Welcome to the Cypress Hills

The island in the prairie plains
An Interprovincial Park

- The first Interprovincial Park in Canada
- Three Separate Blocks – The West Block, Centre Block, and East Block
- Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park spans the borders of two provinces, with three governments cooperating in the management of this unique geographical feature and ecosystem.
- In 1989, Cypress Hills - Saskatchewan and Alberta - joined forces and created Canada’s first Interprovincial Park. The Interprovincial Park Agreement was amended in 2000 to formally include Fort Walsh National Historic Site.
Cypress Hills...

A perfect oasis in the desert we have traveled  John Palliser, 1850
Protecting a Significant Place

Systems Perspective: Environmental Diversity
Distance = ~300 km²
Dark Sky Preserve

• On September 28, 2004, a declaration was signed between the provinces on Saskatchewan and Alberta and the Government of Canada, in partnership with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada to designate the Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park as a Dark-Sky Preserve.

• Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park is the first park in Saskatchewan and Alberta to become fully recognized as a Dark-Sky Preserve in North America
Cypress Hills Dark-Sky Preserve
Geography

• Formed by sedimentary layers, not faulting and folding, or uplifting like the Rockies.
• Over 600 metres above the surrounding plains (though the hills are only 200 metres high)
• Cypress Hills were a Nunatak – meaning they were not covered by the glaciers in the last ice age
Wild Life

• Over 220 species of birds
• Over 47 mammal species
• Wide range of aquatic life
Plant Life

- Forest is like the foothills of the Rockies: Aspen, White Spruce, and Lodgepole Pine
- Many rare and unusual orchids – considering it is in the prairies!
A Long History...

• Over 8 000 years of people continuously using the Cypress Hills

• Many different aboriginal groups

• Instrumental in forming the North West Mounted Police and Fort Walsh
Alberta’s parks inspire people to discover, value, protect, and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.