

# PUBLIC ≠ PROTECTED

How the Alberta government's changes to the parks system put our environment at risk

**Protected areas (provincial parks, provincial recreation areas, and natural areas) are environmentally and recreationally important.**

For example, these areas provide habitat for wildlife and allow people to connect with nature in a way that has a relatively low impact on the environment.



**Public lands and protected areas are not "protected" equally, even though they are both managed by Alberta Environment and Parks.**

**Protected areas** are a specific type of public land that has been established to maintain certain environmental or recreational features.



protect sensitive plants and animals



prevent industrial development



maintain nature for public use

**A wide range of activities that are generally permitted on public lands are typically **not allowed** in protected areas.**

These activities can include new industrial developments such as mining, quarrying, oil and gas, and commercial forestry, but also extend to some recreational activities when they could negatively impact the values for which the site was established.

- ✗ restricted
- ✓ permitted
- ✓ may be permitted (case by case)

	Protected Areas	Public Lands
<b>Industrial Activities</b>		
Petroleum and natural gas	✗	✓
Mining/quarrying	✗	✓
Commercial forestry	✗	✓
Tourism development	✓	✓
<b>Recreational Activities</b>		
Hiking	✓	✓
Horse riding	✓	✓
Random camping	✓	✓
Hunting/trapping	✓	✓
Off-highway vehicles (ATVs)	✓	✓

*Note: table does not cover full range of permitted/restricted activities on all land types*

**The Alberta government is re-categorizing 164 protected areas to public lands, meaning they will no longer be under any protected areas legislation. Public does not equal protected!**

While the Alberta government has stated that they will not pursue industrial development or sale of these lands, the fact remains that stripping away the protections these areas currently have opens them up to environmentally risky activities that could have lasting negative impacts.

**Once protected areas are converted to public lands, their environmental and recreational values are put at risk.** Government promises to keep these areas "protected" do not prevent any future government from developing or selling these lands.

**If these changes concern you, you can raise your voice to oppose them.**

Go to [defendabparks.ca](http://defendabparks.ca) to write your MLA and request a Defend Alberta Parks lawn sign!

