

WASKESIU TOWNSITE – INFORMATION

UPDATED APRIL 16, 2020

The health and safety of Canadians, visitors and Parks Canada team members is our top priority. We are following the advice of public health experts and taking steps to support the Government of Canada's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 and reduce risks to visitors, employees, residents and other users of Parks Canada spaces.

Parks Canada is calling on Canadians to support the national effort to limit the spread of COVID-19 and stay home. Anyone considering a visit to Prince Albert National Park should cancel their plans.

Effective 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 and until further notice, Parks Canada is temporarily suspending all motor vehicle access by visitors at all national parks, including Prince Albert National Park. All visitor services are suspended and all facilities are closed. This means that all parking lots, trails, washroom and shower facilities, day use facilities, visitor centres, and all camping facilities including oTENTiks and backcountry camping, are closed until further notice.

The situation is evaluated on an ongoing basis and we will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

Please visit www.pc.gc.ca/princealbert and follow Parks Canada's social media channels for information and updates on the status of all Parks Canada places. <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/sk/princealbert/visit/covid-19-info>

Following is some information specific to the Waskesiu Townsite.

Will cabin and cottage owners have access to their properties on April 1, 2020?

Residents are strongly encouraged to follow government direction and stay home where possible. Cottage and cabin owners can access and stay in their properties beginning April 1, 2020. The roads are plowed and chain barricades removed. Parks Canada is asking that visitors support Canada's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19. Please stay home and cancel any non-essential travel.

Will water service be available?

As in most years, water service is not available until May, when weather and ground frost conditions permit.

Will there be a washroom and shower open for cabin/cottage owner use?

All washroom facilities throughout the park are closed. To prevent the potential spread of COVID-19, the Spruce Ridge Trailer Park washroom is unavailable at this time.

Is potable water available in Waskesiu?

Potable water is available at a tap outside of the Spruce Ridge Trailer Park washroom.

If I go to my residence in Waskesiu, can I go outside and get some exercise?

Canadians are asked to support the national effort to limit the spread of COVID-19 and stay home. Anyone considering a visit to Prince Albert National Park should cancel their plans.

All visitor facilities such as trails, day use areas and beaches are closed.

The benefits of nature are understood. However, motorized vehicle use to pursue recreational activities in the park is suspended. For those residing in Waskesiu, recreation activities accessible from their personal residences are permissible.

Can I take a scenic drive through the park?

Parks Canada is temporarily suspending all visitor services and visitor motor vehicle access in national parks.

- Access to highway #263 is closed from the South Gate to the Narrows road, including all the facilities along the highway.
- The Northshore/Kingsmere Road and the Narrows Road is suspended and limited to local traffic only. All visitor facilities in those areas are closed.

Residents, cabin/cottage owners, commercial business owners and contractors can access the park via Highway #264 through the East Gate (main park access)

Will commercial operators and their staff have access to businesses and seasonal staff accommodation this spring?

Commercial operators and their staff can access their leaseholds and staff accommodation that they operate on their leaseholds or that has been allocated by Parks Canada.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Spruce Ridge Trailer Park washroom is unavailable at this time. Potable water is available at a tap outside of the Spruce Ridge Trailer Park washroom.

Commercial operators should limit their staffing to employees who are critical to their operations.

I live near Waskesiu and pick up my mail from the post boxes in town. Can I still access the mail boxes?

Yes, the Canada Post mail boxes are accessible to mail box owners.

What other services are available?

A limited capacity for critical services is in place to ensure the provision of water, sewer and garbage services to the Waskesiu townsite. Snow plow operators are on standby to

clear highways and roads as required. Playgrounds, trails and access to the general park facilities are closed.

What emergency services are active?

The RCMP, Parks Canada Law Enforcement, the Waskesiu Fire Department and Medical First Responder Services are all active. Please dial 911 in a life threatening emergency.

For safety, wildlife, or wildfire incidents call Parks Canada dispatch at 1-877-852-3100.

Can I still get a building permit, business licence or other paperwork related to my lease?

Townsite staff are monitoring telephone and e-mail messages from home. Leaseholders can expect some delays in obtaining permits or other documentation. All efforts are being made to complete these types of transactions in a timely manner. Please contact the following staff for:

Cabin area and Business Licence inquiries:

Paulette Hodgson (306) 663-4520

Cottage and Commercial development and all lease inquiries:

Coralee Foster (306) 663-4518

Townsite Manager:

Gregg Rutten (306) 663-4519.

How do I make a payment for Parks Canada invoices?

Payment can be made:

Via credit card at (306) 663-4522; Monday to Friday - 8 am to 4 pm

By mail: Prince Albert National Park, Box 100, Waskesiu Lake, SK S0J 2Y0.

I have a leasehold in Waskesiu. Can my contractor come in to the park to carry out work?

Contractors are currently allowed access to carry out work in Waskesiu.

Are businesses in Waskesiu still open?

Local services are limited at this time. The business community has been responding to this situation in a responsible way. Individual businesses are making their own decisions regarding opening.

Parks Canada strongly encourages residents to follow government direction and stay home. We must all do our part to limit the spread of COVID-19 and reduce risks to visitors, employees, and all users of Parks Canada spaces.

When does Parks Canada plan to reassess the closure?

Parks Canada is monitoring the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation closely and is working with the Public Health Agency of Canada, the federal government lead on the virus, and other partners to respond to COVID-19 and mitigate risks to employees and

visitors. Parks Canada will re-evaluate this closure on an ongoing basis and will communicate regularly.

A complete list of Parks Canada closures and the parameters of the closures is available on the Parks Canada website. Please visit www.pc.gc.ca and Parks Canada's social media channels for information and updates on the status of all Parks Canada places.

Will the Community Fuel Break prescribed fire happen this spring at Prince Albert National Park?

Fire is a natural process and a key part of a healthy ecosystem. Parks Canada conducts prescribed fire programs in carefully selected conditions to return fire to the landscape in a way that prioritizes the safety of the people, infrastructure, cultural heritage and neighbouring lands. The prescribed fire that was scheduled for this spring has been postponed until a later date. For more information, please visit www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/sk/princealbert/nature/feux-fire/brulages_diriges-prescribed_fires.