



# Birds Hill Provincial Park

## Trails Plan





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## Introduction

Birds Hill Provincial Park contains approximately 100 kilometres (km) of all-season trails. These trails are some of the most important facilities for park users and are an important attraction in the park. The trail network extends through much of the park, with trails varying from paved surfaces to narrow clearings in the forest to self-guiding trails with interpretive signs and other features. See Appendix A for a full description of all designated trails in the park.

Most of the trails in the park are designated for specific uses. In spring, summer and fall, these uses include hiking, cycling, inline skating, running, horseback riding and horse-drawn carriage riding. Winter uses include walking, running, cycling, skiing, snowshoeing, riding horse-drawn sleighs and snowmobiling. The Group Use Area No.1 Road is maintained in the winter for skate skiing, skijoring and kick sledding. The shoulder of the main road in the park is also used for cycling, walking and running, and in-line skating. Several trails link the campground to other areas of the park, including the beach and riding stable, allowing people to travel about much of the park without going onto roadways. The trails pass

through the various natural and cultural features of the park giving visitors an opportunity to explore and appreciate all the park has to offer. Part of the reason for Birds Hill Provincial Park's popularity is its close proximity to Winnipeg. This proximity is also noteworthy because it allows for park visitors to access the park by bicycle, and has resulted in the park's trail network being connected to longer distance regional trail networks.

The Birds Hill Provincial Park Management Plan was completed in 2013. Through the process of preparing the management plan, including consultations with park users and stakeholders, it was determined that a separate, detailed plan was needed to guide trail management in the park. As per the management plan guideline 2.2.2 (f):

A trails plan will be prepared for Birds Hill Provincial Park that will guide management of the overall trail system. It is to encompass all the primary types of trails in the park – self-guided interpretive, hiking, cross-country skiing, cycling, equestrian and snowmobiling.

The need for a trails plan for Birds Hill Provincial Park is due to a number of factors, including:

- the importance of providing long-term direction for the trail system in the park,
- the issue of re-occurring conflicts between different types of trail users,
- the need to manage all of the different trails as well as the types of trail uses that are requested, and
- the need to communicate with the high volume of trail users about trail conditions and the different opportunities available.

In addition, the park management planning process resulted in the decision to reconfigure snowmobile use in the park, given the evolution in the nature of snowmobiling that has occurred over time and opposition to motorized activities in the park.

This plan has been prepared by staff of the Parks and Protected Spaces Branch and Birds Hill Provincial Park. It was finalized following public and stakeholder consultation on a draft version of the plan.



Consultation on the draft plan took place in 2017, and consisted of the public being invited to comment on the draft plan via an online comment form on the Manitoba Parks' website, as well as meetings with stakeholder groups. Through this process, approximately 155 people or organizations submitted feedback on the draft plan and their opinions on the Birds Hill Provincial Park trail system. A great variety of comments were received regarding all of the different types of trail uses that occur in the park, and this feedback was carefully considered in the process of finalizing the trails plan.

### **Previous Plans and Related Documents**

Over the years, a number of planning documents have been prepared to guide trail management and development in Birds Hill Provincial Park. For a number of years beginning around 1990 staff worked on "A Plan for the Recreational Trail System in Birds Hill Provincial Park", which detailed problems with the park's trail system, identified priorities for trail development and types of use, and provided a framework for trail signage and cost estimates. This conceptual plan was revised a number of times over the years, with the most recent version finalized in

2004. It included extensive details relating to existing trail uses, designs of different trail types, the results of visitor surveys conducted in the 1990s, systems and requirements for sign design, and costs and requirements associated with construction and maintenance. This trails plan builds on some of the information contained in those earlier plans, but is more focused on providing direction to address the trails-related issues that were identified in the park management plan, and does not go into those factors or issues that are already addressed in park operational and/or interpretation plans.

Other planning documents that are relevant to the Birds Hill Provincial Park Trails Plan include:

- The Birds Hill Provincial Park Management Plan (2013)
- The Birds Hill Provincial Park Interpretation Concept Plan (1995; updated 2000)

### **Birds Hill Provincial Park Trail System**

See Appendix A for a full list of the designated trails in Birds Hill Provincial Park, including their permitted uses, descriptions and experiences offered.

## **Managing the Birds Hill Provincial Park Trail System**

While the great variety of trails and trail uses in Birds Hill Provincial Park and its proximity to Winnipeg are part of the reason the park is so cherished and well-used, these factors also present challenges to the long-term management of the park's trail system and ensuring a balance between recreational development and preserving the natural environment. It is important to note that, under The Provincial Parks Act, Birds Hill Provincial Park is classified as a natural park. This means that the main purpose of its designation is both to preserve areas of a natural region and to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses. Aerial imagery of the park overlain with the designated trails as of summer 2017 shows that a significant amount of the park is currently developed with trails and other facilities (see Figure 1).



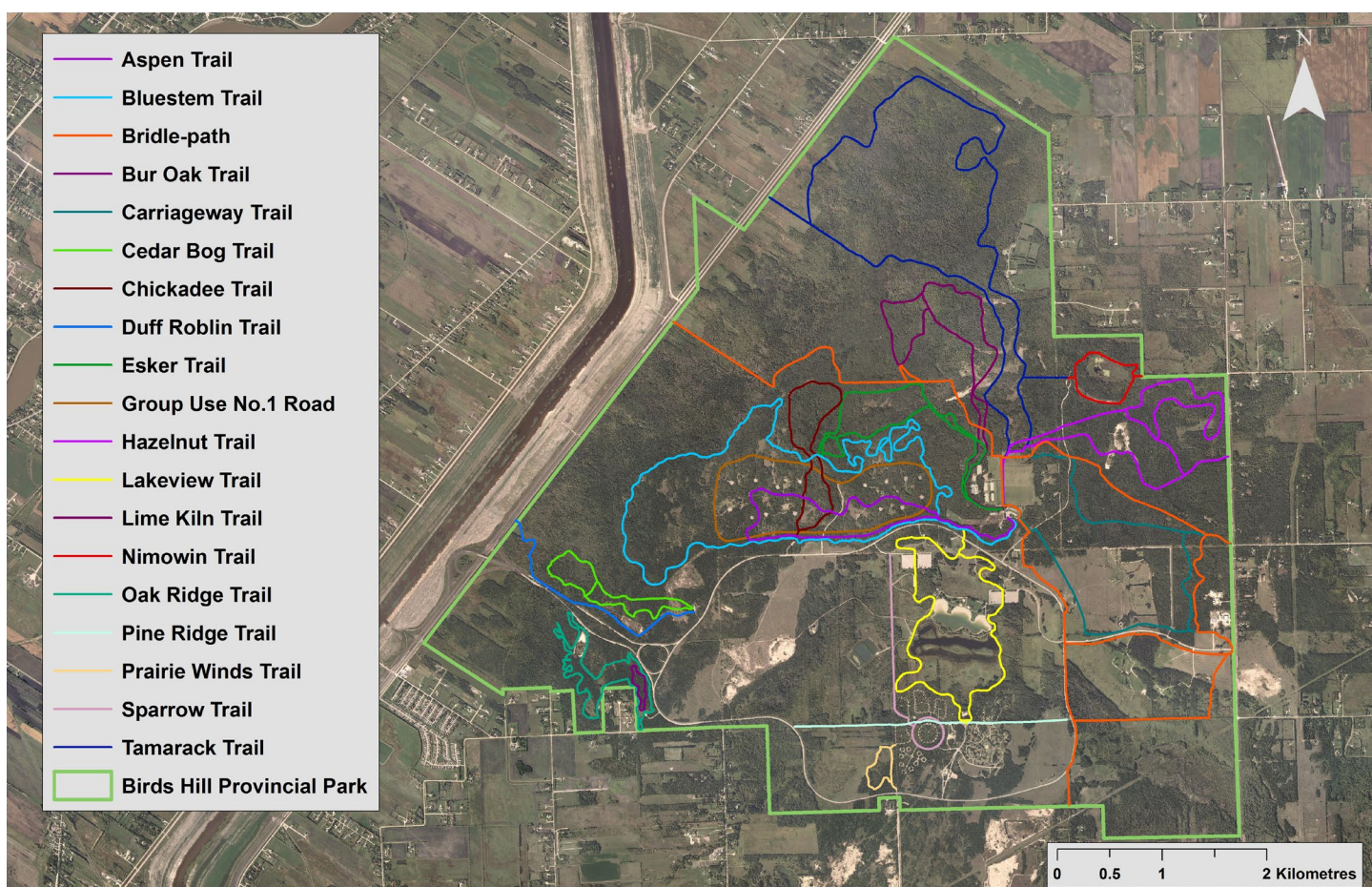


Figure 1: Birds Hill Provincial Park Trails (Summer and Winter Combined) as of Summer 2017

In addition, the image in Figure 1 does not show undesigned trails that have been informally developed by park users without authorization. This illustrates that, given the important role of the park in maintaining natural habitat for wildlife, including relatively large mammals such as white-tailed deer and black bear, there simply is not much room left in the park for further trail development. Although some might feel that a narrow trail has a negligible impact on the landscape, even minimal developments affect ecosystems and wildlife that depend on undisturbed habitat areas.

It is also important to recognize that, among the great variety of trail uses and activities in Birds Hill Provincial Park, no one specific activity or trail use takes precedence over the others (other than a focus on

non-motorized activities rather than motorized). A number of the comments submitted on the draft trails plan included suggestions or requests for new trails to be used for particular activities, but it is not possible for the park to accommodate all of these requests, particularly in consideration of the fact that what is highly valued by one park user may not be so valued by another.

A final consideration is the impact of year-to-year fluctuations in budget and staffing on the department's ability to conduct trail maintenance and monitoring activities. Even relatively small changes in the budget or staffing levels (whether an increase or decrease) can affect things such as how early in the season certain trails are mowed, or how frequently they are groomed.

## Issues to Address

A number of issues that affect the Birds Hill Provincial Park trail system and/or its users were identified through the Birds Hill Provincial Park management planning process which was concluded in 2013. Some of these have since been addressed, while others remain problematic. In brief, issues that have been noted include the following:

- Not all trail users are aware of the specific use designations of the trails, so conflicts between users, such as between skiers and snowmobilers, or cyclists and horseback riders, can arise. Users may also not be aware of the variety of trail options available to them. One of the greatest sources of conflict arises as a result of people walking in winter on ski trails. Public consultation on the draft trails plan demonstrated that, although some incorrect trail use is due to visitors not knowing what their options are, in many cases users knowingly use certain trails for activities for which the trail is not designated. Reasons for this behaviour include that they don't realize the impact they may cause, or they may disagree with the trail use designation.
- There are occasional requests to allow a new use on a trail which is not always compatible with the trail's primary intended use.
- Not all of the major sites in the park are linked by high quality trails and users often use the roadway to travel between these sites. It may be beneficial to direct some of this use of the roadway (that which is not dependent on the road's hard surface and/or the distance and route it offers) to trails to reduce congestion on the roadway.
- Even if some use of the roadway is successfully redirected to other trails, North and South drives will continue to be popular for numerous activities and special events. Widening of the shoulder of the roadway may be required to reduce congestion and accommodate future major sporting events.
- Most snowmobile traffic tends to follow trails adjacent to the park along PTH 59 and PR 206, using the trails through the park as a connector route. The proximity of the snowmobile trails and the cross-country ski trails in the park results in some conflicts between users, either through direct contact or noise impacts.
- A need to improve/increase the ways in which trail conditions are communicated to the public.
- A need to develop and use online tools and related media to promote the Birds Hill Provincial Park trail system and enhance information provided about the park's trails.
- Over the years, the Cedar Bog Trail, located in a very ecologically sensitive area, has suffered from significant degradation due to it being one of the park's most popular trails and the fact that it is located in a low, wet area. The trail is often impassable and action is needed to protect the bog and allow it to restore itself. If this issue is not addressed, the trail will likely have to be closed in the near future. The section of the trail that passes through the bog has currently been closed since early June 2017 due to the wet conditions.
- The potential for trail use to increase the spread of non-native and/or invasive species throughout the park. Such species can be spread unintentionally through a variety of means, including bicycle tires, horse manure, and even footwear. Leafy spurge and spotted knapweed are invasive weeds that are found in the park and threaten to displace native plant species. Other less concerning but non-native plants also occur in certain areas of the park. The department is taking action to control the spread of these species, and it is important that trail use and development not facilitate this spread, such as by encouraging people to travel through areas known to contain these problematic species.

## Trail Management Actions

### Providing a Varied and Well-Maintained Trail System

#### Goals

- To provide and maintain a diverse trail system in the park that provides options for numerous recreational activities for visitors of varying skill levels in all seasons of the year.
- To improve or enhance the trail system while recognizing the need to maintain areas in the park that are free of development and ensure no net loss of natural area as per the Birds Hill Provincial Park Management Plan.

#### Management Actions

1. Manitoba Sustainable Development will continue to provide trails in Birds Hill Provincial Park that offer visitors the opportunity to visit different areas of the park and participate in varied recreational experiences, with a focus on non-motorized activities.
2. When grooming trails, staff will attempt to maintain a balance between retaining natural curves and aesthetics of the trail corridors and physically accommodating the required grooming equipment. Birds Hill District staff directly involved with trail maintenance will be provided with training opportunities to learn the latest technologies and grooming techniques for the delivery of a high quality trail system.
3. Improvements to warming shelters and other basic trail amenities such as garbage cans will continue to be gradually implemented.
4. Enhancements will be made to the skate ski, skijor and kick sled trail on the Group Use Area No.1 Road to add some loops and curves in and out of some of the sites and pathways in the area.
5. Undesignated trails that have been developed without permission will be identified and gradually rehabilitated. Staff will work with partner

organizations to identify undesignated trails to determine if any of those trails are suitable for official designation as park trails that may be kept open for continued use.

6. The section of the Tamarack Trail that ran along the northwestern boundary of the park (see Figure 2) will be decommissioned, as this area of the park is perpetually wet and this section of the trail is no longer able to support grooming equipment and is not safe for general use. The northernmost section of the Hazelnut Trail will also be decommissioned due to perpetually wet conditions.

### Reducing Conflicts

#### Goals

- To eliminate or reduce conflicts between different types of trail users and their impacts on each other.
- To reconfigure snowmobile use in the park and reduce the impacts of snowmobile activity on non-snowmobilers.
- To increase park users' awareness of the variety of trails available to them.

#### Management Actions

7. The snowmobile trails in the park will be rerouted but will continue to provide a connection between PTH 59 and PR 206. The new snowmobile route, which will have the Snoman trail number 781 and is illustrated in Figure 2 (B), will not require new trail development, as it will use portions of the previous Tamarack and Hazelnut snowmobile trails. The trail will be a two-way trail running east-west through the park and will enable continued access to the warming shelter on the east side of the park near PR 206, and access to the Ranch. Large dog sled teams will continue to be allowed to use the portion of the snowmobile trail between the Nimowin staging area and the west side of the park. As part of this re-route, portions of the Hazelnut and Tamarack trails will be decommissioned (see Action #6 and Figure 2).



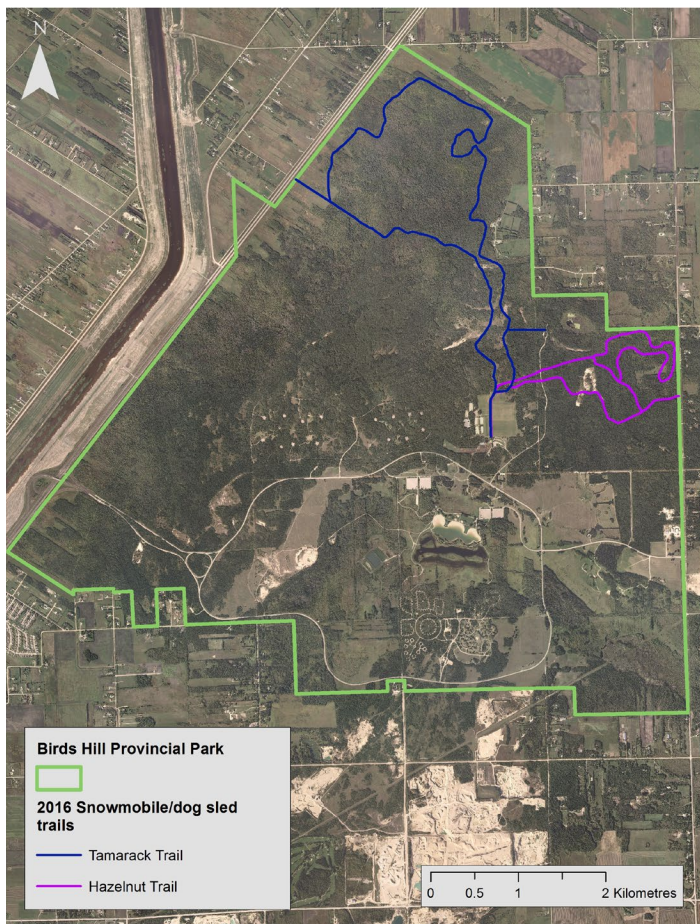


Figure 2 (A): 2016-17 Winter snowmobile / dog sled trails

The new snowmobile route will be evaluated in five years to determine if the re-route has had the desired effect in terms of reducing conflicts and the impacts of snowmobile use on other park users. Additional changes, such as removing the spur to the Ranch, may be considered at that time if needed.

8. The re-route of the snowmobile trails will also affect dog sledding in the park. The dog sled staging area will continue to be located at the Nimowin parking lot, and effective winter 2017-18, a trail called the Spruce Trail will run from the Nimowin lot to the northern tip of the park using what was previously part of the old Tamarack Trail; see Figure 2. Skijoring, kick sledding and skate skiing will also be allowed on this trail. As a result of the required decommissioning of the northwest section of the Tamarack Trail (see Action #6), this

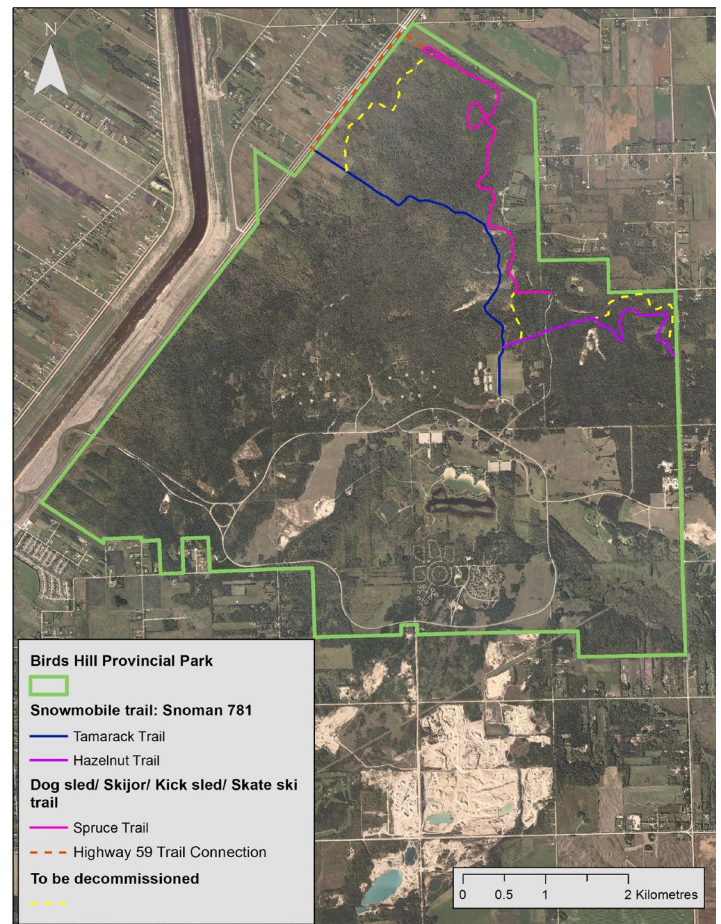


Figure 2 (B): 2017-18 Winter snowmobile / dog sled re-route

trail will be a two-way trail, with a lengthy turnaround loop provided at the northern end of the trail. As some experience is required for dogs or teams to pass head-on on a two-way trail, inexperienced skijorers will be encouraged to continue to use the Group Use Area No.1 Road instead. Signage may also be installed as needed instructing trail users to move aside for large dog teams and providing brief instructions on how to pass. In order to reduce the potential safety risks associated with large dog teams passing head on, such teams will be allowed to exit the park at the west end of the Spruce Trail, travel down the ditch alongside Highway 59, and re-enter the park at the west end of the Tamarack Trail to continue back to the Nimowin staging area. This loop option will not be permitted for any other users of the Spruce Trail. Signage and other methods will be used as necessary to prevent snowmobile



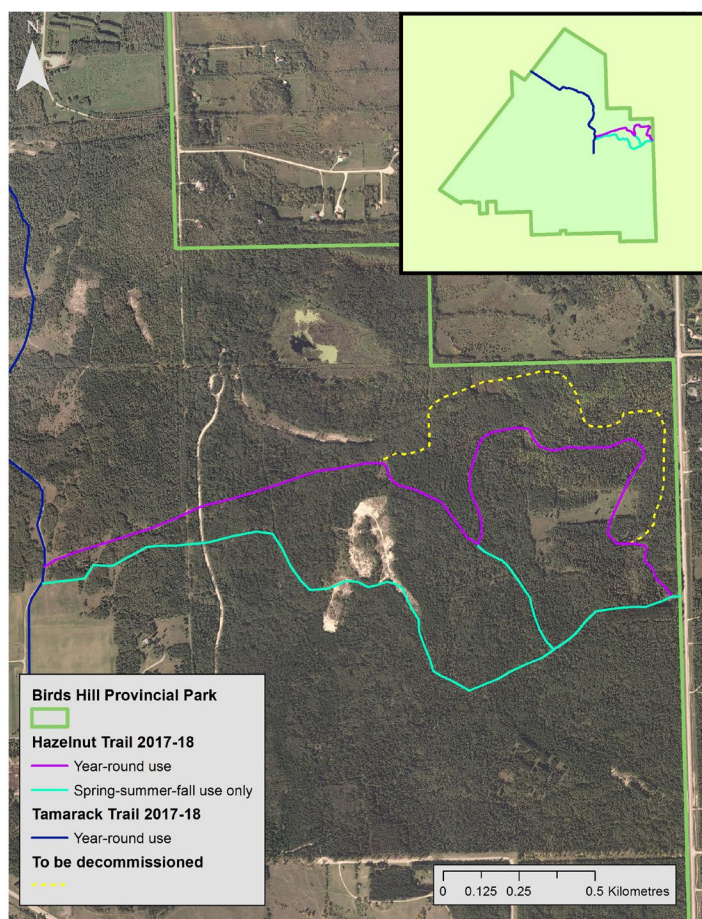


Figure 3: Hazelnut Trail effective 2017-18

users from accessing the Spruce Trail. If it is determined that allowing dog teams to exit the park at the west end of the Spruce Trail is facilitating unauthorized snowmobile use of the trail, this loop option for dog teams may be discontinued.

9. Spring-summer-fall use of the new Tamarack Trail route (see Figure 2) for horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking and running will continue to be permitted. These activities will also be permitted in spring-summer-fall on the Spruce Trail. Apart from the northernmost section which is being decommissioned (see Action #6), horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking and running will continue be permitted on the Hazelnut Trail for spring-summer-fall use. The southernmost portion of the Hazelnut Trail will not be open in winter (see Figure 3).

10. Trailheads were re-done in 2012 to provide greater detail on trail features and permitted activities/uses; future changes or additions will be considered as needed. Other improvements to trail signage, such as potentially adding distance markers on some routes, will continue to be gradually implemented.
11. Staff will continue to investigate methods for reducing or preventing winter walking on ski trails. This will include the preparation of short activity-specific handouts (ex. "Winter Walking", "Summer Cycling", etc.) to assist people in quickly determining where in the park they can participate in the particular activity of interest to them.
12. The Birds Hill Provincial Park Interpretive Map was updated and the new version released in 2016. Updates to maps and other products will continue to be made on an ongoing basis as potential improvements are identified. The development of a "Winter Adventures" map similar to what exists for Whiteshell Provincial Park will be considered.
13. The department will look into the possibility of acquiring a set of cross-country skis to be used by park and/or enforcement staff to periodically conduct patrols on the ski trails and seek out opportunities to communicate and share information with trail users.

## Guiding Future Uses and Development

### GOALS

- To provide direction on how to address requests for new trail uses and make decisions regarding additional/new trail development or trail closures.
- To reduce congestion of the shoulder of the roadway.

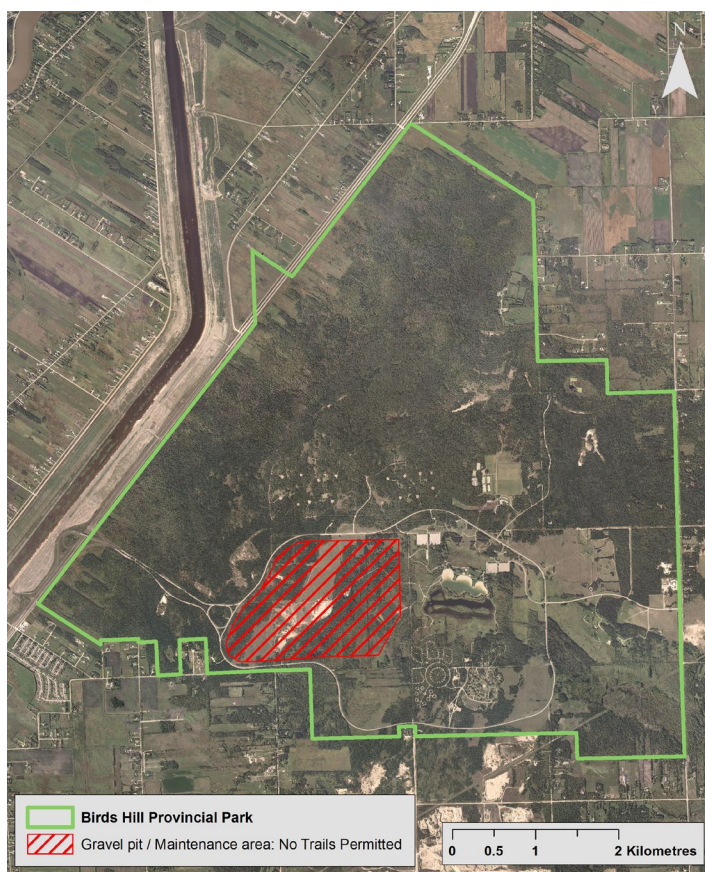


Figure 4: Gravel pit / Maintenance Area

## MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

14. Existing trails and areas within the park will be reviewed to identify where additional hard surfacing of trails and/or new linkages may be appropriate and feasible. New hard surfacing will only be developed in order to provide major access trails between existing facilities, to provide an additional trail option for persons with disabilities, or to provide an alternative to the roadway for those park users who desire a hard surface for walking or roller sports but do not specifically require use of North, South and Festival drives.
  - a. Resurfacing of the Bur Oak Trail is the top priority. No hard surfacing will be considered for any other locations until after the Bur Oak Trail has been repaired.
15. The department will investigate widening the shoulders of North and South drives in order to reduce congestion of non-motorized activities that occur on the road and improve the safety of these activities. Different design options will be considered for this purpose.
16. Specific areas where new trails and/or trail uses will not be permitted will be identified. This list may be expanded as time passes and new sensitive areas are identified and/or trails or areas reach capacity limits for activities or development.
  - a. New uses will not be permitted in the area of the Cedar Bog Trail. Manitoba Sustainable Development will investigate the establishment of a section of boardwalk through the bog area to help restore and preserve this unique ecosystem. This may be accomplished through partnering with other organizations.
  - b. Trails will not be developed through the old gravel pit area located east of the Circle Drive roundabout (see Figure 4). Although some comments submitted on the draft trails plan suggested this area would be a good location for trail development, it is not suitable due to safety concerns, the presence of invasive species and the use of the area for park maintenance purposes.
17. In areas where new activities/uses or trail development may be permitted, proposals for new activities or trails will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. All new trail developments will be considered a Class 2 development in accordance with The Environment Act. Factors that will be considered in the review of proposals will include, but not be limited to:
  - a. whether the trail or activity would be consistent with the park purpose
  - b. ecosystem characteristics and other environmental considerations
  - c. impacts to any existing trail surface(s)





- d. the ability of the trail/area to withstand increased or varied use
  - e. impacts to existing users
  - f. the proposed benefit of the new activity or trail, why the activity or trail should be in Birds Hill Provincial Park, and whether it could be accommodated in another provincial park or area instead
  - g. proximity to invasive species
  - h. available capacity for trail maintenance
  - i. relevant sections of the Birds Hill Provincial Park Management Plan, including:
    - I. Strategic Objective 2.1.1 to maintain the natural habitats throughout the park and to ensure there is no net loss of natural area in the park.
    - II. Guideline 2.2.2(a) – All proposed developments or activities which may have the potential to impact habitats will be subject to an impact assessment to help avoid or minimize detrimental impacts on the park's natural areas.
18. Staff will assess trails as they travel throughout the park to identify any issues that need attention. Issues to be noted may concern the physical condition of a trail, such as erosion, braiding, downed trees or the occurrence of invasive species, as well as social conditions, such as overcrowding or under-use. Trails may be rested, rehabilitated or decommissioned if necessary to prevent irreversible deterioration or resolve conflicts between other trails or user groups.
  19. The possibility of initiating a volunteer trail steward or "adopt-a-trail"-style program will be investigated in order to enhance trail monitoring efforts.
  20. In recent years, the number of Birds Hill Provincial Park visitors accessing the park by bicycle has been increasing. It is likely that this use will continue to increase in the future, particularly considering infrastructure upgrades underway in the area of the north Perimeter Highway. Staff will work with other government departments and partner organizations as appropriate to encourage visiting the park by non-motorized means, particularly via the Duff Roblin Parkway Trail which runs along the Red River Floodway.

## Using Technology and Social Media

### GOAL

- To increase the use of technology and media in relation to the trail system and communicating with its users.

### MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

21. Trail conditions are already communicated via the Manitoba Parks website during the winter, as well as at other times of the year if there are sudden major changes or closures (ex: due to weather events). Staff will increase communications via social media (Twitter, Facebook) regarding trail conditions.
22. A planned redesign of the Manitoba Sustainable Development and Manitoba Parks websites will be used as an opportunity to make information about the trail system and trail conditions more accessible and easy to find.
23. An online interactive trail map project will be developed to increase the amount of information available to the public about the Birds Hill Provincial Park trail system and current conditions. The first step in proceeding with this project is the collection of current GPS data for all trails in the park.
24. The potential future development of a mobile phone app related to trail information, use and/or monitoring will be considered.

## Plan Implementation

Some of the management actions identified in this trails plan have already been initiated and some will be implemented immediately. Others will occur gradually in the future and/or be implemented on an ongoing basis. See Appendices B and C for maps of the winter and spring-summer-fall trail networks in Birds Hill Provincial Park effective winter 2017-18, with the changes described above included.

Priorities for implementation of the trails plan management actions are:

### IMMEDIATE

1. The re-routed snowmobile and dog sled trails (with new/updated signage as needed) will be in place for the 2017-18 winter season. This will include the required decommissioning of portions of the Tamarack and Hazelnut trails as described above.
2. Staff will meet with certain partner organizations to review undesignated trails used by their members to determine if any of those trails are suitable for official designation as park trails that may be kept open for continued use.
3. Enhancements to the Group Use Area No. 1 Road skate ski/ skijor/ kick sled trail will be implemented in 2017-18.
4. Work will begin on the preparation of short activity-specific handouts in 2017-18.
5. The department will investigate the possibility of acquiring a set of cross-country skis for park and/or enforcement staff to use for trail monitoring and communications in the 2017-18 winter season.

### ONGOING

1. Updates to maps, trailheads, trail amenities and other products will occur on an ongoing basis.
2. Staff will continue to maintain, monitor and assess trail conditions on an ongoing basis.
3. Trail conditions will continue to be communicated via the Manitoba Parks website and various forms of social media.
4. The collection of GPS trails data will occur on a gradual basis.
5. Training related to trail maintenance and grooming will be provided to park staff as opportunities arise.





## FUTURE

1. The closure and rehabilitation of identified undesignated trails will occur on a gradual basis.
2. The installation of a boardwalk through the bog on the Cedar Bog Trail will occur at such a time in the future when the necessary resources and/or partnership opportunity are available.
3. Once trail data and other necessary information have been collected, work will be initiated on the development of the online interactive map project.
4. A volunteer trail steward or “adopt-a-trail”-style program may be initiated if initial investigations determine it would be feasible and beneficial for the Birds Hill Provincial Park trail system.
5. Following resurfacing of the Bur Oak Trail, consideration will be given to the question of where in the park additional hard surfacing of trails may be feasible and appropriate.
6. Changes to North and South drives to enable widening of the shoulder for non-motorized activities will be implemented pending the availability of necessary resources.

## Appendix A – Birds Hill Provincial Park Trail Descriptions\*

\*all trails are non-motorized unless otherwise noted

### Aspen

*Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running, cycling  
Winter – Cross-country skiing (groomed)

*Description:* Looped trail starting at the riding stable cutting through Group Use Area No.1. The ski trail is novice-level.

*Length:* 6.5 km

### Bluestem

*Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Cycling, running, hiking  
Winter – Cross-country skiing (groomed)

*Description:* Looped trail starting at the riding stable, wrapping around Group Use Area No.1 with numerous twists and turns. The ski trail is intermediate-level.

*Length:* 14 km

### Bridle-path

*Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running  
Winter – Horseback riding, horse-drawn sleigh (not groomed)

*Description:* Trail crosses the park east-west, connecting PR 206 to PTH 59. The trail can be accessed via horse gates at Sapton Rd., Vernon Rd., and on the western boundary of the park. A warming shelter is located at the western end of the trail.

*Length:* 16 km

### Bur Oak

*Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running, wheelchair accessible  
Winter – Hiking, running (groomed)

*Description:* This self-guided looped trail is designed to accommodate all visitors. The trail is asphalt covered and adjacent picnic tables and washrooms provide barrier-free access. Although the trail is currently passable, it is in need of significant repairs. The trail loops through a stand of gnarled bur oak and has eight on-site interpretive signs that describe the plants and animals that thrive in the area during each season. Braille text of the interpretive signs is available at the Park Office upon request. The landscape of the trail is characterized as an oak savannah.

*Length:* 1 km

### Carriageway

*Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking  
Winter – Horseback riding, horse-drawn sleigh (not groomed)

*Description:* Looped trail starting at the riding stable, wrapping around Group Use Area No.2 and crossing the Pan-Am Games Equestrian Course.

*Length:* 7.5 km



## Cedar Bog

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running
- Winter – Hiking, running (groomed)

*Description:* This self-guided loop trail descends gently from the aspen oak parkland into a unique cedar bog where the tall cedars create a canopy that blocks the sunlight. It winds through grasslands, areas of aspen and oak trees and a magnificent stand of eastern white cedar. The trail starts at a relatively high elevation, passes through an aspen forest and descends about 25 metres to an unusual cool and damp cedar bog. During winter, the path is packed for winter walking. A self-guiding brochure is available. Visitors are asked to stay on the trails to protect the unique ecosystem. The cedar bog is a very wet area and because it is one of the most popular trails in the park, it has deteriorated from heavy use. The trail requires a section of boardwalk through the bog area to help restore and preserve this unique ecosystem. If a boardwalk is not installed, some sections will become permanently impassable and the trail will have to be closed.

*Length:* 3.5 km

## Chickadee

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running
- Winter – Cross-country skiing (groomed)

*Description:* This loop trail starts at the Chickadee parking lot just off North Drive and cuts across Group Use Area No.1. Griffiths Hill, at about the halfway point along the trail, is the highest point in the area at 265 metres above sea level (870 feet above sea level). The trail has five on-site interpretive signs at the Griffiths Hill viewing tower that provides a westward view, beyond the park's treed boundary. The signs explain how eskers are formed. Settlers in this region would use this esker to escape flooding when the Red River spilled its banks. The landscape of the trail is characterized by aspen oak parkland as visitors gradually climb up the face of the esker. A warming shelter is located at Griffiths Hill. The ski trail is novice-level.

*Length:* 4 km

## Duff Roblin

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running, cycling, wheelchair accessible
- Winter – Potential for hiking, running, cycling

*Description:* Paved trail provides a connection to the park from the Duff Roblin Parkway Trail along the Red River Floodway, via a pedestrian overpass at PTH 59. The trail ends at the Cedar Bog Trail parking lot.

*Length:* 2 km

## Esker

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running
- Winter – Cross-country skiing (groomed)

*Description:* Looped trail starting at the riding stable that connects to the Chickadee and Bluestem trails at Griffiths Hill. The ski trail is intermediate level. There is a sharp decline at Griffiths Hill.

*Length:* 6 km

## Group Use Area No.1 Road

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – N/A
- Winter – Skate skiing, skijoring, kick sledding (groomed)

*Description:* The Group Use Area No.1 Road is groomed in winter for skate skiing, skijoring and kick sledding. Through 2016-17 the road/trail had been a simple loop but it will be modified in 2017-18 to add some twists and turns to improve variety along the trail.

*Length:* 5.2 km (loop only); 7.1 km with 2017-18 additions

## Hazelnut

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running

Winter – Northern section: Snowmobiling (groomed)

Southern section: CLOSED

*Description:* Effective winter 2017-18, the total length of this trail is 6.2 km; however, only the northern section, approximately 3.2 km, is open year-round. The southern section, approximately 3.0 km, is only open in spring through fall. In the winter, the northern section of the Hazelnut Trail is part of the snowmobile route through the park (Snoman 781), which is a two-way trail running east-west from PR 206 to HWY 59. A warming shelter is located just inside the park boundary at the eastern end of the trail. At its western end, the Hazelnut Trail connects with the Tamarack Trail for the continuation of the snowmobile route.

In the spring through fall, the southern section of the trail is also open, providing a looped route for horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage riding, hiking and running.

*Length:* Total 6.2 km

Northern section (year-round use): 3.2 km

Southern section (spring-summer-fall use only): 3.0 km

## Lakeview

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Cycling, inline skating, hiking, running, wheelchair accessible

Winter – Hiking, running, cycling (not groomed)

*Description:* This looped trail is paved and winds through woods and around the lake. There are four possible starting points (the riding stable, East and West beach parking lots, and the campground), with the trail crossing North Drive at its northern end to connect with the Bluestem and Aspen trails.

*Length:* 7.2 km

## Lime Kiln

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running, cycling

Winter – Cross-country skiing (groomed)

*Description:* This looped trail starting at the riding stable goes to a unique site of an old lime kiln that was used until the 1930s. Limestone gravel quarried from Birds Hill was burned in the kiln to make quicklime, a building material used for whitewash, plaster, mortar and sewage treatment. A warming shelter is located halfway around the trail near its most northerly point. The ski trail is novice-level.

*Length:* 7.8 km



## Nimowin

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking and running
- Winter – Hiking and running (groomed)

*Description:* This year-round self-guided trail winds through areas previously disturbed by people and communities in the decades prior to establishment of the park. Nimowin is a Cree word meaning peaceful or quiet. The purpose of this trail is reflecting upon the environment and considering the impact of people, while witnessing the progression of natural cycles and how nature repairs itself from disturbance. A self-guiding brochure is available. The trail is heavily used by schools participating in guided interpretive programs. The park's Interpretive Workshop is located at the Nimowin trailhead. The Birds Hill Provincial Park Management Plan identified a site for a future new visitor centre at the Overlook Picnic Area. There is currently no timeline for when the new visitor centre will be constructed, but if/when it is, it will render the existing Nimowin Interpretive Workshop obsolete. As per Guidelines 2.1.2 and 2.4.2 in the Management Plan, the interpretive workshop at the end of Nimowin Road will be decommissioned and removed in conjunction with the development of a new visitor centre, and the site will be rehabilitated as a natural area. At that time, Nimowin Road is to be retained for use as an emergency exit route only. This will affect the Nimowin Trail and as such, its use and accessibility will need to be re-evaluated if/when these changes take place.

*Length:* 1.8 km

## Oak Ridge

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Mountain biking
- Winter – Snow/fat biking (groomed)

*Description:* This trail contains three single-track loops and was developed by the local cycling community. Year-round operation and maintenance of the trail is the responsibility of the Manitoba Cycling Association, with assistance from park staff. The trail includes moderate changes in elevation with some technical sections. The trail is used by experienced technical riders as well as youth cyclists.

*Length:* 7 km

## Pine Ridge

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

- Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking and running
- Winter – Hiking and running (not groomed)

*Description:* This self-guided trail is dedicated to the former residents of Pine Ridge. Visitors can gain a glimpse of their lives during the '30s and '40s as they walk the Old School Road and visit the sites of their former homesteads, store and school, identified by interpretive signs. A self-guiding brochure is available, providing information on the sites along the trail in an east to west direction.

*Length:* 2.4 km

## **Prairie Winds**

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running  
Winter – Snowshoeing, hiking, running  
(not groomed)

*Description:* This self-guided trail meanders through aspen groves and across large meadows and provides an opportunity to see these competing ecosystems first-hand. The trail has on-site interpretive signs that highlight the flora and fauna of the park and the ecological processes in the aspen oak parkland natural region. A viewing tower is located midway along the trail at the opening to a grassland area. The trail was formerly the White-tailed Deer Self-guiding Trail but was re-interpreted in 2017 based on the prairie theme.

*Length:* 1.5 km

## **Sparrow**

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – N/A  
Winter – Cycling, hiking, running (groomed)

*Description:* This winter trail is a main service road, campground bay and campground road in the summer.

*Length:* 4.5 km

## **Spruce**

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running  
Winter – Dog sledding, skijoring, kick sledding, skate skiing (groomed)

*Description:* Effective winter 2017-18, the Spruce Trail is a two-way trail starting at the Nimowin trailhead and extending to the northern tip of the park. A lengthy turnaround is provided at the northern end of the trail. Dog sled teams are permitted to exit the park via the west end of the Spruce Trail in order to access the ditch alongside HWY 59.

*Length:* 10.5 km return (two-way portion is 4.8 km one-way; turnaround loop is 0.9 km)

## **Tamarack**

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

Spring/Summer/Fall – Horseback riding, horse-drawn carriage, hiking, running  
Winter – Snowmobiling, dog sledding (groomed)

*Description:* In winter, the Tamarack Trail is part of the snowmobile route through the park (Snoman 781), which is a two-way trail running east-west from PR 206 to HWY 59. The Tamarack Trail connects with the Hazelnut Trail just north of the polo fields to make up the full snowmobile route and then exits the park at HWY 59. A short extension of Tamarack south of the connection provides access to the Ranch.

*Length:* 4.7 km

## **Trans Canada Trail**

### *Permitted Uses and Seasons:*

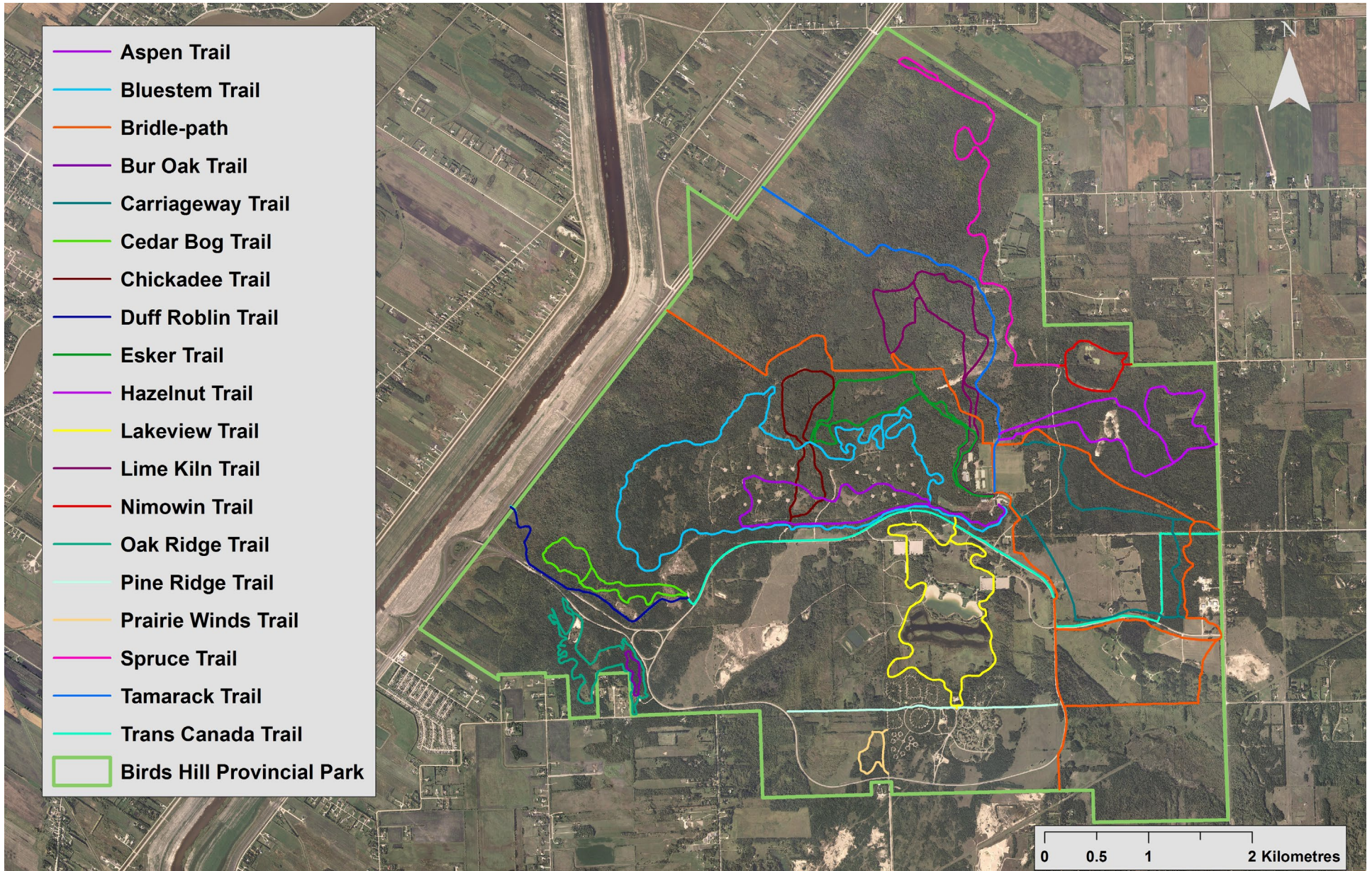
Spring/Summer/Fall – Hiking, running, cycling  
Winter – Potential for hiking, running, cycling

*Description:* A Trans Canada Trail connection through the park was made official in 2017, with the route entering the park from the east at Supton Road and exiting the west side of the park via the Duff Roblin Trail. This route follows existing trails and roads within the park.

*Length:* 9.4 km



## Appendix B – Birds Hill Spring – Summer – Fall Trails Effective 2018





## Appendix C – Birds Hill Winter Trails Effective 2017-18

