

Site Name: **Pinto Creek Canyon**

Site Type: **Natural Area**

Status: Order-in-council (OC)

Subtype:

PASite ID (Map Ref #): 592

O.C. No. (Land Ref. Manual): 325/01

Site # (Parks Website): 562

Reserved Area: 0.00 ha. (0.00 ac.)

Designated Area: 1232.19 ha. (3044.73 ac.)

Total Area: 1232.19 ha. (3044.73 ac.)

Additional Protected Areas: none

Lat/Long Co-ordinates: 53.7694370577 N, -117.829041469 W

Natural Region: Foothills

Natural Subregion(s): Upper Foothills

2nd Natural Region:

2nd Natural Subregion(s):

IUCN Classification: III

Operated By: Parks Division

Info Phone: 780-865-8394

Steward(s) Aug2002:

Steward(s) Aug2003:

Steward(s) Dec2011: no

**Petroleum & Natural Gas Surface
Access Aug2002:**

Day Use Site(s): Pinto Creek Canyon

Recreation Activities: none noted

Access:

Notes: Pinto Creek Canyon Natural Area (12.32 km²) is home to Alberta's only canyon-dwelling herd of goats. Other populations occur on steep slopes and cliffs in the Rocky Mountain Natural Region. These goats are very sensitive to disturbance, especially during the kidding period from May 1 until July 31, so visitation during this period should be limited to minimize stress on newborn kids during their first three months of life. There are also moose, white-tailed deer and elk in the area, and a variety of foothills bird species.

Pinto Creek has eroded a deep canyon through the relatively soft sandstone hills in this area. Ongoing stream erosion has maintained a series of steep cliff faces in parts of the valley, and these discontinuous cliffs provide ideal habitat for the mountain goats. There are also hoodoo formations in the area. The area's cliffs consist of loose sandstone and rocky outcrops surrounded by a forested plateau of lodgepole pine and white spruce. Labrador tea and mosses dominate the understory. On well-drained slopes above the cliffs, grasses (e.g. bluejoint, hairy wild rye) grow & shrubs (e.g. buffalo berry, wolf willow) are common. Aspen is abundant along the cliff edges and in the steep gullies that separate the cliffs.

This site lies in the Foothills Natural Region, Upper Foothills Sub-region. Five level 1 and 39 level 2 natural history themes describe the environmental diversity of the Upper Foothills. All themes are moderately well represented, with shortfalls in the ridge valley wall and organic wetland level 1 themes. The site was established or expanded as part of the Special Places program.

Images:



