

Human Well-Being



Nature That Nurtures: How Parks and Green Spaces Support Community Well-Being



Across Saskatchewan, nature plays an important role in daily life, whether it is experienced in the wide-open landscapes of provincial parks or in the parks and pathways woven through towns and cities. With more than 70 per cent of Canadians living in urban areas, these natural spaces have become increasingly vital for supporting health and well-being in busy environments. They offer both escape and connection, rest and activity, and a sense of balance during periods of environmental variability.

Large natural areas such as Cypress Hills, Lac La Ronge and the Athabasca Sand Dunes give residents the opportunity to step away from busy urban life and experience the quiet of forests, lakes, dunes and native prairies. These expansive landscapes protect wildlife habitat, safeguard water and support responsible emissions stewardship, but they also offer something deeply personal. Many of these landscapes hold cultural and historic significance for Indigenous Peoples, including native prairies that continue to support traditional medicine gathering and foraging. For many residents, these parks also act as nature sanctuaries where individuals can walk among trees, watch birds along the shoreline, camp under wide skies or take part in cultural practices tied closely to the land. These moments of calm and connection help support both mental and physical well-being by creating space to recharge far from the pace of city life.

Within urban areas, green spaces bring nature much closer to home. Neighbourhood parks, trails, sport fields and riverside pathways offer safe and familiar places to gather, walk, cycle and enjoy the outdoors. Regular access to green spaces is linked to improved mood, reduced work-related exhaustion, lower crime rates and heightened mental well-being. These spaces also help cool neighbourhoods during hot weather, improve local air quality and provide welcoming places for people of all ages to be active.

In 2025, Saskatchewan provincial parks received a 92 per cent satisfaction rating.

Together, Saskatchewan's provincial parks and urban green spaces form a connected system of natural places that strengthens communities in complementary ways. Parks provide large-scale biodiversity, cultural value and the experience of remote natural environments, while green spaces within cities offer convenient, everyday benefits that can reduce stress, brighten mood and support healthier routines for families, seniors, youth and anyone looking for a brief pause in their day.

Public appreciation for these spaces is clear, with strong provincewide support for both provincial parks and local recreational areas, consistent with a [2016 survey](#) that established an early benchmark of their high public value. Saskatchewan's provincial parks continue to attract strong interest, with park permit entry days reaching a record-setting 1.06 million in 2021-22 and remaining high at 930,000 in 2025 – clear evidence of how much residents and visitors value time spent in the province's natural spaces. In 2025, provincial parks also received a 92 per cent satisfaction rating.

Why It Matters

Access to nature supports well-being in many ways. Time spent outdoors can reduce stress, improve mood, support mental clarity and encourage physical activity. Natural spaces also offer welcoming places for connection, reflection and relaxation. Whether through the calm of large natural landscapes or everyday comfort of neighbourhood green spaces, these environments help create healthier, more resilient communities.

Link to Related Information

[Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport 2024-25 Annual Report](#)

[Explore other resilience stories](#)

