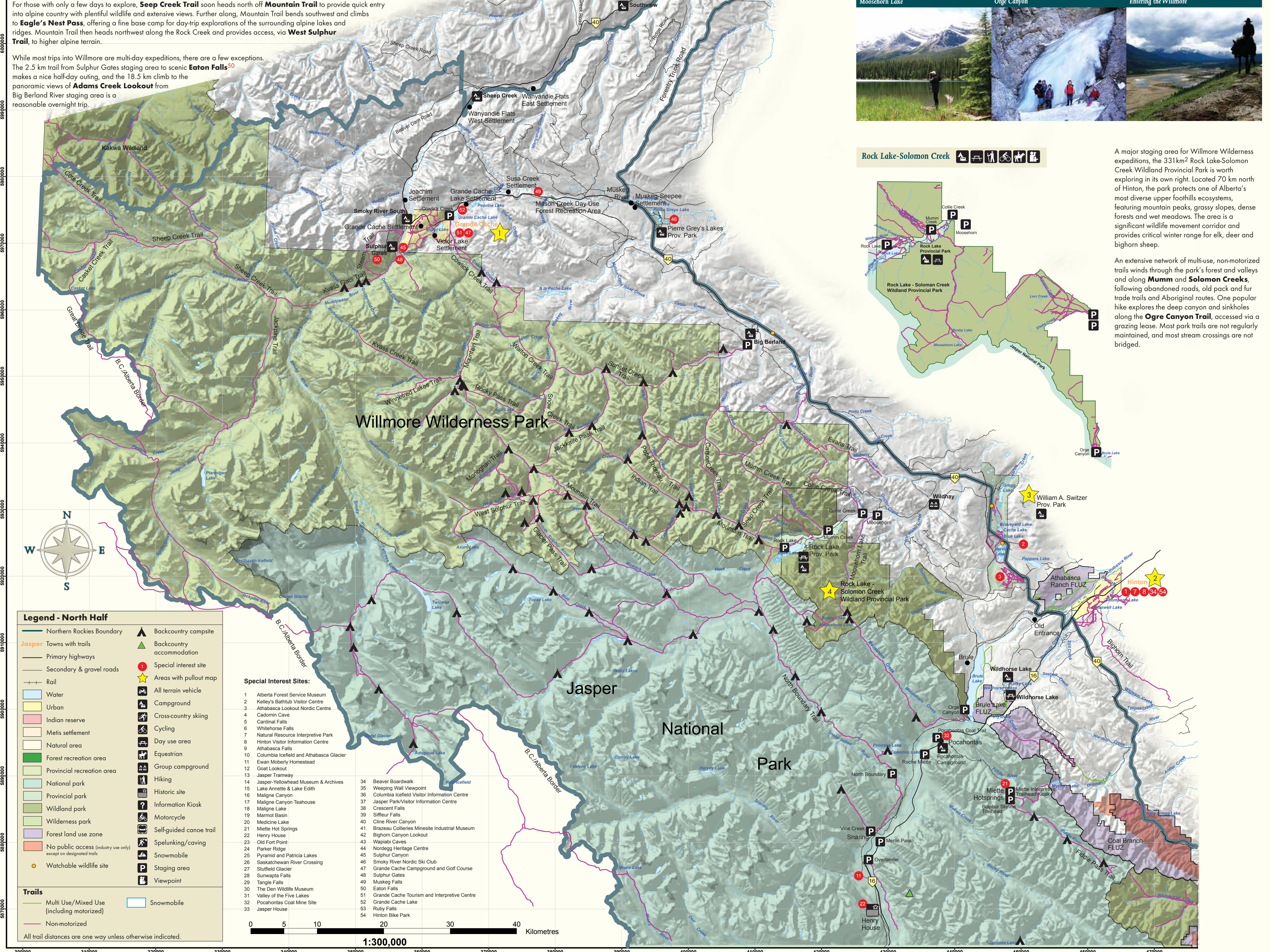
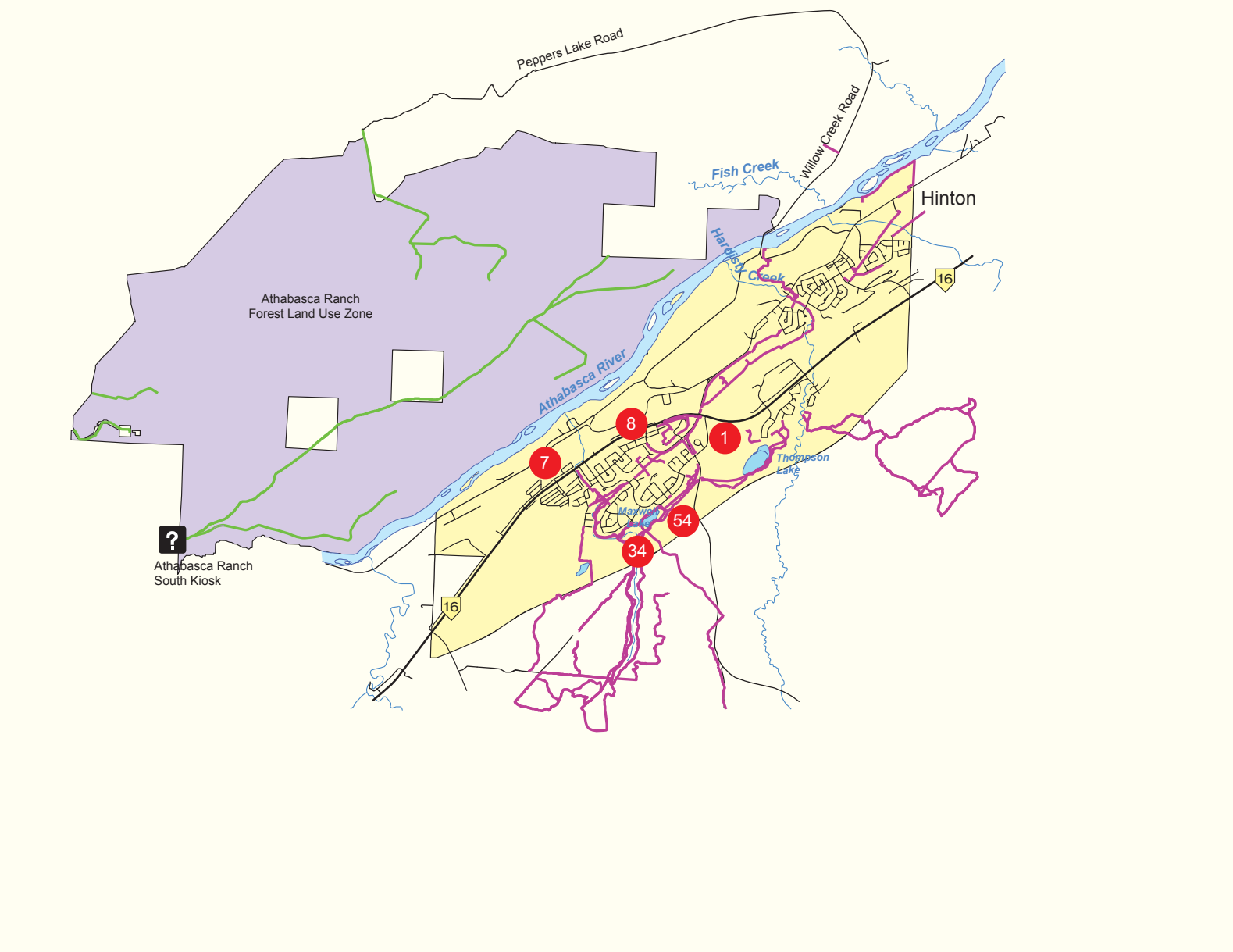
With a population of 10,000 people, the full-service town of Hinton (www.hinton.ca) is the major staging area for trails in the region and contains a network of multi-use trails within and just outside its boundaries (its Visitor Information Centre<sup>6</sup> can be reached toll-free at 877-446-8666). In town, more than 20 km of walking and cycling trails lead through lush forests, past creeks and lakes and to viewpoints of mountains. The 3 km **Beaver Boardwalk** (www.beaverboardwalk.ca), the longest of its kind in Canada, meanders through beaver habitat and offers great bird and wildlife watching.

The 15 hectare **Hinton Bike Park** (www.bikehinton.com) connects to multiple bike trails, each with a technical rating. Hinton is also the starting point for the annual MS Mountain Bike Tour, a highly successful two-day fundraising trail ride.

From Hinton, the 5 km **Happy Creek Trail** connects to additional trails ideal for biking and hiking. Just outside town, **Athabasca Ranch Trails** provide scenic views of the Athabasca River and open onto grassy meadows. Similarly, the **Cache Perceite Forest Trails** offer a variety of challenges to mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders. For the more ambitious, the multi-use **Bighorn Trail** follows a historic pack route for 22 km through forested foothills.

Much of the land on this map south of Hinton and west and south of Highway 40 is covered by two provincial forest land-use zones (FLUZ) – Brule Lake and Coal Branch. Here, designated trails and timing restrictions are used to allow motorized use while protecting sensitive habitats, especially for elk. For more detailed information on trails and when they are open, consult the **Hinton/Coal Branch Area** map, published by Sustainable Resource Development.

Just east of Jasper, an OHV corridor through the Brule Lake FLUZ provides access to non-vegetated sand dunes along the lake. The Coal Branch FLUZ covers a much larger area to the southeast, with Grave Flats Road providing access to trails in and around coal mines south of Cadomin. Near Mountain Park Cemetery, for example, OHV trails lead along **Mackenzie Gap** and up **Mount Cadomin**.



Legend - North Half	
	Northern Rockies Boundary
	Jasper Towns with trails
	Primary highways
	Secondary & gravel roads
	Rail
	Water
	Urban
	Indian reserve
	Melts settlement
	Natural area
	Forest recreation area
	Provincial recreation area
	National park
	Provincial park
	Wildland park
	Wilderness park
	Forest land use zone
	No public access (industry use only) except on designated trails
	Watchable wildlife site
	Backcountry campsite
	Backcountry accommodation site
	Special interest site
	Areas with pullout map
	All terrain vehicle
	Campground
	Cross-country skiing
	Cycling
	Day use area
	Equestrian
	Group campground
	Hiking
	Historic site
	Information kiosk
	Motorcycle
	Self-guided canoe trail
	Spelunking/caving
	Snowmobile
	Staging area
	Viewpoint

Special Interest Sites:	
1	Alberta Forest Service Museum
2	Kelley's Bathub Visitor Centre
3	Athabasca Lookout Nordic Centre
4	Cadomin Cave
5	Cardinal Falls
6	Whitehorse Falls
7	Natural Resource Interpretive Park
8	Hinton Visitor Information Centre
9	Athabasca Falls
10	Columbia Icefield and Athabasca Glacier
11	Ewan Moberly Homestead
12	Goat Lookout
13	Jasper Tramway
14	Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives
15	Lake Annette & Lake Edith
16	Columbia Icefield Visitor Information Centre
17	Jasper Park/Visitor Information Centre
18	Maligne Canyon
19	Maligne Lake
20	Marmot Basin
21	Medicine Lake
22	Miette Hot Springs
23	Henry House
24	Prater Ridge
25	Saskatchewan River Crossing
26	Statue of Glacier
27	Surwapita Falls
28	Tangle Falls
29	The Deer Wildlife Museum
30	Valley of the Five Lakes
31	Grande Cache Tourism and Interpretive Centre
32	Pocahontas Coal Mine Site
33	Jasper House
34	Beaver Boardwalk
35	Weeping Wall Viewpoint
36	Columbia Icefield Visitor Information Centre
37	Jasper Park/Visitor Information Centre
38	Crescent Falls
39	Siffleur Falls
40	Cline River Canyon
41	Brasau Collieries Minita Industrial Museum
42	Bighorn Canyon Lookout
43	Old Fort Point
44	Noridge Heritage Centre
45	Sulphur Canyon
46	Smoky River Nordic Ski Club
47	Grande Cache Campground and Golf Course
48	Sulphur Gates
49	Muskeg Falls
50	Eaton Falls
51	Grande Cache Tourism and Interpretive Centre
52	Grande Cache Lake
53	Ruby Falls
54	Hinton Bike Park

All trail distances are one way unless otherwise indicated. Scale: 1:300,000. Kilometres: 0, 5, 10, 20, 30, 40.



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Gratitude is expressed to all local clubs, groups, organizations, individuals and municipalities for their review, comments and updates in developing this map. For more information or for map access, please contact Alberta TrailNet at 877-987-2457 or through www.albertatrainet.net

Photo Credits: Bill Corbett, Scott Sunderwald, Gord Court, Off Road Connections, Travel Alberta, Project Partners, Willmore Wilderness Foundation, Randy Kadotz, Recreation trail layer, campground layer and backcountry layer provided by Jasper National Park of Canada, P.O. Box 10, Jasper, AB T0E 1E0.



**Know Before You Go**  
There is limited maintenance on many trails. To maximize enjoyment of these trails, gather additional details about the trails, current conditions, local sites of interest, area services and access points from nearby communities and recreation associations (see website information in the text that accompanies this map). Further visitor information can be obtained from:  
**Travel Alberta**: 1-800-ALBERTA; www.travelalberta.com  
**Grande Alberta Economic Region** (GAER): www.grandealberta.com  
**Jasper National Park of Canada**: www.pc.gc.ca/jasper  
**Alberta Parks**: www.albertaparks.ca  
**Sustainable Resource Development**: www.srd.alberta.ca  
**Alberta Parks Campground Reservations**: online  
www.ReserveAlbertaParks.ca or toll-free 877-537-2757  
**Alberta Outfitters Association**: www.albertaoutfitters.com  
**Refer to other websites within the text.**

This map includes designated, managed trails; many can be used year round. Trail quality and difficulty of use can vary considerably, with surface materials ranging from pavement and groomed snow to dirt and corduroy. Some trails are signed and regularly maintained; others are not. Even maintained trails can be challenging when wet or covered in fresh snowfall. Similarly, major access roads range from paved highways to good gravel (i.e. Forestry Trunk Road/Highway 40 north of Nordegg) to poorer gravel (i.e. Grave Flats Road south and east of Cadomin and spur roads west of Highway 40), which may not be regularly maintained. Temperatures can range from winter lows of -40 Celsius to summer highs in the upper 30s. Precipitation and harsh conditions can occur at any time. Bugs can be bothersome, especially in wet and shaded areas, in late spring and summer. Much of the area in this map is avalanche terrain, and backcountry winter trail users should be well equipped and trained to deal with avalanche hazards. Check regular avalanche bulletins at 800-657-1105 or www.avalanche.ca. You may encounter wildlife, including grizzly, black bears, cougars and large ungulates. For bear information in Jasper National Park, talk to park staff, consult Parks Canada publications or visit www.pc.gc.ca. Fall hunting is permitted in some areas outside Jasper National Park of Canada; be aware, and dress and behave appropriately. Trails may be remote from services or help. Carry sufficient food, water, clothing, first aid and emergency/survival supplies, repair gear, navigation equipment and a mobile phone. Note: mobile phones may not have reception in all areas.