

# FABULOUS FALL

A teacher-conducted field study for  
Kindergarten students

FISH CREEK  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTRE

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# Introduction

This is a curriculum-connected, full day field study with multidisciplinary preparatory and post-visit activity support. The intent is to offer a natural world experience for students that reflects the outdoor field study components of the kindergarten program statement as set out by Alberta Learning and also reflects the priority actions of Alberta’s Plan for Parks

Fish Creek Provincial Park is one of Canada’s largest urban provincial parks, stretching from the western edge of the city to the Bow River. The park has a strong vision within its visitor services program plan to support and foster environmental and cultural education.

Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

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# Facility & Rules

## THE FACILITY

The Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre, located at the west end of the Park off of 37 Street SW, offers five indoor classrooms, an outdoor picnic area and access to an extensive variety of natural ecosystems: an old spruce forest, grasslands, riverine, creek, pond wetlands and disturbed (urban) areas.

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The Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre offers you the following facilities and services:

1. Each teacher will be given a classroom to use as a home base for the day's activities.
2. Some equipment for the day's activities will be available at the Park. It is your responsibility to count all equipment and return it at the end of the day. **There is a fee charged for lost or broken equipment.**
3. Washrooms and water fountains are located in the building. There are no vending machines or coffee available.
4. A short orientation (about 15 minutes) will be provided to the entire group upon arrival to welcome and introduce everyone to the park, its rules, the program for the day and what the students may discover outside.
5. Parent volunteers will have a separate orientation (about 10 minutes). This will introduce them to the equipment provided, to a map of the activity area (maps provided), to the general flow of the day, and will answer any questions that they may have.
6. A washroom and snack break will take place *after* the group orientation and during the parent volunteer orientation. Please ensure that the students are supervised during this time.
7. **There are NO indoor activities available. Please bring your own activities and/or DVDs when planning for inclement weather.**



## SNACK BREAK PROCEDURES

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*Your class may eat inside the facility, within their assigned room. Please ensure that the students understand the following :*

### INSIDE THE BUILDING

- Students must be supervised by an adult while they are in the building (classrooms and washrooms).
  - Classes from other schools may be in the facility at the same time. Please respect them and keep noise to a minimum, especially in the washrooms, hallways and other common areas.
  - Help us keep the classrooms clean. There are garbage containers in the brown cabinets by the classroom doors.
  - Recyclable containers go into the brown cabinet labelled “Juice boxes, cans and bottles”. Do the students know what recycling is, how it conserves resources and how it helps the environment?
  - Leftover fruit and vegetable materials, such as banana peels and apple cores, are collected in a white compost bucket in each room.
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### OUTDOOR FACILITIES

There is a picnic area just to the north of the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre, about two minutes walk up the trail, with plenty of picnic tables.

There are several picnic tables and a fire pit behind the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre. This area is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

*When using the fire pit area be sure to:*

- Provide your own roasting sticks and firewood. **Do not use branches or deadfall from the park.**
- Have a bucket of water nearby **before** the fire is lit. Check that the fire is out before you leave.
- **Do not feed or disturb wildlife.**

# Preparation Materials

## 1. Site Visit

### Teacher Orientation

Attending a teacher orientation prior to your class visit is mandatory and essential for familiarizing yourself with the facilities and the surrounding trails.

Returning teachers are not obligated to attend but are welcome. Dates for the teacher orientations will be sent to you via email so you can register for an orientation on a date of your choice.

## 2. Preparation Checklist

A teacher checklist for your field trip preparation is available on the next page.

These are general guidelines to assist you in planning your field trip.

## 3. Program Start and End

Program start and end times are flexible to accommodate bus availability and travel distance to the park. In general, half-day programs start between 9:30- 10:00 am and finish between 11:30 and 12:30 pm.

## 4. Field Trip at a Glance

<b>Group Orientation (10 minutes)</b>	Overview of park rules, safety and behaviour expectations for the day
<b>Student Snack Break Parent Volunteer Orientation (10-15 minutes)</b>	Overview of program activities, equipment and trail safety for parent volunteers.
<b>Educational Activities</b>	Students explore the park in small, parent-led groups. Environmental Educator will be available to answer questions and provide support during your lunch break and at the end of the day and is always available should the need arise at the Learning Centre.
<b>Groups return to Learning Centre for Program Wrap-up</b>	Final washroom break, head count, inventory and return equipment borrowed from the park, gather personal belongings.

***Program Wrap-up should take place at least 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure.***

## TEACHER CHECKLIST: Preparing for Your Day at the Park

### Prepare yourself

- ☐ Read the teacher package thoroughly: phone 403-297-7926 if you have any questions.
- ☐ Register for and attend a Teacher Orientation date on site before your field trip.
- ☐ Book your bus(es).
- ☐ Give every driver - including the bus driver - a copy of the route map (found in the Appendix).  
Make sure all drivers know you are coming to the west end of the park, near Woodbine!
- ☐ Check student health forms, looking for allergies in particular to bee/wasp stings
- ☐ Bring a first aid kit and a few band aids with each adult.

### Prepare the students

- ☐ Discuss how Fish Creek Provincial Park is a wild environment.
  - Do not feed or disturb wildlife: Quietly observe all wildlife from a comfortable distance.
  - Leave only footprints: Share discoveries, but leave everything as they found it.
  - Pitch in: Litter should be placed in the rubbish bins provided or in a pocket.
- ☐ Discuss behavioural expectations. Explain that the field study will be another school day, just at a different place. All the school rules apply.
- ☐ Discuss the purpose of provincial parks and protected areas. Have the class make a list of ways they can show respect for living things during their visit to the park. *Possibilities include:*
  - Stay well back from the banks of Fish Creek
  - Leave ant hills, nests and rotting logs alone and intact. They are animal homes.
  - Walk with care and mindfulness to minimize your impact.
- ☐ Discuss outdoor safety. Students need to:
  - Stay with an adult all times.
  - Walk, do not run.
  - Keep feet on the ground: no climbing.
  - Leave dead branches on the ground:
- ☐ Discuss what to wear on the field trip
  - Hats, sunscreen, insect repellent.
  - Runners, comfortable boots (no sandals/high heels). Dress in layers and bring extras.
- ☐ Complete some preparatory activities, either the ones in this package or your own.

### Prepare the adults

*Please follow the recommended adult to student ratios as outlined in your school board regulations.*

- ☐ Provide the following to adult volunteers and review with them: Key Messages, Chaperone Letter, Map, Inform them they will be provided an orientation and information booklet on the day to assist them during the program.
- ☐ Emphasize the following: there is nowhere to buy anything in the park, including coffee.
- ☐ Ensure adult volunteers are aware that their role is to lead a small group of students for part of the day and supervise students during the snack period.



## FISH CREEK PROVINCIAL PARK: Key Messages

*Please review and be sure everyone understands the following information before your visit the park.*

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- Our vision: Alberta's parks inspire people to discover, value, protect, and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.
- Alberta Parks acknowledges that Fish Creek Provincial Park is part of the traditional territory of Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda First Nation. The City of Calgary is also home to Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III.
- Alberta's parks and protected areas belong to all Albertans and contain many different natural landscapes that are home to numerous plant and animal species as well as significant cultural and historic resources. The province's network of parks and protected areas helps to ensure that Alberta's natural and cultural heritage is preserved for future generations.
- There are a wide variety of visitors and users of our parks. Everyone must respect and share the park and its facilities and resources.
- Stay on designated trails while moving through the park and participating in group activities. Staying on designated trails reduces impact to the natural habitats of the park. Please share the trail with other users.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited. The park's ecosystems provide all the food and habitat wildlife require for their basic needs. Feeding wildlife can cause wildlife to associate humans with food. Quietly observe wildlife from a safe and comfortable distance so as not to disturb them or put them or you at risk.
- Everything in the park – living and non-living is protected. Students are welcome to share their discoveries, but must remember to leave everything as they found it. Do not remove anything natural from the park.
- Litter must be placed in garbage cans or packed out.
- Use only designated fire pits. The collecting and burning of park vegetation is not permitted. You must ensure fires are fully extinguished before leaving them.

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word "Alberta" in a stylized script font, followed by a small square icon containing a stylized mountain range.

# Pre-field Trip Activities

**Preparatory activities are essential to the success of your trip!** The preparatory activities described here will introduce the field study day to your students and will allow them to practise the skills to be used during the field study day.

Feel free to use your own activities and the ones described in this package. Within the activities you select and present to your students be sure to consider other curriculum areas and explore how all subject areas can be connected to your field study day.

## 1 Sensory Snoops *Worksheet: No*

Discuss the senses. Have the students name them. Make a collage from your discussions. Centre your bulletin board display with a picture of a young person. From each sensory source have pictures that illustrate that particular sense. Try the same display, using pictures of animals that live in the Park, such as deer, red squirrel, snowshoe hare.

## 2 Spot the Difference *Worksheet: No*

Hone the students' observation skills and reinforce the concept of change by playing this game with the class several times before your Park visit. Stand in front of the students and ask them to look at you very carefully. Then tell them to hide their eyes while you change something about your appearance. You will tell them when to look again. First person to spot the change could come up and do the next round of change and guess. Change possibilities include adding or removing sweater, hat, glasses, jewelry, name tag, etc. As the students' skill levels heighten, make the changes more subtle.

## 3 Odour Centre *Worksheet: No*

At a centre lay out a selection of strong smelling objects (e.g. onion, orange, banana, lemon, perfume, pepperoni). In pairs, have one student blindfold the other student and then select one object to hold up to the blindfolded student who can smell but not touch the object. The object is then returned to the table with the other objects and the blindfold is removed. Can the student who was blindfolded identify the source of the smell? If the students have difficulty, they may smell all the objects to help find the source.

## 4 Touch Patterns *Worksheet: No*

Gather together 6 - 8 objects that are opposite textures. Depending on the skill level of your students, you may want to start the game very simply by ensuring the objects are consistent in other properties (e.g. colour, temperature, moisture etc). Set the objects down in a pattern, for example, rough, rough, smooth, rough, smooth, rough, rough.

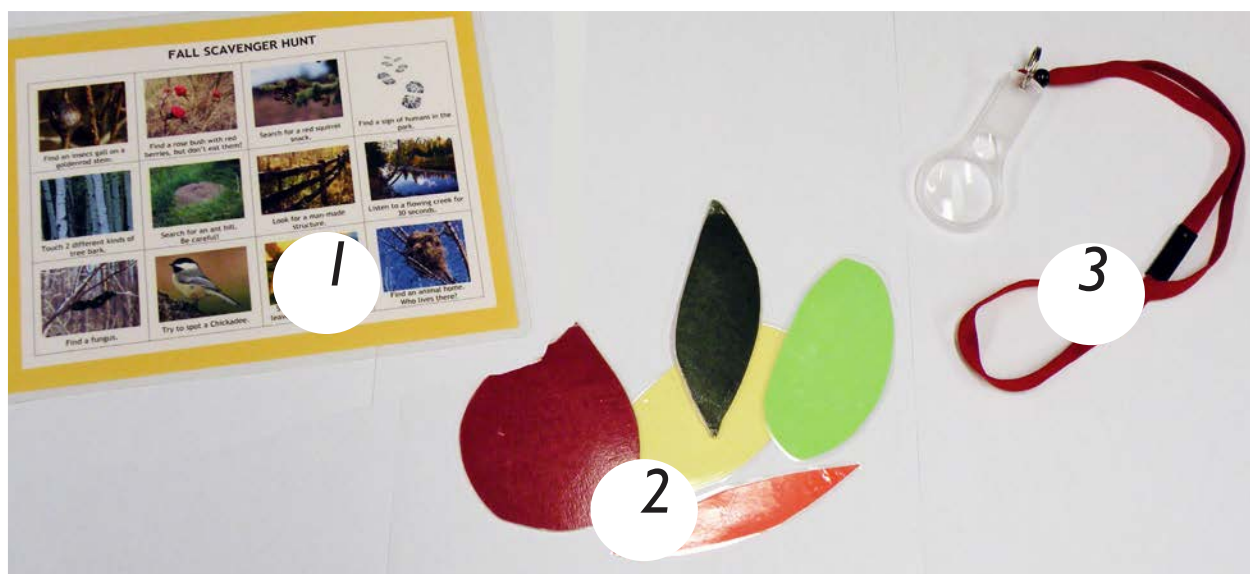
Challenge the students to discover the pattern using their sense of touch only. As the students' awareness grows, vary texture, temperature or moisture of the objects. Ask them to create their own pattern and have other students or adult volunteers to try to guess the pattern.

## 5 Seasonal Changes *Worksheet: No*

Start the discussion of seasons by reviewing the concept of change. Student input will focus on changes due to life cycles and aging. Introduce the idea that change also occurs as the time of year does. These changes are due to season: not because of aging. As a class, can the students list some changes in diet, dress and activities that happen to them as summer changes to fall? Introduce the topic of seeds. What are seeds? Why do plants grow seeds? Do all plants grow seeds? Show the students a variety of seeds. Discuss the different colours and shapes. Soak lima bean seeds and leave covered with damp paper towel. After several days, cut the seed in half to show the students the parts of a seed. Can the students find the plant embryo?

Animals also change as summer turns to fall. Discuss with the students methods animals use to prepare for winter cold. Show pictures of Calgary area animals that migrate (birds such as swallows, warblers), animals that hibernate (ladybugs, frogs, garter snakes, bats, ground squirrels), and animals that stay active all winter.





# Program Equipment

The Learning Centre will provide your students with equipment and resources to utilize throughout the day.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There is an additional fee for lost, stolen or broken equipment.

For the *Kindergarten Fabulous Fall* program, your students will be provided with the following:

<div>1</div> <div>Seasonal Scavenger Hunt</div>	<div>3</div> <div>Magnifying Glasses</div>	<div>4</div> <div>Animal Identification Guide</div>
<p>Students will seek signs of the changing season with kinesthetic, auditory and visual objectives. This is not meant to be a competition, rather it is a fun way for students to hone their observation skills.</p>	<p>Students will use the magnifying glasses to examine signs of animals (such as tracks, evidence of feeding, droppings) and ground level plants.</p>	<p>Students will be encouraged to identify common species of birds, insects or mammals using an identification key and assistance from their parent volunteer.</p>
<div>2</div> <div>Colour Cards</div> <p>Students will use the colour card to identify colours and familiar shapes in the environment.</p>	<p>Students use the magnifying glasses to examine signs of fall and the texture, colour and shape of fallen leaves</p>	

# Field Trip Activities

## *Information Booklets*

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The Learning Centre will provide your adult chaperones with an information booklet with all of the field trip activities outlined and explained in full detail. These booklets will have pictures and information that will support and enhance your students' learning.

**These booklets will be provided at the Park for your field trip.**

By providing laminated copies, at your field trip we hope to reduce the amount of photocopying and wasted paper.

### Important Notes:

- We greatly appreciate all feedback to strengthen our resources; please let us know if you have any recommended changes

# Field Trip Activity Summary

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*The following Field Trip Activities are curriculum-connected. You are certainly welcome to change, remove or follow the activities to suit the needs of your students.*

## 1 Sounds of Fall Worksheet: Yes

- Students are directed by their teacher to listen to three different sounds in the environment to enhance their listening skills.
- Students can creatively use shapes and colours to draw their favourite sound.

## 4 Touch Tells Worksheet: Yes

- Students will feel objects and describe using terms such as hot, cold, heavy, light for common objects.

## 2 Colours/Shapes/Numbers Worksheet: Yes

- Students look for shapes, colours and numbers in nature related to their colour shape.
- Students identify the shape of their viewer and find similar shapes/colours in nature.

## 5 Seeds Worksheet: Yes

- Students will discover the methods that plants use to disperse their seeds (berries, parachutes, burrs).
- Students will learn that these changes in plants occur at different times throughout the year.

## 3 Nose Knows Worksheet: Yes

- Students will scratch different objects they find in nature, then take a whiff! Encourage scratching/smelling at all levels (ground to nose level).
- Students can draw the objects they smelled.

## 6 Signs of Fall Worksheet: No

- Students will use their sense of touch, smell, sight and hearing to detect the changes in the season.

# Post-field Trip Activities

*In addition to a class discussion about trip highlights and favourite activities, students may need class time to complete data sheets or to share information about their discoveries.*

## Student Journals *Worksheet: Yes*

Distribute the student journals and explain, page by page, what the students could draw. Use the adult journals as references if the students require some assistance. Page 8 provides space for the students to do a fall picture of the Park. Invite the students to share their completed journals with their classmates either verbally during a sharing circle or by adding them to the class "library" so others could look at them any time.

## Experience Chart *Worksheet: No*

Develop a class experience chart. Have each student contribute something that they experienced at the Park to the list. Beside each response print the student's name. When everyone has had a chance to contribute, start back at the beginning of the list and, for each response, invite the contributing student to come up and draw the body part used to make that discovery. Can they also name the sense?

Example: squirrel - Mary; she would draw eyes and say sense of sight.

## Leaf Sort *Worksheet: No*

Ask the students to collect several leaves each from the ground at home or schoolyard. Put all the leaves together.

- Have the students sort the leaves according to shape, colour and size.
- Have each one pick a favourite leaf and describe how it looks, feels, smells.

When the sorting activity is completed, demonstrate how a dry leaf breaks apart. Explain that as the dry leaves decompose (fall apart) they will add nutrients (things like minerals) to the soil that will help new plants grow. Take the leaves outside and return them to nature.

## Seeds *Worksheet: No*

Have a "seeds" snack break. Show the students a corn seed then a popcorn kernel. Point out the differences in shape and colour. We plant a corn seed to grow corn.

What can we do with popcorn kernels? As the popcorn is being prepared, distribute other edible seeds such as sunflower or pumpkin. Discuss what would grow if the seeds were planted instead of roasted (cooked). Where on the plant are each type of seed found? Compare size, colour, shape. Have a fruit salad snack break. As pieces of each different fruit are distributed, discuss the seeds. Can the students find the seeds in apples, oranges, grapes (some varieties), pears, berries or melons? How are the seeds different from each other?

## Felt Board Centre *Worksheet: No*

Put out beside a felt board pictures that show plants and animals in various seasons. Also include human figures and a seasonal variety of clothing that can be added to the people. If possible also set out pictures of recreational equipment, such as sleds, bicycles, rollerblades and skates. Ask each student to create a fall picture and monitor the picture selections they make to assess students' understanding of seasonal changes in plants, animals, people and the activities of each.

## Drama *Worksheet: No*

Have the students dramatize some of the fall changes they discovered during their field study. Using creative movement and their imaginations can they be a leaf dancing in the wind, a migrating bird, a hibernating insect or a squirrel storing food for the winter?

Dear Adult Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering for a field trip to Fish Creek Provincial Park! This excursion allows students to explore, discover and learn in one of the largest urban parks in North America.

Here are a few tips that may help you enjoy your visit:

- Pack a hearty and healthy lunch (snacks and water too!). There are no vending machines or stores onsite to purchase food.
- Please dress appropriately for the weather. We will run our programs rain, snow or sunshine.
- Ensure that you are aware of what part of Fish Creek the program is taking place. We host educational programs at the WEST end (near Woodbine) and the EAST end (near Deer Run).

Our staff will be available throughout the day to ensure that you and your group have a safe and educational experience in the park.

You are not expected to be a naturalist or history expert, but a positive attitude goes a long way!

Thank you again, we are very excited to see you in the park soon.

Warmest regards,

Environmental Education Team



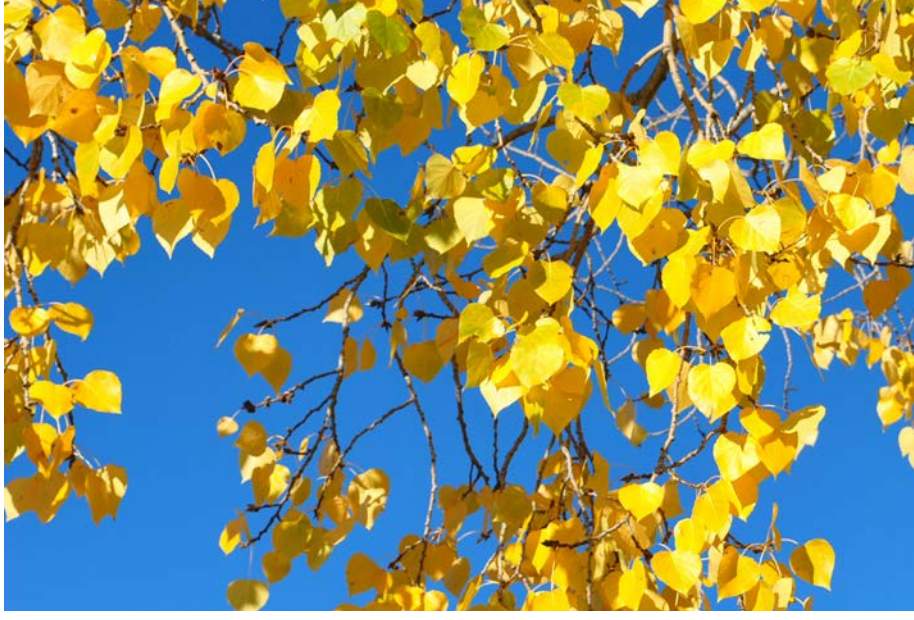


## Fall in Fish Creek Provincial Park

Practice tracing the line where the leaves will fall!



## Fabulous Fall



Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Signs of Fall**

Draw or write a word to remember your favourite fall discovery.

7

## **My Shape and Colour**

Draw the shape card from the Learning Centre.

Try to colour it the same colour to match!

## **Numbers in Nature**

Draw the object in nature that had the same number of things as your colour card.

2

## Sounds of Fall

Use shapes and colours to draw your favourite sound!



5

## Touch Tells

Draw your favourite thing from the park.



4

## Noses Know

Draw your favourite smell.

Draw a line to the picture of the nose!



3

## Seeds

Draw or trace a seed you found outside.

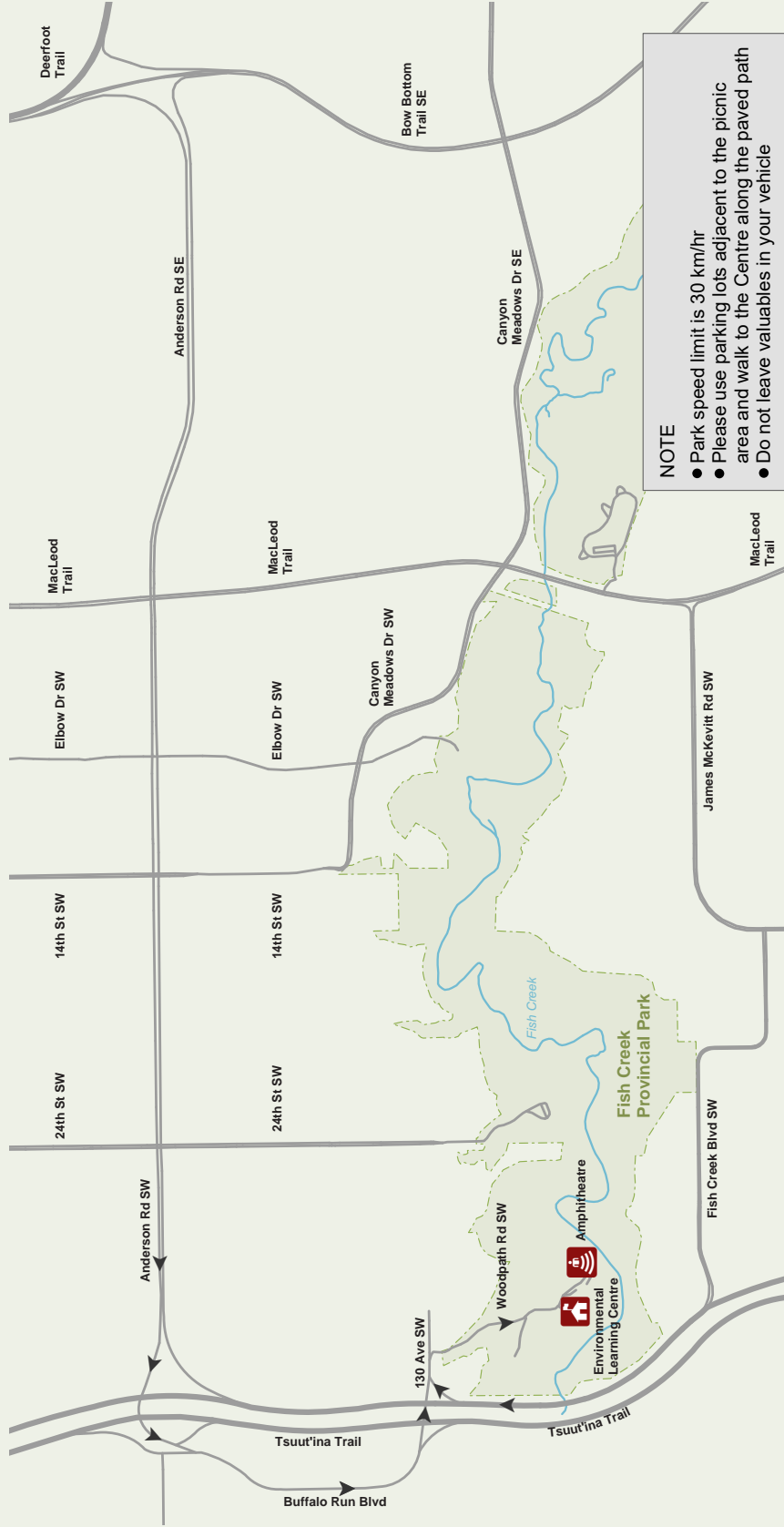


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# Directions Map

## Access Map - Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre

13931 Woodpath Road SW, Calgary, Alberta



### DIRECTIONS

#### From Anderson Rd SW heading west:

- Follow signs to Tsuut'ina Trail and follow exit onto Buffalo Run Blvd
- Follow Buffalo Run Blvd past the gas bar and Costco complex to 130 Ave SW
- Heading east through two traffic circles to continue onto 130 Ave SW
- Turn right onto Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park

#### From south of 130 Ave SW on northbound Tsuut'ina Trail:

- Take the 130 Ave SW exit and keep right at top of ramp onto eastbound 130 Ave SW
- Turn right on Woodpath Rd SW and follow road straight into the park

#### NOTE

- Park speed limit is 30 km/hr
- Please use parking lots adjacent to the picnic area and walk to the Centre along the paved path
- Do not leave valuables in your vehicle



# Trail Map

## Program Trails at the Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre

PLEASE STAY IN  
ASSIGNED AREAS!

It is important that park staff  
know where you are at all times.

