



# Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan

County of Grande Prairie

2015-2040



## Introduction

Management plan development is an activity intended to ensure that future land use activities and planned developments are compatible with the objectives of both the special interest groups and stakeholders in the region. Management plans define the vision and goals for the site, and also identify the responsibilities of project partners. This plan describes the history and physical characteristics for the gravel leases on the North side of the Wapiti River, between highway 40 and the water line running from the Aquatera water storage site to Grande Prairie. It also outlines the long term management objectives (see section 2.0) and the planned activities that will be conducted on the site over the next 25 years. Finally, it identifies the stakeholders of this project (the County of Grande Prairie No. 1, Alberta Environment and Parks, and Alberta Transportation), and the responsibilities of each group.

## Referrals and Inquiries

For all referrals and inquiries, the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 will act as the manager of this site, once dispositions are issued in the County of Grande Prairie No. 1's name by Alberta Environment and Parks. Prior to that time, the County of Grande Prairie No.1 will still receive all referrals and inquiries, and as appropriate, coordinate responses in conjunction with the owners of specific dispositions within the plan boundary. To ensure adherence to this management plan, all proposed land use changes within the plan area will be forwarded by Alberta Environment and Parks to the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 for consultation.

County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Parks and Recreation:

Megan Schur  
Parks and Recreation Manager  
County of Grande Prairie No. 1  
10001 84 Avenue  
Clairmont, Alberta  
T0H 0W0  
mschur@countygp.ab.ca  
780-567-5584 ext.2175



## Acknowledgements

The County of Grande Prairie No. 1 would like to thank both Alberta Environment and Parks and Alberta Transportation for their strong support in achieving the vision: “To transform the depleted gravel leases into a site that provides outdoor recreation enjoyment to the citizens of the region”.

## 1.0 Site Description

### 1.1 Background

Over the past 50 years, various organizations have extracted gravel from the public lands in the Wapiti River Valley between highway 40 and the Aquatera water line supplying the City of Grande Prairie. Today, all but one of the gravel dispositions in this location are depleted. Project stakeholders have been in discussions of how to best change this area into dispositions in the County’s name that will allow for the creation of outdoor recreation opportunities for the citizens of the region, while still permitting the holder of the existing active disposition to extract gravel. Wapiti Gravel Suppliers, the private operator with gravel dispositions in this area has also been most cooperative. As their dispositions have been depleted and reclaimed, with the help of Alberta Environment and Parks personnel, these dispositions have been reallocated to the County of Grande Prairie, with the understanding that they will one day become recreational dispositions in the County’s name. This organization is very aware of the potential of depleted gravel dispositions. About 20 years ago, elsewhere in the Wapiti River Valley, they worked with a motocross club and the Alberta Government to convert a depleted disposition into a motocross track which is still operating today.

Over the years, Provincial Government, stakeholder and special interest group plans have recognized the recreational potential of the area. As well, the two most recent plans specifically recommended reclaiming these depleted gravel leases to a recreational land use to serve the people of this region. These plans were:

- The 1978 Wapiti-Grande Prairie Sand Dunes Integrated Land Use Management Plan (Alberta Energy and Natural Resources)
- The 1986 Bear River-Wapiti Local Integrated Resource Plan (Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife)
- The 1998 Wapiti Sand Dunes Land Use Zones (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development)
- The 2013 Wapiti Corridor Multi Use Plan (Wapiti Corridor Planning Society).



The total area of all the gravel dispositions is 130 hectares. Over the past 15 years, as gravel dispositions have become depleted, with the support of Alberta Environment and Parks, the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 has taken over control of the depleted areas. The County of Grande Prairie No. 1 is now ready to apply for the first of two dispositions – the 75 hectare portion of land closest to Highway 40. The remaining land – a 55 hectare patch to the east - will not be ready to convert to a recreational use until the remaining gravel on an Alberta Transportation disposition is utilized. This is not anticipated to occur for at least 10 years.

## **1.2 Site Location and Surrounding Land Use**

The proposed County of Grande Prairie No. 1 dispositions are located 5 kilometres south of the City of Grande Prairie, and to the east of highway 40. Access is via a gravel all-weather road which runs south of TWP RD 704A and parallel to Highway 40.

The Northern boundary of the future dispositions is bounded by a power line right of way. To the North of the right of way is forested unoccupied public land which runs north out of the Wapiti River Valley for approximately 1 kilometre. The landscape consists of lodge pole pine covered sand dunes rising out of predominately aspen poplar-spruce boreal forest. There has been some harvesting of pine beetle infested lodge pole pine stands in recent years. Extensive off highway vehicle trails exist on this unoccupied public land. The rise from the northern boundary of the planned dispositions to the top of the Wapiti River Valley is approximately 100 metres. At the top of Wapiti River Valley, abutting TWP RD 704A is the sub division of Tamarack Estates, a very high end set of residences.

The proposed dispositions are bounded to the South by approximately 300 metres of land between the dispositions and the Wapiti River. The closest 100 metres is characterized by about a 50 metre vertical drop, changing into less steep terrain on the remaining 200 metres to the Wapiti River. This remaining 200 metres, running parallel to the Wapiti River, is a route utilized extensively by ungulates as they traverse the Wapiti River Valley. The landscape is forested with no current access from the proposed dispositions due to the steepness of the terrain. Approximately 50 metres closest to the River bank is vegetated by deciduous trees less than 20 years old – evidence of major flooding that occurred about 20 years ago that killed existing vegetation. To the immediate south of the planned first disposition is an active cabin lease, MLP810351.

The proposed dispositions are bounded to the East by a road leading to Aquatera Utilities' water intake infrastructure. As well, to the North East approximately one kilometer is the McLaurin Baptist Church lease

(Camp Wapiti, a location with permanent buildings designed for week long stays). Both these facilities are accessed via roads that run through the future dispositions.

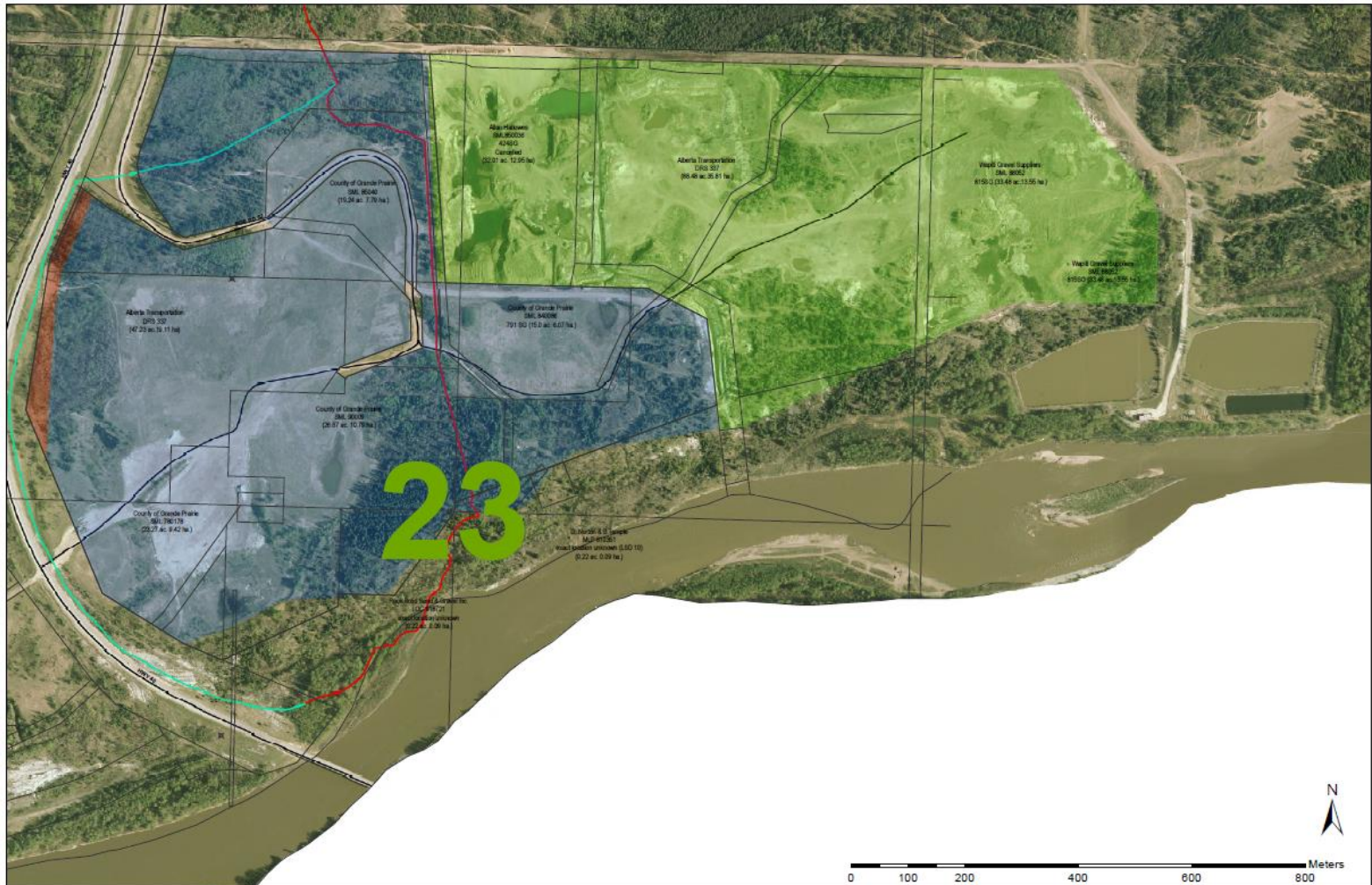
The proposed dispositions are bounded to the west by Highway 40.

The attached map (Figure1) shows the above two proposed dispositions, and also provides good perspective on the proximity of the leases to Highway 40, Aquatera infrastructure, and the Wapiti River.

### 1.3 Legal Description

Table 1: Legal Description of the Wapiti Recreation Area proposed dispositions

Wapiti Recreation Area Dispositions A & B	Legal Land Description	Area
Disposition A	LSD's 5,6,9,10,11, 12, 13, and 14 in the north half and SW quarter of 23-70-06-W6.	75 hectares
Disposition B	LSD's 9,15 and 16 in the NE quarter of 23-70-06-W6 and LSD 13 in the NW quarter of 24-70-06-W6.	55 hectares



County of Grande Prairie Proposed Recreation Dispositions

- Disposition A (73.73 ha.)
- Disposition B (55.68 ha.)
- Future Transportation Right-of-way (1.30 ha.)
- Part of Non-Motorized Biking Trail from Nitehawk to Claimont
- Part of Non-Motorized Walking Trail from Nitehawk to Claimont
- Roads

1:2,000

Map Created by Planning Department, Jan 4, 2015

**Figure 1. County of Grande Prairie proposed recreation leases, includes identification of leases, the surveyed and hand drawn future walking trail to the future second bridge location, and the future highway expansion area, which will be included in disposition A.**

## **1.4 Site Features**

### **1.4.1 Infrastructure**

Currently, a graveled road approximately a kilometer in length branches off of TWP RD 704A and accesses the area of the proposed dispositions. This road passes through both the first and second proposed dispositions, and is utilized by both Aquatera and Camp Wapiti to access their respective facilities.

### **1.4.2 Habitat**

The northern portion of disposition A (portions of LSD's 13 and 14-NW 23-70-06-W6 covering approximately 15% of disposition A) consists of predominately steep forested slopes typically found in the area. A community of lodgepole pine, with shrubs such as bear berry, rose and bog cranberry, and forbs such as lilly of the valley, wild vetch and bunchberry with soils that are sensitive to erosion are found therein. Dependent upon moisture conditions, the few flat areas contain, either white spruce/aspen poplar or black spruce boreal tree species, with accompanying understories common to these tree species. This area is relatively undisturbed, and due to the slope and extensive windfall, shows minimal evidence of off highway vehicle use.

The middle portion of disposition A, (portions of LSD's 11,12, and 14 –NW 23 and portions of LSD's 5 and 6-SW of 23-70-06-W6 and covering approximately 60 % of disposition A) is where gravel extraction occurred in the past. Terrain is relatively flat, contains grass vegetation which has been cultivated on the site, and has no tree cover. The specific grasses are the "native" mixture common to the industry, and consist of the varieties known as rocky mountain fescue, tufted hair grass, fowl blue grass, fringed brome, and slender wheat. A few lower areas exhibit shallow water pooling during wet periods of the year.

The south east portion of disposition A (portions of LSD 10-NE 23, and LSD 6-SW 23 and LSD 11-NW 23-70-06-W6 covering approximately 20% of disposition A) is relatively flat and is comprised of forest cover similar to that described above. This area shows considerable evidence of off highway vehicle usage.

The west portion of disposition A (portions of LSD 12-NW 23-70-06-W6 covering about 5% of disposition A) is also forested, and contains steep slopes towards the depleted gravel area. It shows minimal evidence of off highway vehicle use and provides both a noise and visual buffer to highway 40.

Within disposition A, and running along the east boundary of LSD 14, is a treed corridor about 20 metres wide. This route is otherwise surrounded by previous gravel extraction activities. Given this, it is one of the few locations where a trail could be placed within a treed corridor for non-motorized access to the River.



The desire of the County to keep the non-motorized trail within treed areas makes this treed corridor important to the County.

Disposition B also consists of a number of different conditions.

In the north east of disposition B (portions of LSD 15-NE 23-70-06-W6 and covering approximately 10% of disposition B), is an orphaned disposition (SML850040) which is the responsibility of Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). It has had minimal reclamation and exhibits variable terrain, and includes a number of areas submerged year round. It also exhibits considerable erosion from off-highway vehicle use on a steep sand dune on its northern boundary. This erosion appears to be impacting the power line right of way on its northern boundary.

Exiting the south east corner of LSD 15 (orphaned disposition SML850040), is a steep and deep ditch approximately 5 metres wide that traverses to the south east. This ditch, and the west and south boundaries of SML850040 (west boundary and south boundary of LSD 15) form the divide between dispositions A and B. The ditch is currently used to drain water away from the active Alberta Transportation (AT) gravel disposition that is included in a portion of disposition B's area. After the Alberta Transportation gravel disposition is depleted (approximately 10 to 20 years), the County of Grande Prairie plans to landscape LSD 15 (SML850040) to accommodate at least two permanent water features that will be utilized for recreational purposes (e.g. fisheries access sites). After the appropriate landscaping is completed, the ditch will be blocked off, which will increase the size of the water features. Once the ditch is blocked off, the area of the ditch will be included as part of disposition B. The County of Grande Prairie will seek to work with the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) or other relevant organizations to develop the recreational water bodies.

No further description of the habitat of the second disposition will be provided at this time, as it contains an active gravel disposition, and so the habitat will change between now and the development of the application for the second disposition.

Disposition A and B are located within a Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zone (KWBZ), an area considered to be a combination of key winter ungulate habitat and higher habitat potential for biodiversity more broadly. Ungulates (e.g. moose, elk, deer) tend to move into KWBZs for winter survival. Human activity, particularly motorized vehicle use, can disturb and/or displace wildlife. Actions should therefore be taken to mitigate and reduce serious disturbances such as those caused by construction from January 15 to April 30. Permitted activities that may cause limited disruption to wildlife include recreation programming, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and nature appreciation (track identification). Fencing will be erected to keep visitors out of



nesting or hibernacula areas. These areas will be identified each year in the fall by conducting a wildlife sweep. Other wildlife species that may be found in the area include black bear, cougar, lynx, coyote, fox and a variety

of birds including Sandhill Cranes, Trumpeter Swan, and grouse. The Wapiti River is home to Arctic Grayling and Bull Trout, considered sensitive species in Alberta, along with Walleye, Mountain Whitefish, Burbot and Northern Pike.

## **2.0 Site Management**

### **2.1 Purpose of Management Plan**

The proposed Management Plan for this area includes four major components:

1. Conversion of the Surface Mineral dispositions to Recreation dispositions, with the County of Grande Prairie as the disposition holder;
2. Identify and implement objectives related to restoration of terrestrial and hydrological habitat and eco-systems;
3. Identify and implement objectives related to the development of responsible and sustainable recreation opportunities;
4. Enhance neighboring property owners' and stakeholders' a sense of safety and security by reducing undesirable and illicit behaviors;

### **2.2 Proposed Management Direction**

#### **2.2.1 Recreation**

With thorough planning and proper management, this area has the opportunity to be a unique recreation resource and a facility that will encourage environmental stewardship. It will consist primarily of low impact recreation resources where people are encouraged to craft their own experience. Walking trails, toboggan hills and waterbodies provide the spaces for people to have outdoor experiences, but do not create the experience for users in the same way that organized sports or activities do. In this way we want people to be an active participant in creating engaging opportunities with guidance from the County.

Motorized Recreation –The Wapiti Recreation Area is not suitable for motorized recreation, and signage will be installed at all formal and informal roadway and trail entrances to inform users. At trail junctions staggered



man gates will be installed that prevent the passage of ATV's or vehicles. Random motorized recreation in the area will not be permitted in accordance with Bylaw No. 3002.

**Non-Motorized Trails** – trails activities will include walking, cycling, skateboarding in the summer months as well as cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing in the winter. These activities will be permitted in designated areas through signage and trail maps. A bicycle trail in the Alberta Transportation highway right of way will be developed in accordance with Alberta Transportations response to the Active Alberta Policy as per the document 'Trails in Alberta Highway Rights-of-Way Policies, Guidelines and Standards' (2015). Trails will be surveyed every fall to identify any nearby nesting or hibernacula that are visible from the trail. Portions of the trail will be closed if their use is deemed as a potential disruption to these areas.

**Day Use** – The majority of the Recreation area will be for day use purposes, with overnight camping available in designated areas only.

**Seasonal Overnight Camping** – (summer only) - an area of approximately 10 acres that is partially cleared will be designated for tenting only camping in Disposition A. **This designation of overnight camping space in Disposition A will not result in development of the camping spots until work begins on the camping facilities in Disposition B.** It is strictly a designation until such time as the full campground and caretaker residence can be developed as one project. A water tap will be provided and a combination washroom/shower house. A camp shelter with woodstove will be available, as well as a group firepit. There will be between 20 and 50 tenting sites that will each have an individual firepit and picnic table. No sites will have power or sewer. An area of approximately 20 acres will be designated for Recreational Vehicle camping in Disposition B. This will be a combination of open pull-through sites and partially treed back-in sites, with one group area intended to accommodate as many as ten units. A water tap will be provided and a sani-dump, as well as a washroom/shower house. There will be between 50 and 80 sites that will each have an individual firepit and picnic table, as well as a riser with 50 amp service. A secondary emergency exit will be developed that exits the area on the far east portion of Disposition B to evacuate overnight campers in an emergency.

**On Site Caretaker Residence** – with the development of overnight camping an on-site caretaker is essential for operating the campground and being on site emergency personnel. An area of approximately 2 acres to the west of the tenting only area in Disposition A will be utilized to provide an on-site residence and campground office. Although the campground is open only seasonally, this residence would be occupied year round.

**Water (Wapiti River)** - No new crossings will be created across the Wapiti River as a function of this project. The trail system that is appropriate for non-motorized use will traverse above the 100 year high water mark, in



the older growth trees. It will not lead down to the shorebed. A lookout will be created at the southernmost driving turnaround that will feature benches and an interpretive sign that provides information about the history of the Wapiti, the flora and fauna varieties of the river, and human behaviors that impact the health of the river.

**Water (Constructed Water Features)** - In the Disposition II there will be constructed water features that will be suitable for non-motorized water craft and sport fishing. It will be developed as a restorative wetland, with features that promote the survival of fish, birds and water plant life. Features include, but are not limited to, shoreline inlets and varying depths throughout the water body. A dock will be constructed at the northwest portion of the waterbody to encourage recreational users to access the waterbody without disruption to the shoreline in other areas. Signage will be installed to explain why it is important to limit shorebed disruption. A station will be installed for watercraft to be cleaned no closer than 100 metres from the water body, in the parking lot for this area. Signage will be installed that informs about the risk of invasive species, and appropriate measures that should be taken to limit their transmission.

The waterbody will be designed to flood to the northwest, in the event of a 100-year flood, into a second constructed waterbody. The second waterbody will serve as a restorative wetland that is not accessible for recreation purposes. Bird watching will be permitted as the only form of recreation. In the event of unprecedented flooding, this waterbody will be designed to flood into the day use area immediately to the south. In this way the constructed water bodies should never flood into the Wapiti River.

All constructed hydrological aspects will be completed with direction from Alberta Environment and Parks or in collaboration with an appropriate organization such as the Alberta Conservation Association.

**Bicycle/BMX** – At the northwest portion of Disposition II a BMX track will be constructed, that is accessible via the trail system that runs through the Dispositions. It will only be suitable for non-motorized use. It will be constructed from packed earth and boundaries to the track will be created using shock absorbing material such as rubber or recycled tires. A natural bike park will be constructed as a supplement to the facility, with obstacles built from natural materials such as packed earth and logs. This facility will require a full implementation plan prior to approval, and must be supported by the County's 10-year Recreation Master Plan.

**Off Leash Dog Park** – If a Bicycle/BMX track is deemed unsuitable through the Implementation Plan, a fenced off leash dog park will be established. It will have a minimum 6 foot high chain link fenced boundary, and will not be open or accessible for use during the winter hibernation. Dog owners will be discouraged through signage to keep their pets out of the entire Wapiti Recreation Area during winter months, and at all times of year dogs must remain on a leash in accordance with the Dog Control Bylaw No. 2310.

Hunting – the discharge of firearms for any purpose will be strictly prohibited on the disposition grounds as per Bylaw No. 2630.

### **2.2.2 Facilities**

The intention of the dispositions will be to accommodate low impact recreation. Facility development will not focus on high performance sports facilities, or high investment recreation buildings. In accordance with a site plan the following facilities will be developed:

1. Trails, non-motorized
2. Outdoor classroom/performance area
3. Wildlife-proof garbage containers and recycling containers. Containers are located 1 per linear kilometer of trail, and a minimum of 2 containers per individual facility within each Disposition (playground, day use area, BMX track)
4. Public washrooms
5. Washroom/Shower for overnight camping area
6. Tent only camp stalls
7. Firepits
8. RV camping stalls, with electrical risers
9. Non insulated camping shelter
10. Sani Dump with water treatment facility
11. Parking lots/staging areas
12. Playground
13. Picnic amenities (tables, benches, fire pits)
14. Piers
15. Bridges
16. Bicycle/ BMX course
17. Signage – including directional (trail or site maps), behavioural (trail etiquette, safety awareness) and informational (Alberta Bear Smart, fisheries regulation)
18. Fencing to promote safety or to isolate sensitive areas

### **2.2.3 Restoration**

Depleted gravel leases possess little to no opportunity for habitat conservation, however there is potential for remediation work resulting in the creation of new habitat and eco-systems. A thorough assessment of the area will be completed in collaboration with Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Conservation Association, the University of Alberta ALES department or others in order to develop a formal step by step strategy for restoration of the hydrological features. Restoration of hydrological habitat (constructed waterbodies) will be done with Alberta Environment and Parks guidance as it relates to the Water Act, Fisheries Act and/or the



Alberta Wetland Policy. The landscaping for the waterbodies will be completed a year prior to the closure of the drainage structure (DRS 080007).

Restoration of terrestrial habitat will be reviewed with the end users and AEP prior to terrestrial restoration activities. We believe that activities will centre on areas where some measure of foliage remains that can be built upon and where native species can be supported or re-introduced. Lodgepole Pine and Aspen Poplar are opportunistic growers, so by closing areas to activity or development an opportunity will exist for natural reforestation. Clay and topsoil may need to be supplied to provide a base for turf and plant life in areas such as playgrounds.

#### **2.2.4 Compliance and Enforcement**

Informational and Behavioural signage will play a significant role in ensuring that users of the facility behave in a safe and responsible fashion. In addition to this an active presence by the County Parks and Recreation Department and Regional Enforcement Services will further encourage compliance. The Parks & Recreation Department will be responsible for maintenance of the site, which will include daily visits to empty garbage, do site clean-up, conduct facility inspections and to deliver recreation programming. During the course of these duties staff will engage users to provide information about permitted activities in the area and to promote responsible recreation. The following County of Grande Prairie Bylaws will be in effect and enforced by Regional Enforcement Services as they tour the facility or as is needed based on reports from the Parks & Recreation Department or the public:

Bylaw No. 3002 – County Parkland Conservation – this bylaw establishes rules and regulations in order to protect and preserve natural ecosystems while promoting safe and responsible recreation activities in County Campgrounds and Parkland.

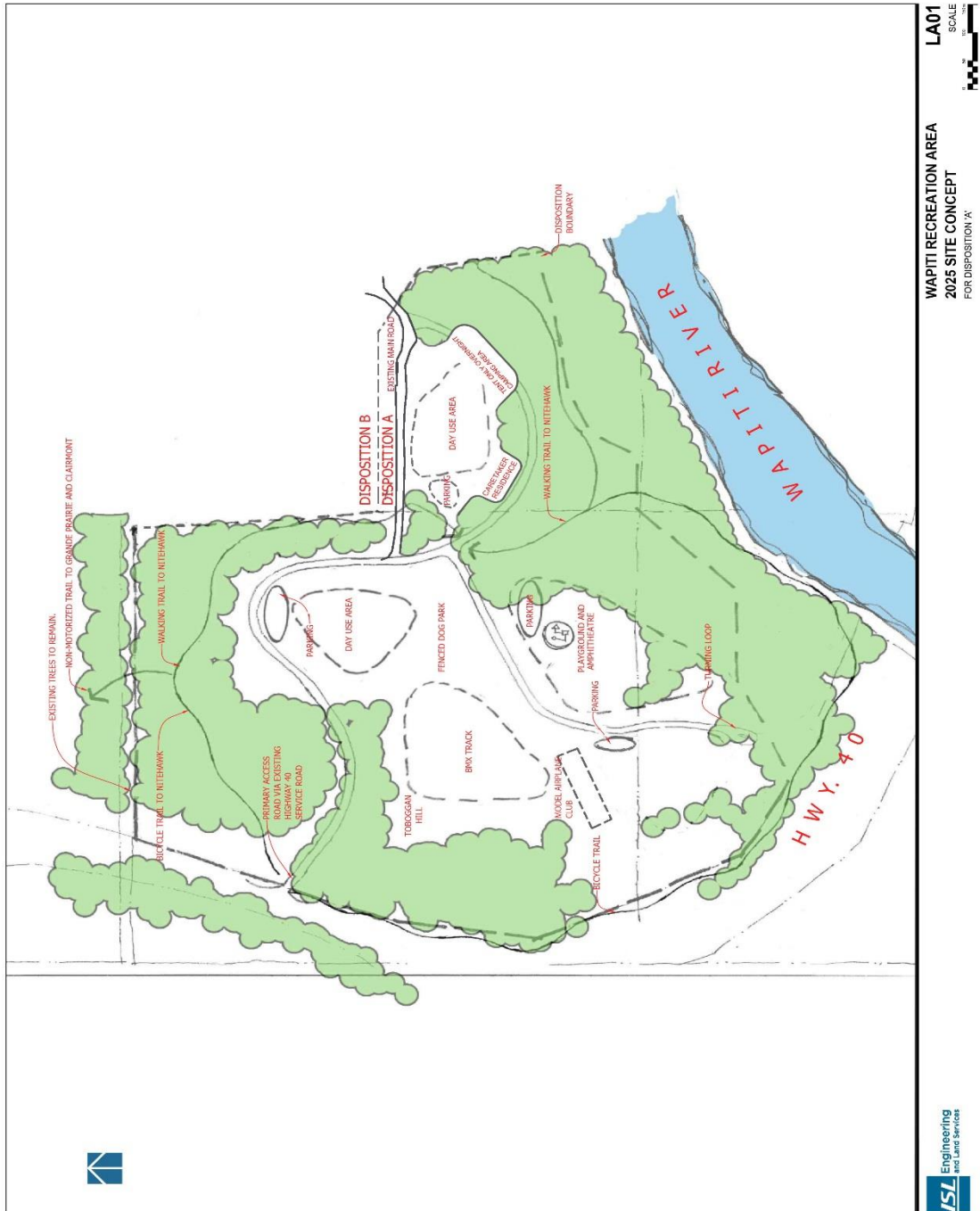
Bylaw No. 3023 – Off-Highway Vehicles – by bylaw the County allows Off-Highway vehicles on highways and other places under its direction, control and management.

Bylaw No. 2630 – Discharge of Weapons – by bylaw the County prohibits the discharge of weapons in specified areas in the County of Grande Prairie. Disposition I and II are encompassed in an area where discharge is prohibited.

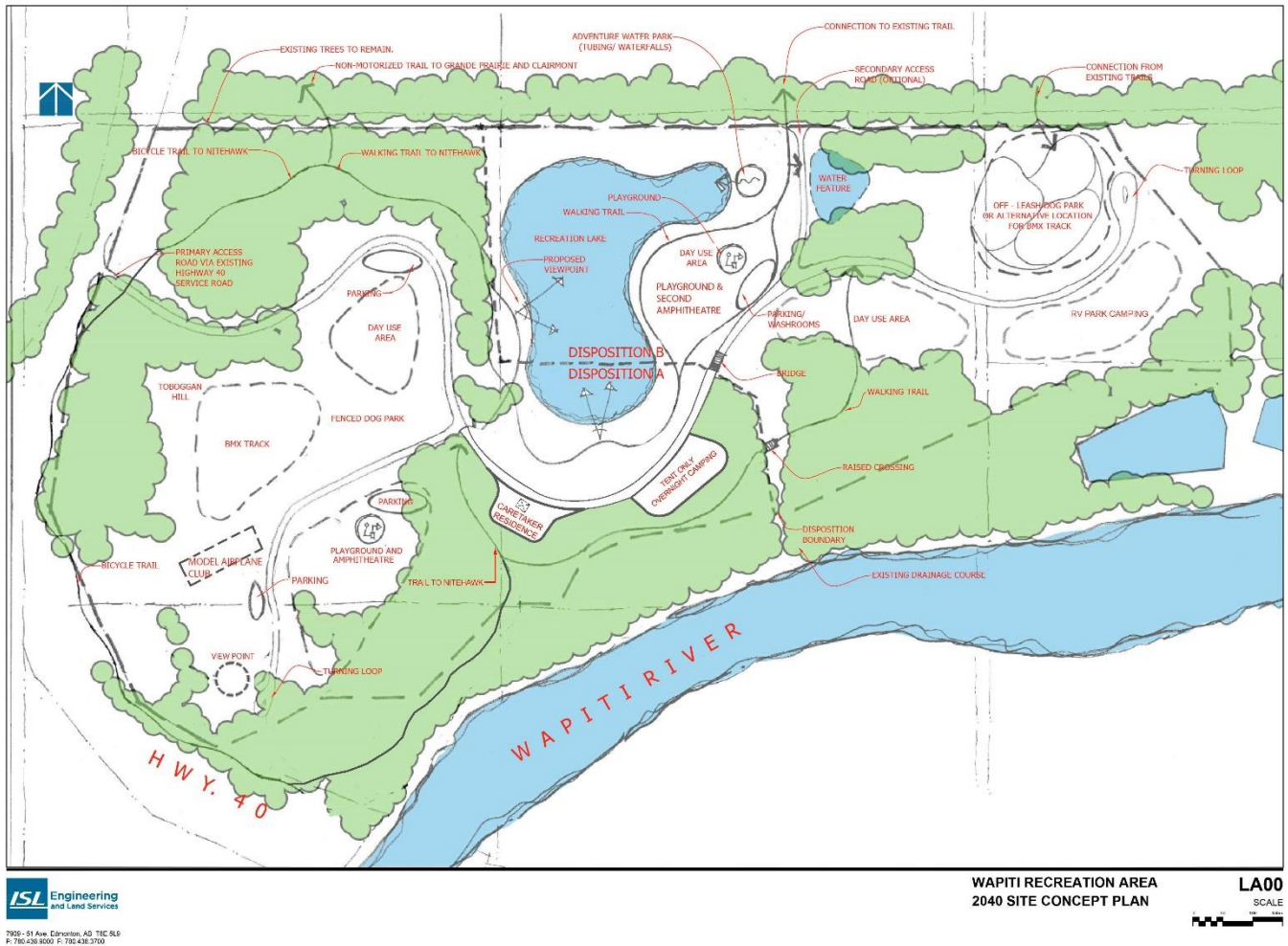
Bylaw No. 3024 – General Traffic – Council may provide for the control, regulation and penalties for the traffic and pedestrians moving on County highways, roadways and streets and for the parking of vehicles thereon.

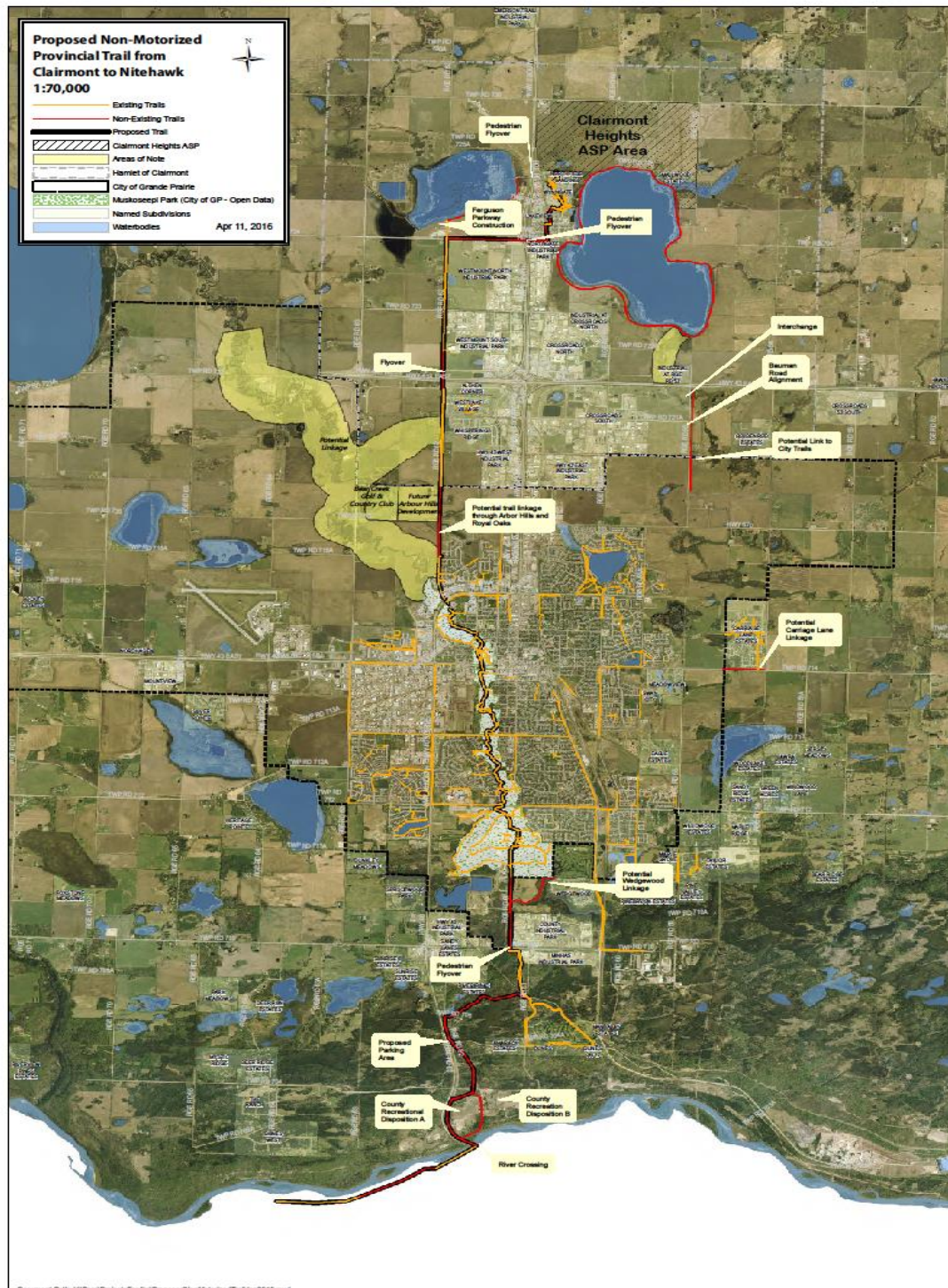
Bylaw No. 2310 – Dog Control Bylaw – by bylaw the County retains the right to license and control dogs.

Figure 2, page 14 – Disposition A Concept Plan



**Figure 3, Page 15 – Disposition A and Disposition B Concept Plan.**





**Figure 4, Page 16 – Proposed continuous trail beginning in Clairmont, continuing through the City of Grande Prairie to the Wapiti Recreation Area and beyond to the Wapiti River.**

## 2.3 Land Management Plan

### 1. Restore Land/Habitat

#### 1.1 Reclaim gravel lease areas for habitat development

- 1.1.1 Work with recreation groups, public works, AT and AEP to ensure gravel lease areas are reclaimed

*(Reference - 'Best Management Practices User Manual for Aggregate Operators on Public Land') (Disposition A – 2020 – 2025 Disposition B - 2030-2035)*

- 1.1.2 Develop topography to reduce sight lines

*(Disp. A - 2020-2025, Disp. B 2030-2035)*

- 1.1.3 Work with AEP and AT to determine the best reclamation strategy for DRS 080007. Develop necessary agreements to handle the reclamation costs involved.

*(Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

#### 1.2 Develop a restorative Wetland

- 1.2.1 Construct a waterbody in Disp. B that is suitable to stock with Northern Pike or Trout by maximizing habitat through design.

*(Reference – Alberta Wetland policy (2013), Alberta Water Act) (Disp. B - 2030-2035)*

### 2. Protection of Land & Water

#### 2.1 Manage Vegetation

- 2.1.1 Encourage passive reforestation by eliminating access to select areas through signage and fencing

*(Reference - Native Plant Revegetation Guidelines for Alberta (2000), H. Sinton-Gerling) (Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*



- 2.1.2 Partner with County of Grande Prairie Ag department to identify and eliminate noxious weeds.

*(Reference - Alberta Weed Act, 2000) (Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

- 2.1.3 Where required, soil may be transported to the site to permit the establishment of trees as directed by AEP.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

- 2.1.4 Actively reforest and re-establish native flora in select areas and control access through signage and fencing

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

## 2.2 Manage access to Riparian Areas

- 2.2.1 Build piers and docks into the constructed water body to provide foot traffic and non-motorized watercraft with a controlled access to limit shorebed disturbance

*(Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

- 2.2.2 Limit access to the Wapiti River to foot traffic only through trail design and signage. All walking trails will be set back a minimum of 60 meters from the shorebed of the river, remaining in the 'older growth' tree line to limit erosion potential

*(Disp. B - 2030 – 2035)*

### 3. Protection of Wildlife, fisheries and other Biodiversity values

#### 3.1 Manage recreational activities to reduce wildlife disturbances

- 3.1.1 Design facilities to maintain a treed buffer between humans and southern boundary wildlife corridor and enforce foot traffic only recreation through this area.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

- 3.1.2 Do not have on site construction or disruptive maintenance during winter timing restrictions unless unavoidable. Request Temporary Field Authorizations as necessary

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

- 3.1.3 Reduce recreational activity during the winter to avoid disturbing or displacing wildlife.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

- 3.1.4 Enforce restrictions with signage and application of County Bylaws.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

#### 3.2 Create educational opportunities to assist with recreational use requirements and compliance with regulations

- 3.2.1 Use designated trail signage to inform users of the importance of staying on marked trails and off of sensitive areas.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

- 3.2.2 Use signage to increase awareness of fisheries regulations and the environmental value of compliance.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

- 3.2.3 Use signage to promote wildlife awareness and safety information (Alberta Bear Smart and cougar awareness initiatives)

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

- 3.2.4 Deliver programs on site that focus on outdoor education and the value of environmental stewardship.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)*

#### 3.3 Encourage wildlife repopulation

- 3.3.1 Install bat boxes

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

- 3.3.2 Install nesting shelves to encourage thrushes and swallows

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

- 3.3.3 Install nesting boxes of various dimensions to encourage chickadees, woodpeckers and owls.

*(Reference - Hinterland Who's Who - hww.ca) (Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

## 4. Increase Recreation Connectivity

### 4.1 Build a continuous non-motorized Developed Trail from Clairmont to the Wapiti Bridge

- 4.1.1 Work with stakeholders (County, City of GP, landowners, GoA) to identify a trail linkage from the northern portion of the Muskoseepi Trail system to the hamlet of Clairmont  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)
- 4.1.2 Work with stakeholders (County, City of GP, landowners, GoA, Wapiti Corridor Society) to identify a trail linkage from the southern portion of the Muskoseepi Trail system to the northern boundary of Disposition A  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)
- 4.1.3 Identify linkage from northern boundary of Disposition A to connect to a walking trail that leads through the Disposition and travels above the Wapiti River high water mark. At this linkage (in the northern portion of disposition A) the trail will bifurcate into the aforementioned walking trail and a separate bicycle trail (in the AT road allowance).  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)
- 4.1.4 Work with the Province to determine the parameters required to be considered a 'Provincial Trail' system and secure funding through this program  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)
- 4.1.5 Build a continuous non-motorized Developed Trail (surfaced with asphalt, gravel or wood chips) system from Clairmont to the second bridge location on the Wapiti River  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)
- 4.1.6 Create and Implement long term maintenance strategy for this facility for beautification mowing, snow removal, crack sealing, garbage removal and safety inspections  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)

### 4.2 Build non-motorized Developed Trails that connect Disposition A and B

- 4.2.1 Build a non-motorized Developed Trail (surfaced with asphalt, gravel or wood chips) that connects Disp A and Disp B from east to west and north to south with limited lines of sight  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)
- 4.2.2 Create and Implement long term maintenance strategy for this facility for beautification mowing, garbage removal and safety inspections  
(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)
- 4.2.3 In late fall closely review the area for animal bedding or hibernaculum. Close trail sections for winter season if they fall within 25 m of bedding area  
(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)
- 4.2.4 Install informative signage and enforce having dogs on leashes at all times  
(Disp. A - 2020 - Ongoing, Disp. B - 2030 - Ongoing)

## 5. Infrastructure Development

### 5.1 Build a model airplane runway and storage building

- 5.1.1 Research the impacts of model airplane use on wildlife to ensure the recreational use does not negatively impact local wildlife. Only proceed with this recreational development if a consensus between the County, AEP and ACA is reached that impacts to wildlife will not negatively impact populations.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.1.2 Ensure this recreational function is compatible with the County's 10-year Recreation Master Plan and the Wapiti Corridor Multi Use Plan.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.1.3 Work with model airplane club to determine their facility requirements and incorporate this into construction planning  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.1.4 Create a Construction Plan that gives specific consideration to the wildlife sensitivities in this area  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.1.5 Secure a financial commitment from model airplane club to contribute towards development and maintenance of the facility  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.1.6 Create an ongoing maintenance plan for this facility  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*

### 5.2 Build a toboggan hill

- 5.2.1 Identify an area that is naturally sloped and enhance the natural topography to create a 3:1 sliding hill. This area cannot be in proximity to the southern treed corridor  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.2.2 Conduct a risk assessment and implement recommendations to mitigate risks associated with toboggan hills  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.2.3 Install seasonal (November 1 - March 1) fire pit with seating for hill users.  
*(Reference - County Bylaw No. 2924, Medical and Fire Emergency Response) (Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.2.4 Install signage indicating seasonal burning permission, hours of operation (daylight hours)  
*(Reference - County Bylaw No. 2924, Medical and Fire Emergency Response) (Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*

### 5.3 Build an Outdoor Classroom

- 5.3.1 Coordinate with local school boards and the County Agriculture department to design a classroom that could be utilized to instruct a class of 30 students in Disp. A.  
*(Reference - Atkinson Outdoor Classroom – Oregon) (Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.2 Obtain all required construction approvals and seek financial grants and contributions  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.3 Construct the facility with easy access to the constructed water body for student access to passively study shorebed and riparian areas  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.4 Incorporate modern environmentally friendly design - no glass, living roof  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.5 Build a permaculture garden on the edge of existing trees to incorporate 'canopy' into design. Utilize for teaching opportunities.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.6 Create and Implement operating model that enforces strict environmental practices - Integrated pest management approach, no use of pesticides  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*
- 5.3.7 Implement short and long term maintenance strategy for this facility for beautification mowing, garbage removal and safety inspections and facility infrastructure replacement  
*(Disp. A - 2020 – 2025)*

### 5.4 Build a fenced 'off leash dog park' in Disp B

- 5.4.1 Adjacent to walking trails, build a contained area no less than 3 Acres with chain link fencing no less than 6 ft tall for dog owners to allow their dogs 'off leash'.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.4.2 Install signage to educate dog owners on hazards presented to wildlife from dogs off leash in wildlife areas.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.4.3 Install signage to educate pet owners on proper etiquette and safety measures  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.4.4 Implement incentive programs for pet owners to clean up after their pets (good deed tickets etc)  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.4.5 Provide varied surfaces for pets to run on, bring in clay and topsoil to create grassed areas as well as gravel areas  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.4.6 Implement a short and long term maintenance program for the facility that includes cleaning, garbage removal, and site infrastructure replacement  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*



- 5.5 Build a constructed waterbody suitable for non-motorized watercraft
- 5.5.1 Complete a full risk assessment and employ recommendations from risk assessment to mitigate risks associated with open bodies of water  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.2 Water depth will be adequate and floor bed and shore will be designed to encourage fish survival.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.3 Piers and Docks will be built to encourage launching and docking without disrupting shore bed.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.4 Signage will clearly display that motorized watercraft is not-permitted and will be enforced through Bylaw  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.5 Informational signage will be installed regarding invasive water species and how to avoid transferring them. 1.6 Install a fresh water cleaning station no closer than 100 meters from the shore to provide watercraft operators a place to wash invasive species from the watercraft.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.6 Fishing will be permitted and informational signage will be installed to inform fishers of length and size requirements for keeping fish  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
  - 5.5.7 Install a solar powered aeration system  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.6 Build a Day Use picnic area with playground equipment (one in Disp A, a separate one in Disp B)
- 5.6.1 Construct a 'natural playground' as the central focus. Work with natural topography for playground features (develop slides on hillsides). Create separate 'themes' for each playground  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*
  - 5.6.2 Construct picnic tables and benches with easy sightlines to the playground. Install signage that indicates the area is a County Red Zone and burning is not permitted.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*
  - 5.6.3 Obtain all required construction approvals.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*
  - 5.6.4 Create level grassed areas for sitting, cloud watching  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*
  - 5.6.5 Apply a Facility Maintenance Plan that identifies items such as frequency of grass cutting, garbage removal and facility safety inspections  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

## 5.7 Build a Bicycle/BMX Track

- 5.7.1 Ensure this recreational function is compatible with the County's 10-year Recreation Master Plan and the Wapiti Corridor Multi Use Plan.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.2 Design the facility to utilize natural topography and develop the trail with packed earth and logs.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.3 Work with local biking/bmx groups club to determine their facility requirements and incorporate this into construction planning  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.4 Create a Construction Plan that gives specific consideration to the wildlife sensitivities in this area.  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.5 Secure a financial commitment from local bmx/biking clubs to contribute towards development and maintenance of the facility  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.6 Encourage cyclists to remain on designated pathways to access this facility with signage at the trailheads leading into the Rec Area.  
*(Disp. A - 2020-2025, Disp. B - 2030-2035)*
- 5.7.7 Create an ongoing maintenance plan for this facility  
*(Disp. B - 2030-2035)*

## 5.8 Build Overnight Camping Stalls for Summer Use

- 5.8.1 Ensure this recreational activity is compatible with the County's 10-year Recreation Master Plan and with neighboring campgrounds business objectives.  
*(Disp. A & B - 2030 - 2035)*
- 5.8.2 Designate the future tenting only area of Disposition A, but do not construct and designate as an overnight camping area until work can begin on building the campground and caretaker residence as a single project with the development of Disposition B.  
*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)*
- 5.8.3 Design the facility with tenting only opportunities in Disposition A and RV opportunities in Disposition B, with group function areas in both.  
*(Disp. A & B - 2030 - 2035)*
- 5.8.4 Incorporate comfort amenities including 50 amp power for RV's and an on-site Sani Dump System with a water treatment facility into the design of the campground. Design will also include provision for potable water and a covered camping shelter with a wood stove for the tenting area.  
*(Disp. A & B - 2030 - 2035)*
- 5.8.5 Create a construction plan that identifies how to develop the camping stalls with minimal ecological disturbance (leaving trees standing wherever possible). This plan must also identify how power will be brought to the sites and caretaker residence with minimal

disturbance, and where the sani-dump will be located to ensure convenience for users without sacrificing ecological integrity.

*(Disp. A & B – 2030 – 2035)*

- 5.8.6 Provide a caretaker residence to allow for on-site staff to manage the operational aspect of the campground, and also be available to offer site security and manage emergency situations.

*(Disp. A & B – 2030 – 2035)*

- 5.8.7 Create an ongoing Facility Operational and Maintenance Plan

*(Disp. A & B – 2030 – 2035)*

## 6. Promote Safety

- 6.1 Include AT gravel hauling in facility risk assessments

- 6.1.1 Ensure all development in disposition A recognizes the potential impacts of an active AT gravel haul, and steps are taken, both in terms of planning the location of each activity, and working in conjunction with AT to mitigate the risks involved.

*(Disp. B – 2020-2025)*

- 6.2 Implement a plan to resolve safety concerns associated with drainage channel

- 6.2.1 Work with the Provincial government to determine how to mitigate risks to the public posed by the active drainage structure on the eastern boundary of disposition A.

*(Disp. B – 2030-2035)*

## 7. Fostering Environmental Values

- 7.1 Seek opportunities to connect residents with nature

- 7.1.1 Develop and install interpretive signage to complement directional and wildlife awareness signage on trails.

*(Disp. A – 2020 – 2025, Disp. B – 2030 – 2035)*

- 7.1.2 Design and deliver educational programming that encourages healthy living and nature appreciation. Focus will be on physical activities in the outdoors (canoeing, hiking) and environmental stewardship (flora and fauna identification, nature appreciation).

*(Disp. A – 2020 – 2025, Disp. B – 2030 – 2035)*

- 7.1.3 Communicate with school divisions to encourage teachers to host their own outdoor education at the facility.

*(Disp. A – 2020 – 2025, Disp. B – 2030 – 2035)*

## 7.2 Create 'Remediation Case Study' areas

- 7.2.1 Partner with Evergreen Centre for Resource Excellence and Innovation to display remediation in multiple stages. Create a visual timeline via different educational 'stations' to show a gravel pit at the a) raw stage b) partial remediation and c) final stages of remediation. Accompany various areas with interpretive signage that explains active and passive reforestation as well as the other processes that go into remediation.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

## 8. Foster an appreciation for Indigenous values

- 8.1 Seek opportunities to connect residents with Indigenous values and practices in the area

- 8.1.1 Develop and install interpretive signage to complement directional and wildlife awareness signage on trails that identifies indigenous historical use of the Disposition area.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

- 8.1.2 Work with local first nations to influence the design of the outdoor classroom to ensure it is a facility that first nations leaders and teachers would utilize.

*(Disp. A - 2020 - 2025)*

- 8.1.3 Incorporate Traditional Knowledge (TK) including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) that links humanity and ancient origins into outdoor programming

*(Reference - Coming Full Circle: Indigenous Knowledge, Environment and Our Future) (Disp. A - 2020 - 2025, Disp. B - 2030 - 2035)*

## 3.0 Partnership Responsibilities

Between 2013 and 2015, the County of Grande Prairie No.1, Alberta Transportation, and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (now Alberta Environment and Parks) met numerous times and agreed to the following win/win/win accommodations:

- The County of Grande Prairie No.1 will be the owners of the dispositions that evolve from the depleted gravel leases in question.
- The County of Grande Prairie No.1 will respect the rights of Alberta Transportation to possess the lands they require for the twinning of highway 40.
- The County of Grande Prairie No.1 will respect the rights of Alberta Transportation to continue to extract gravel from DRS 337 until they no longer wish to do so.



- Alberta Transportation will provide the County of Grande Prairie No.1 funds equal to what it would cost to reclaim DRS 337 to acceptable standards, and the County of Grande Prairie No.1 will utilize these funds in the development of the dispositions granted them.
- Alberta Environment and Parks will provide the County of Grande Prairie No.1 funds equal to what it would cost to reclaim SML 850036 to acceptable standards, and the County of Grande Prairie No.1 will utilize these funds in the development of the dispositions granted them.
- Alberta Transportation will provide the County of Grande Prairie No.1 funds equal to what it would cost to reclaim DRS 080007 to acceptable standards, and the County of Grande Prairie No.1 will utilize these funds in the development of the dispositions granted them.

To date, one formal Agreement has been signed between Alberta Transportation and the County of Grande Prairie. This formal Agreement defines the amount and specifics of fund transfer. The specifics of other agreements involving the three organizations are present in minutes of meetings held over the past three years, and also written in correspondence. It is expected that other formal Agreements involving the three organizations will be developed as the project moves forward.

## 4.0 Glossary

Lands and Wildlife. Pub No. T/145. ISBN:0-86499-451-6. December 1, 1986.

### Special Interest group

As used in this plan, a special interest group is an organization with a preference on how land is managed. Unlike stakeholders, special interest groups are those with no legal interest in an area.

### Stakeholder

As used in this plan, a stakeholder is an individual or organization with a legal interest in an area. This may be a land owner for private land, or a lease holder for public lands.

## 5.0 References

Alberta Environment and Parks. 2015. Fish and Wildlife Internet Mapping Tool (FWIMT). Available at: <http://esrd.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/fwmis/access-fwmis-data.aspx>.



Alberta Environment and Parks. 2015. Recommended Land Use Guidelines: Key Wildlife and Biodiversity Zones (KWBZ). Available at: <http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wildlife-land-use-guidelines/documents/KeyWildlifeBiodiversityZones-Apr08-2015.pdf>.

Bear River-Wapiti Local integrated Resource Plan. Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Pub No. T/145. ISBN:0-86499-451-6. December 1, 1986.

Best Management Plans User Manual for Aggregate Operators on Public Land. October 28, 2010. Available at <http://esrd.alberta.ca/forms-maps-services/publications/documents/BestMgmtPracticesManualAggregateOpPL-2010.pdf>

Wapiti-Grande Prairie Sand Dunes Integrated Land Use Management Plan. Alberta Energy and Natural Resources. ENR Report No. 78. 1 July, 1978.

Wapiti Sand Dunes Land Use Zones. Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. June, 1978.

Wapiti Corridor Multi Use Plan. Wapiti Corridor Planning Society. December, 2013.

Coming Full Circle: Indigenous Knowledge, Environment and Our Future. Deborah McGregor. The American Indian Quarterly, V. 28, No. 3 & 4, Summer/Fall 2004.

Trails in Alberta Highway Rights-of Way. Policies, Guidelines and Standards. April 2015. Available at <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/doctype233/production/Trails-HWY-ROW-apr2015-f.pdf>

County of Grande Prairie Bylaw No. 2630 – Discharge of Weapons. Available at <http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/departments/regional-enforcement/bylaw-division/enforced-bylaws.html>

County of Grande Prairie Bylaw No. 3002 –Parkland Preservation Bylaw. Available at <http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/departments/regional-enforcement/bylaw-division/enforced-bylaws.html>

County of Grande Prairie Bylaw No. 3023 – Off-Highway Vehicle Bylaw. Available at <http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/departments/regional-enforcement/bylaw-division/enforced-bylaws.html>



County of Grande Prairie Bylaw No. 3024 – General Traffic Bylaw. Available at  
<http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/departments/regional-enforcement/bylaw-division/enforced-bylaws.html>

County of Grande Prairie Bylaw No. 2310 – Dog Control Bylaw. Available at  
<http://www.countygp.ab.ca/EN/main/departments/regional-enforcement/bylaw-division/enforced-bylaws.html>