

DECISION REQUIRED

Select Campground Temporary Liquor Bans

November 19, 2015

PURPOSE:

- A Ministerial Order is requested annually to implement temporary liquor bans at select provincial parks. For 2016, the areas included are the same as in 2015, which are Aspen Beach Provincial Park, Cypress Hills Provincial Park, Dillberry Lake Provincial Park, Garner Lake Provincial Park, Jarvis Bay Provincial Park, Miquelon Lake Provincial Park, Pigeon Lake Provincial Park, Wabamun Lake Provincial Park and Whitney Lakes Provincial Park.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- The Minister should sign Ministerial Order #XX, to implement temporary liquor bans at select provincial parks, from May 19-23, 2016.
- The Minister should approve the memorandum to the Premier and All Government MLAs, informing them of the temporary liquor bans and providing them with key messages to use in answering enquiries.

RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

- Criminal and unsafe behaviour, underage drinking, excessive partying and complaints from other campers were all concerns at campgrounds initially selected for temporary liquor bans.
- Since 2004 this tool has worked well to provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for the campground users on this busy long weekend.
- Evidence gathered from Aspen Beach, Wabamun Lake and other jurisdictions (Saskatchewan and Manitoba) indicates that implementing temporary liquor bans does not negatively impact campground occupancy rates.
- Other management strategies, such as “zero-tolerance”, were tried in select parks, with no marked improvement in behaviour.
- Liquor bans have been implemented by other jurisdictions across the country, including Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, as well as Parks Canada.

OPTIONS:

- The minister has the option to approve and Sign Ministerial Order #XX, to implement temporary liquor bans at select provincial parks, from May 19-23, 2016 or deny the liquor ban allowing possession and consumption of liquor within the parameters of the Gaming and Liquor Act.
- Approving the liquor ban and signing the Ministerial Order is the preferred option because this action in the past has proven to create a safer and more enjoyable experience for our campers.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

- Past May-long liquor bans have resulted in reduced unsafe activities and excessive partying while increasing overall usage and visitor satisfaction. No significant negative impacts are anticipated.
- The planning and implementation of select temporary liquor bans has involved prior consultation with the campground operator and local RCMP.

- As campers need to be notified prior to booking their reservations on line in February, approval is requested prior to the Christmas break. This will allow time to update website and reservation systems to ensure campers are aware of liquor bans prior to the reservation system going live on February 9th 2015.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

- Users will be notified through Reserve.AlbertaParks.ca, and AlbertaParks.ca, and through news releases prior to the May-long weekend.
- Minister will advise Premier's officer and other MLA's and provide key messaging
- Parks under liquor bans will have signage in place and compliance will be maintained through enforcement staff.

BACKGROUND:

- In 2004, Alberta's *Provincial Parks Act*, General Regulation, was amended to allow the Minister to impose temporary liquor bans at select parks.
- Since 2004, temporary liquor bans have been used successfully to reduce crime and deprecative behaviour at specific provincial parks on the May long weekend.

May Long Weekend Liquor-Related Enforcement Actions

	Aspen Beach	Cypress Hills	Dillbery Lake	Garner Lake	Ghost Resivore	Jarvis Bay	Miquelon Lake	Pigeon Lake	Wabamum Lake	Whitney Lakes
2003	36	22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	32	N/A	70	N/A
2004	1	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	77	N/A
2005	7	24	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	30	2	closed	1
2006	12	67	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	closed	12	10	6
2007	8	92	19	N/A	2	N/A	closed	16	6	32
2008	3	7	2	21	2	6	5	12	0	2
2009	1	3	0	0	8	9	0	1	0	0
2010	4	1	2	0	3	3	1	0	2	0
2011	1	1	0	1	N/A	1	0	0	0	0
2012	2	3	0	0	0	4	1	1	0	0
2013	0	7	0	0	0	5	1	1	2	0
2014	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
2015	4	4	2	0		3	6	7	2	2

Liquor Ban in Effect

Zero Tolerance

N/A = Statistics Not Available

- In 2004, a May long weekend temporary liquor ban was implemented at Aspen Beach, Miquelon Lake and Cypress Hills Provincial Parks.
- In 2007, on the May long weekend, seven Conservation Officers/RCMP were assaulted, one park user was sexually assaulted, and there were also 27 arrests in provincial parks and provincial recreation areas
- This inappropriate activity affects other park users, the campground operators and the park infrastructure. The use and enjoyment by the general public is negatively impacted, leading to increased complaints, fewer return visits and detrimental publicity
- In 2008, five additional provincial parks imposed temporary liquor bans on the May long weekend. In 2009, Garner Lake was included, with a significant decrease in liquor-related occurrences.

- Jarvis Bay Provincial Park, located near Sylvan Lake, was experiencing an increasing trend in depreciative behaviour requiring enforcement-related action, and was added in 2010. A noticeable decline in enforcement action was evident during the May long weekend.
- In 2011, there were nine provincial parks with a May long weekend temporary liquor ban; Aspen Beach, Miquelon Lake, Cypress Hills, Pigeon Lake, Wabamun Lake, Jarvis Bay, Whitney Lakes, Garner Lake and Dillberry Lake.
- A province-wide May long weekend liquor ban in Saskatchewan has resulted in increased liquor related enforcement in Alberta's provincial parks that are in close proximity to Saskatchewan, such as Dillberry Lake, Whitney Lakes and Cypress Hills Provincial Parks.
- Although specific provincial parks benefit greatly from a temporary liquor ban, province-wide liquor bans should not be considered at this time, as liquor-related problems are limited to a few parks.

() OPTION 1: Approve the recommended liquor ban and sign the ministerial order

() OPTION 2: Do not approved the liquor ban

Recommendations approved:

_____ Date

_____ Honourable Shannon Phillips, Minister

ADM: Steve Donelon, Parks Division, 780 422-4407