

ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK
ALBERTA

PURPOSE OF NATIONAL PARKS

The Parliament of Canada has decreed:
The Parks are hereby dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the provisions of the National Parks Act and Regulations, and such Parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the use of future generations.

LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Elk Island National Park, situated in central Alberta about 30 miles east of Edmonton, is the second largest fenced animal preserve in Canada. It contains an area of 51 square miles and occupies a portion of the extensive irregular elevation known as Beaver Hills. Evidences of the Ice Age are visible where the low hills are worn smooth and many small lakes nestle between the ridges and in the hollows left by the retreating glaciers.

The park was originally reserved in 1906 as a sanctuary for elk, moose and mule deer in the region, and was later used as a temporary home for the Pablo herd of buffalo purchased by the Government of Canada in 1907. During the past few years many facilities for recreation have been provided in the park which is now a popular vacation area. It is surrounded by 34 miles of strong fencing, with fire-guard strips ploughed both inside and outside the fence for fire prevention purposes.

Of the many lakes in the park, Astotin, situated in the northern part, is the finest and largest. It is a beautiful body of water approximately 2½ miles long and 1½ miles wide, and dotted with more than twenty islands. Long Island situated near the centre of the lake is the largest and near the southern shore is Elk Island to which the park owes its name. East of Long Island is Crane Island, widely known for its rookery of great blue heron. In the southern part of the park are Tawayik, Little Tawayik, Oster, Paul and Long Lakes.

The park is a forested area embracing most of the species native to the region. The predominating growth is poplar; spruce and tamarack are also found in limited quantities.

THE BUFFALO HERD

An outstanding attraction of Elk Island National Park is its herd of bison, or plains buffalo, as they are better known. When in 1907 the Government of Canada purchased the Pablo herd of buffalo numbering 716 head, Elk Island National Park was utilized as a home for these animals until Buffalo National Park near Wainwright, Alberta, was made ready for their reception. Two shipments totalling 410 head were received at Lamont, Alberta. By 1909 the fence surrounding Buffalo National Park had been completed and, with the exception of 45 head, the buffalo were transferred from Elk Island Park to the new park. The animals remaining in Elk Island Park formed the nucleus of a second national buffalo herd which, on December 31, 1937, had increased to

more than 2,400. These magnificent animals, along with large herds of moose, elk and deer now roam practically at will over terrain which in years gone by formed part of the range of the great herds of their forbears.

The buffalo in Elk Island National Park are very fine examples of the species. Their coats are dark and thick and the animals are all sturdy and well developed. An outlet for surplus animals is provided partly by donations or transfers to other locations, or by supervised slaughters which are carried out under the supervision of Government inspectors.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

Elk Island National Park is linked by all-weather motor roads with the main provincial highways of Alberta. There are three entrances to the park, namely, through the southern, western and northern gateways. The approach through the southern gateway is made over Highway No. 15, east from Edmonton or west from Vegreville. The gateway is situated on the highway, and the park headquarters to the north are reached by a road through the park. The western gateway is situated on a road which connects with Highway No. 16, at a point about six miles east of Fort Saskatchewan. The northern gateway is situated on a road that leads to Lamont, which is situated on Highway No. 16.

The following are the distances from points in Alberta to the park headquarters on Astotin Lake:

Calgary (via Edmonton and Highway No. 15).....	237 miles
Edmonton (via Highway No. 15).....	36 miles
Fort Saskatchewan (via Highway No. 16)	15 miles
Vegreville (via Highway No. 15).....	45 miles
Ardrossan (via Highway No. 15).....	18 miles
Lamont (via Highway No. 16).....	12 miles
South Gate (via Highway No. 15).....	9 miles
North Gate.....	8 miles

RAIL CONNECTIONS

The nearest railway stations from the park headquarters are Lamont, 12 miles distant, situated on the Winnipeg-Saskatoon-Edmonton line of the Canadian National Railways, and Ardrossan, 18 miles distant, situated on the main line of the Canadian National Railways. Edmonton, the provincial capital of Alberta, 36 miles distant, is served by the Canadian Pacific, Canadian National and the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway systems, and is less than an hour's ride by automobile from the park. A modern city, Edmonton contains excellent hotel accomodation, and its fine airport forms a base for flying operations in northwestern Canada.

REGISTRATION

Visitors entering Elk Island National Park are requested to register at the registration booths located at the north and south boundaries of the park, or at the park headquarters situated on Astotin Lake.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PARK

A resident Superintendent, whose office is located on the western side of Astotin Lake, supervises the local administration of Elk Island Park. The office of the Park Superintendent is open daily, and information concerning the wild animals, roads and recreational facilities in the park may be obtained, together with literature and maps.

The park regulations are enforced by the Park Warden Service.

ACCOMMODATION

There is no hotel or bungalow camp accommodation in the park, although provision is made for camping. Hotel accommodation is available at both Edmonton and Lamont, Alberta.

GOVERNMENT MOTOR CAMPGROUND

Visitors carrying their own camping outfit will find a well-equipped motor campground on the eastern side of Astotin Lake adjacent to Sandy Beach, where kitchen shelters, camp-stoves, tables, benches, and other facilities are provided. Space is also available for automobile trailers. Camping permits are issued at a nominal charge based on a fixed period. A refreshment booth situated in the vicinity serves both campers and visitors. There is also an extensive parking area adjacent to the campground.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Several forms of outdoor recreation are available, including bathing, boating and golf. A recreational area has been laid out at Sandy Beach on the eastern shore of Astotin Lake where baseball, softball and other sports may be enjoyed. Tables and benches are also available for picnic purposes. A large recreational building well situated on Scout Hill overlooking Astotin Lake and Sandy Beach is at the disposal of visitors to the park.

Bathing.—Excellent bathing may be enjoyed at Sandy Beach on Astotin Lake, where three modern bath-houses have been constructed for public use.

Boating.—Boating is a popular sport at Astotin Lake. Boats may be rented from private owners at nominal charges.

Golf.—A fine nine-hole golf course has been constructed recently in the vicinity of Sandy Beach and is open to park visitors on payment of a nominal charge. The course is well situated on the rolling terrain southeast of Astotin Lake, and is accessible from the main park highway. The fairways are flanked on both sides by beautiful growths of trees. The greens and fairways are maintained in excellent condition. An attractive club-house overlooking Astotin Lake is at the disposal of visitors making use of the golf course.

Rates for the use of the golf course are:	
One round (18 holes continuous)	\$ 0.75
One day.....	1.25
One week.....	5.00
One month.....	15.00
Season (Lady).....	15.00
Season (Gentleman).....	25.00

FAUNA AND FLORA

Among the wild animals of the park, the bison or buffalo are a feature attraction. These great animals, feeding or roaming over their native habitat, may be observed from points along the main highway which crosses the park from north to south. The herds of elk, deer and moose also provide a great attraction to those interested in wild animal life.

The park is also a sanctuary for smaller animals including weasel, muskrat, porcupine, rabbit, squirrel and gopher.

Bird life is numerous in the park. Migratory waterfowl, which find rest and shelter on the lakes, include Canada goose, duck, snipe, and plover. There are several rookeries of great blue heron on Astotin Lake. Other species which may be observed in the park during the summer season include, owl, hawk, crow, jay, woodpecker, kingfisher, pine and evening grosbeak, chickadee, waxwing, red poll and blue bird.

Trees and Shrubs.—The forests in the park include white spruce, tamarack, birch, and poplar. Shrubs including hazel, highbush cranberry, Saskatoon, chokecherry, raspberry and bird cherry are also indigenous to the area.

FIRE PREVENTION

Visitors are requested to co-operate with park officers in the prevention of fires. Matches, cigarette butts, pipe ashes and other smoking materials should be completely extinguished before being thrown away, and then dropped only on bare soil.

Camp-fires may be kindled only at places provided for the purpose, and must be completely extinguished before leaving. Persons using the park trails, unaccompanied by a licensed guide, should acquaint themselves with the parks regulations and secure particulars concerning suitable campsites and other related information.

Any fire observed by a park visitor should be extinguished if possible, or the nearest park officer notified at once.

A fire in a National Park may cause damage which cannot be replaced in a hundred years. Forest fires are among the greatest enemies of the parks.

Additional information, maps and literature concerning the National Parks of Canada may be obtained from the Superintendent of Elk Island National Park (Lamont, Alberta), or from the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, Canada.

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ELK ISLAND
NATIONAL PARK
ALBERTA

GENERAL INFORMATION



DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES
Hon. T. A. Crerar, Minister Charles Camsell, Deputy Minister

LANDS, PARKS AND FORESTS BRANCH
R. A. Gibson, Director

NATIONAL PARKS BUREAU
F. H. H. Williamson, Controller

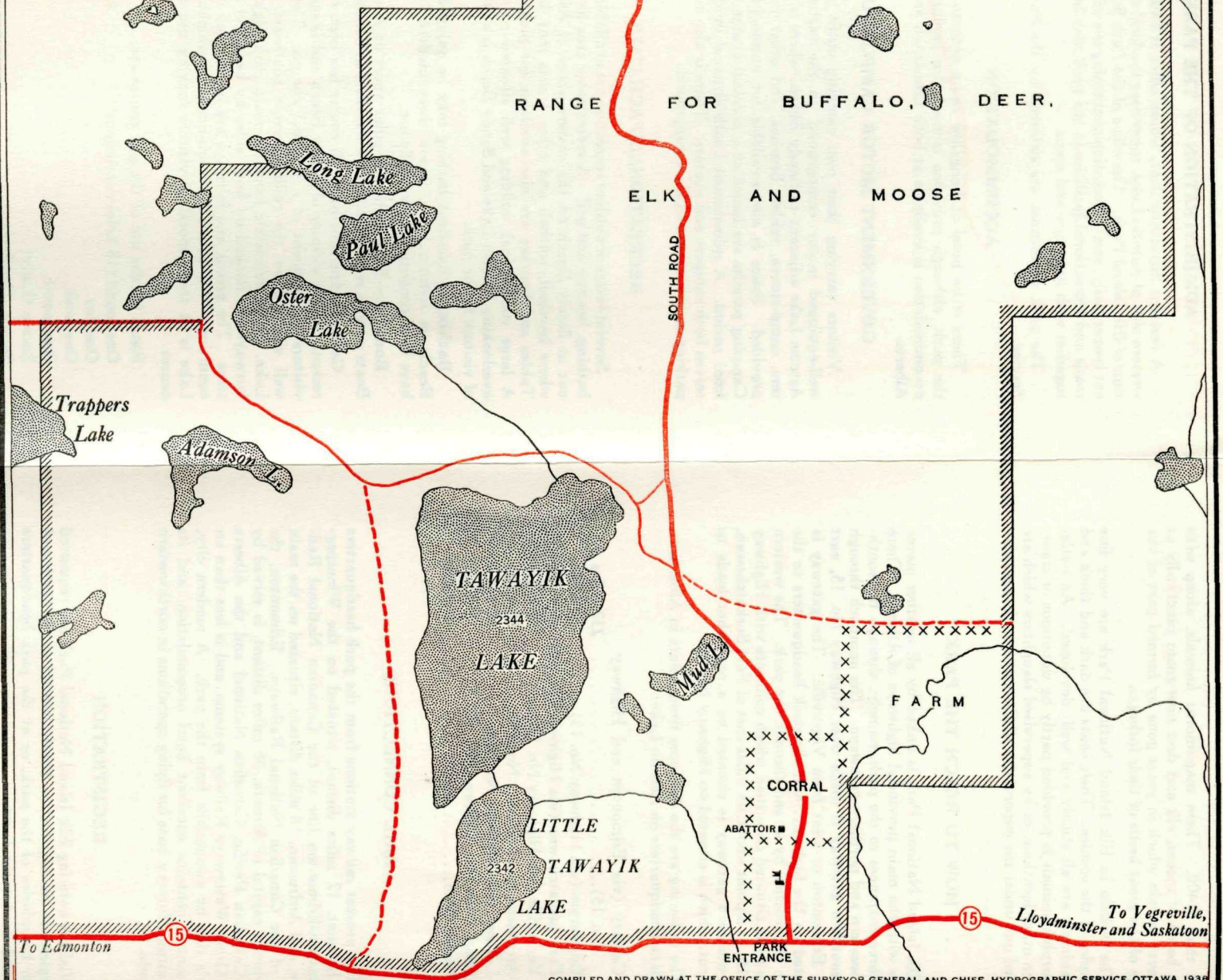
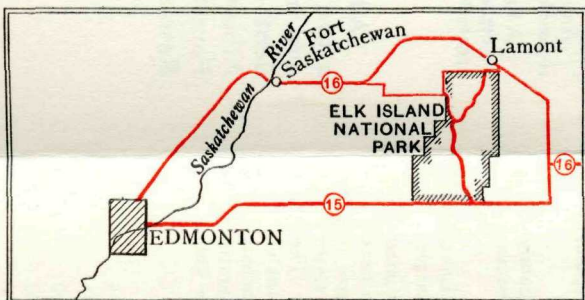
OTTAWA CANADA

MAP OF
ELK ISLAND NATIONAL PARK
ALBERTA

SCALE
Miles 0 1 2

REFERENCE
Park Boundary..... Highway Route No. (15)
Motor Road..... Warden's Cabin.....
Secondary Road..... Building.....
Trails..... Altitude..... 2336

To Fort Saskatchewan and Edmonton



To Lamont and
Highway No. 16.

To Edmonton

To Vegreville,
Lloydminster and Saskatoon