



# GLENBOW RANCH Provincial Park

Photo Credit: Linda Vick

**English**



## ABOUT

The lands of Glenbow Ranch have a rich history that spans thousands of years. From early indigenous peoples hunting bison, to the first settlers and industries such as stone and brick production, to what is now a protected area for everyone to enjoy. In 2006, 3,247 acres of land were generously donated to the Alberta Government by the Harvie Family. It was formally established as a Provincial Park in April of 2008. Through a unique partnership with the Government of Alberta, Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation (GRPF) was created to support the operations and development of Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park.

GRPF has built nearly 30 km of trails throughout the park that provide access to visitors on foot and bike; in wheelchairs, and even on skateboards and rollerblades!

GRPF is excited to offer you information about the park, now in various languages, and we look forward to seeing you out enjoying this beloved place!



## INDIGENOUS BEGINNING

Archeology has played an important role in learning more about the unique history of this land. Archeologists are like detectives, examining layers of soil and rock, and searching for clues to events that occurred hundreds or even thousands of years ago.

At Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, they are still uncovering new evidence and the story is still unfolding.

The earliest signs of people in Alberta were small campsites dating back 11,500 years.

Within the park, archeologists have identified about 30 sites from this era. We believe that many of these were camps occupied by small family groups that were following bison herds across the plains. They would have gathered plants and hunted small game animals and birds for food and medicines, but long term survival depended on their skill as bison hunters.

Bison provided for most of their needs: meat and marrow for food, bone for tools, and hides for tipis and clothing.

Some remnants of the tipi rings can still be seen in the park today!





## RANCHING

The land that makes up Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park also has an interesting history of ranching. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, this land was part of the Cochrane Ranche: Western Canada's first government lease ranch. The terms of the lease were a penny per acre per year. The ranch was founded by Senator Matthew Cochrane with the intention of ranching cattle. The cattle came from Montana and when the journey was too rushed, many of the cattle would become too thin to survive the winter.

This mistake was made again the following year, and it was predicted that in 1882-1883

nearly 5000 cattle had died. The result of this terrible winter was that the Cochrane Ranche's management would decide to give up ranching cattle on the



original Cochrane lease. In 1888, the land that the lease was on was divided and the part north of the river was returned to the federal government, and was made available for purchase or homestead. Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is still home to ranching today! It is part of a working ranch, that is managed as a winter cattle range. Since there is no bison remaining here, the grazing cattle replace bison herds that would keep grasses healthy and limit shrub growth.

## SANDSTONE QUARRY

In 1893, a man by the name of Joseph Cockbaine and his wife, Elizabeth, left England and moved to Canada; they lived on the very same land that now makes up Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park. They built a home, a stable, a shed, a large fence, and 5 corrals to contain their 22 cattle, 7 horses, and 2000 sheep!

Later, in 1905, Alberta officially became a province and there was an immediate demand for stone that could be used to build government buildings like legislature, courts, and universities. Glenbow became one of many sandstone quarries around the province to supply building materials for these structures. During this time, the population of the area boomed. A townsite was developed that included a store, a post office, a school, and a railway station. However, the demand for the sandstone depleted as the government buildings were complete, and the Glenbow quarry was shut down in 1912.



Photo Credit: Glenbow Museum

## BRICK FACTORY

Shortly after the stone quarry closed, a brick factory was established near the Glenbow store. Many former quarry workers were hired to make bricks. The Glenbow brick operation was strategically located between the quarry pit (source of clay) and the Bow River (water source), and quite close to the railway which provided effective transport of the finished bricks. However, the brick making operation did not last long and was abandoned just prior to WW1. Now, all that remains of this time is the clay quarry, some foundation blocks, and piles of unused bricks.

Ultimately, the stone and brick productions made Glenbow a very popular community. After both of these operations were shut down, residents left in search of new jobs. The buildings in the former townsite were either burned down or removed. By 1920, the store and post office closed and its wood frame beside a few piles of bricks is all that remains. A once-vibrant community had turned into a ghost town.





## CREATION OF THE PARK

Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is conveniently located between Calgary and Cochrane, alongside the Bow River. This land would be highly valuable for housing development, and yet it has been preserved as a natural space for public enjoyment. This is largely due to the generosity of the Harvie Family. Eric Harvie purchased this land in 1934 for ranching purposes. His son, Neil Harvie, took over the ranching in the 1950s. He loved these lands and knew the threat posed to them by development. So he financed research into government rules for land donation. He sought to change the tax rules that governed donations of land. It was his dream to have these lands be protected. Though this dream would not be fulfilled in his lifetime, it would be his children—Pauli Smith, Carol Raymond, Katie Harvie, and Tim Harvie—that would see it through. In 2006, the Harvie siblings donated 3,247 acres of this land to the Alberta Government so that it could become a Provincial Park and remain protected for generations to come.



Photo Credit: Glenbow Museum

## THE PARK TODAY

To this day, Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park is an extraordinary place for research, education, public recreation and enjoyment. It is home to various plant and animal species and there is a rich mosaic of woodland, grassland, and riparian areas.

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation (GRPF) is a non-profit organization that supports the development of the Park. GRPF is responsible for the Park's trails, the visitor centre, the interpretive signage, and the various programs throughout the park. From golf cart tours to family programs, and even school outreach programs; it's all the Foundation at work!

*"To all future visitors to Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, my wish is this: that you feast your mind and senses, and enjoy." ~ Tim Harvie*





# ENJOY YOUR VISIT

## Park Etiquette

- Stay on pathways and obey all posted signs.
- Off-leash dogs are not allowed. Dog walkers must pick up and remove all dog waste.
- Liquor is prohibited.
- Do not remove natural or historical items.

## Come Prepared

- Bring a full water bottle, layered clothing, and appropriate walking shoes.
- Know that some pathways have steep sections.
- Know that there are long distances between parking lots, washrooms, and viewpoints.

## Support Your Park!

*Become a Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation*

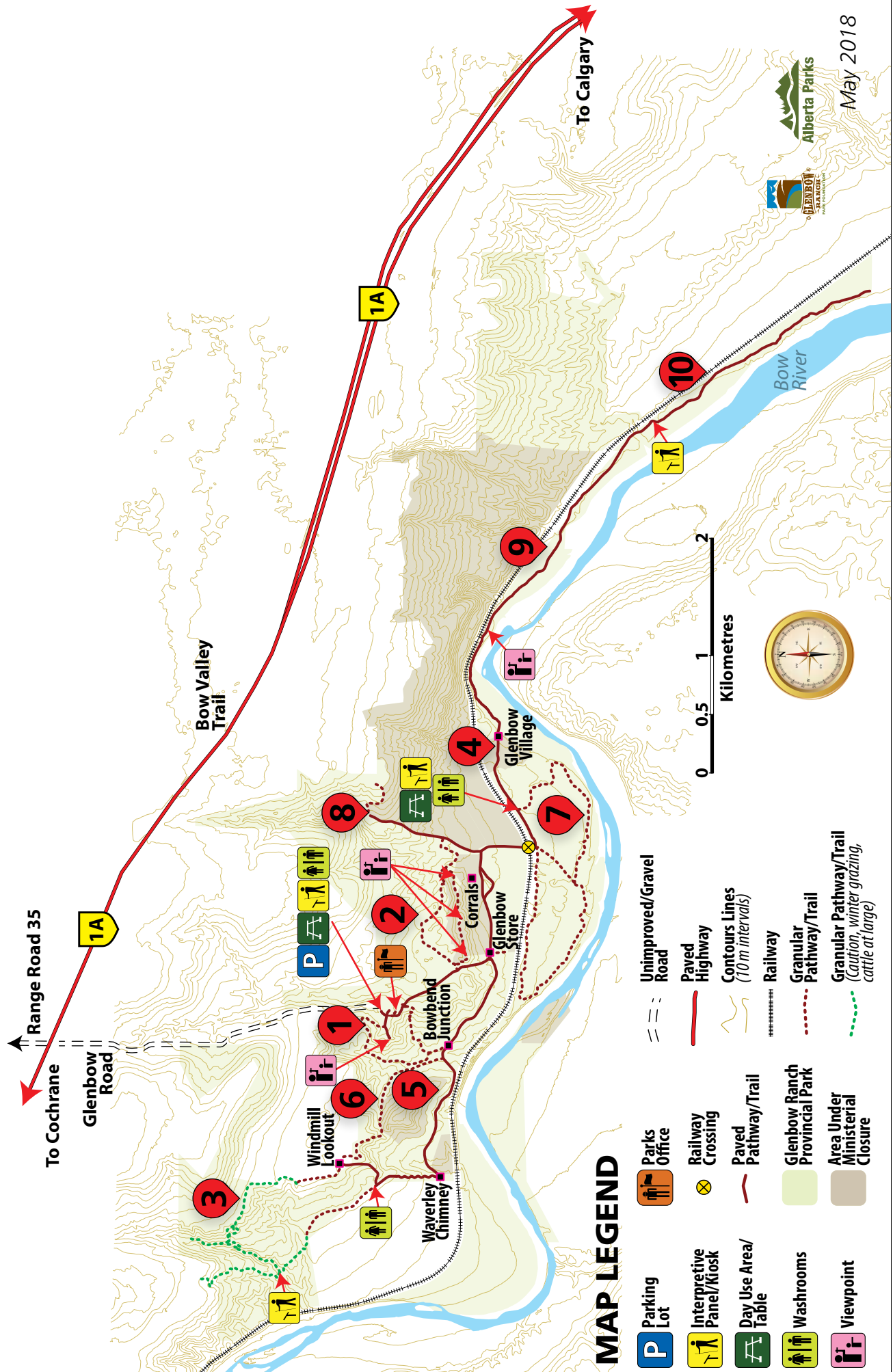
*Member and enjoy:*

- E-Newsletters
- Free Admission to *Park Talks*
- 15% Discount at Park Programs and Events
- Perks for the *Park Partners*



Photo Credit: Pamela Reid

# MAP OF THE PARK





## TRAILS DESCRIPTIONS

- 1 Tiger Lily Loop (1.4 km, 20 min)**  
*Trailhead:* Accessed just west of the parking lot or east of the Park Office, Tiger Lily Loop descends into a sheltered, wooded coulee. Don't miss the incredible western views afforded from the viewpoint west of the trail's north end.
- 2 Yodel Loop (2.1 km, 35 min)**  
*Trailhead:* From Glenbow Trail, the loop's southern switchbacks lead you to a beautiful ridge walk overlooking the expansive Bow River valley. Interpretative signage at two scenic viewpoints provides an excellent introduction to the Park's natural and cultural resources.
- 3 McPherson Trail (2.5 km, 40 min)**  
*Trailhead:* Climbing North from Bowbend Trail, this pathway runs along tree-lined, spring-fed McPherson Coulee. Along this trail, enjoy magnificent views that stretch to the Rockies.
- 4 Glenbow Trail (3.1 km, 1 hr)**  
*Trailhead:* Downhill from the parking lot and through the grasslands to Glenbow Village, you pass by some of the park's most iconic landmarks. Fescue covered hillsides, the old Post Office and General Store, and the corrals are all reminder of Glenbow as a once-vibrant industrial community.
- 5 Bowbend Trail (4.6 km, 1 hr)**  
*Trailhead:* At the bottom of Glenbow Trail's lengthy hill, head west. Stretch your legs and explore a landscape reminiscent of Alberta's badlands. Climb steep aspen-covered hillsides to the west for beautiful views or get side-tracked on McPherson Trail.

- 6 Badger Bowl (1.4 km, 1 hr)**  
*Trailhead:* From Bowbend Trail, head north and discover Badger Bowl. Treed north-facing slopes and grassed south-facing slopes provide a wonderful contrast and display of the Park's ecological diversity. Be prepared for the long, gradual climb to the west and the beautiful views along the way.
- 7 Bow River Loop (4.8 km, 1 hr 20 min)**  
*Trailhead:* Ramble through some of the Park's wonderful native grassland south of the railway tracks. Views of the historic Bow River Horse Ranch and the beautiful fescue-covered hillside are not to be missed.
- 8 Scott Trail (0.9 km, 30 min)**  
*Trailhead:* From Glenbow Trail or the east end of Yodel Loop, a deceptively steep climb up the centre of the Park takes you to a spectacular viewpoint. From Calgary to Cochrane, the Bow River valley stretches for miles below you!
- 9 The Narrows (3.3 km, 1 hr)**  
*Trailhead:* From the east end of Glenbow Trail, The Narrows provides a cool stretch of relief from the summer heat and shelter from biting winter winds. This wooded area is great for birding.
- 10 Bears paw Trail (2.2 km, 35 min)**  
*Trailhead:* From the east end of The Narrows pathway, you can explore Bears paw Trail. This open stretch of prairie east of Michael's Creek has a wonderful collection of tipi rings. Keep your eyes peeled for these reminders that long before Calgary grew to the city it is today, Indigenous peoples made this land their home.



## GLENBOW RANCH PARK FOUNDATION

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*Our foundation runs on  
your donations and  
we issue tax receipts.*

