

**BANFF**  
**NATIONAL PARK OF CANADA**  
Management Plan

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**DRAFT**

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## 1. A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BANFF NATIONAL PARK

### 1.1 Mandate

The Canada National Parks Act requires that each of Canada's national parks have a management plan. These plans reflect the policies and legislation of the Government of Canada and are prepared in consultation with Canadians. They are reviewed every five years. This management plan will guide the overall direction of Banff National Park for the next 10 to 15 years and will serve as a framework for all planning and decisions within the park.

#### **PARKS CANADA'S MANDATE**

*On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations.*

In 1994 the Banff-Bow Valley Task Force was commissioned to prepare recommendations concerning the long-term management of Banff that would maintain ecological integrity while allowing appropriate levels of development and continued access for visitors. The independent Task Force was made up of five people from the academic and private sectors with expertise in ecological sciences, tourism, public policy and management. Public involvement was a key component of the Task Force's work. A Round Table, with representatives from fourteen sectors with an interest in the area, met and crafted a vision, principles and values to guide the management of the Bow Valley and Banff National Park. The Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan, approved in 1997 after four years of scientific study, analysis and public consultation, incorporated many of the Round Table's recommendations.

The 1997 Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan has proven important, and effective, at improving the ecological health of Banff National Park and providing guidance for investments and decisions that support the continued relevance and attractiveness of Banff National Park as Canada's best known national park and a global visitor destination. In response to major milestones in addressing the plan's priorities, it has been updated twice: in 2004 to incorporate a Human Use Management Strategy, including the Lake Louise Area Strategy, and in 2007 to incorporate direction for the Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff.

Parks Canada's approach to management planning has evolved over the years. In 2008, the Parks Canada Agency finalized new national Management Planning

Guidelines intended, among other things, to ensure that management plans provide strategic direction, as opposed to specific prescriptive measures, and that their content more effectively integrate the three key elements of Parks Canada's mandate: protection of heritage resources, visitor experience, and public understanding and appreciation.

The second five-year review of the amended 1997 Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan coincided with an opportunity to substantially rewrite and reorganize the Plan so that it is aligned with the new planning guidelines. This is not a new plan; it is a rewritten plan that brings forward important policy direction for the ecological integrity of Banff National Park and integrates it with new content intended to identify opportunities and strategic direction relating to visitor experience and integration.

## **1.2 Planning Process**

The seven mountain national parks – Banff, Yoho, Kootenay, Jasper, Mount Revelstoke, Glacier and Waterton Lakes – share many features and issues in common. Visitors travel among the parks, and stakeholders often have interests in several parks. Consequently, the management plans for the seven parks have been reviewed and amended concurrently, through a common process.

The management plans have been written with an overall mountain park vision and closely related common thematic strategies, to ensure co-ordinated approaches.

Each management plan also contains Area Concepts, in which detailed direction is provided for specific geographic areas that represent the diversity of landscapes that comprise each park. Area Concepts integrate the three elements of the Parks Canada mandate – protection, education and visitor experience – through key actions intended to help achieve an idealized future condition for each area.

## **1.3 Regulatory and Policy Context**

Management authorities and accountabilities for national parks are established under the Parks Canada Agency Act and the Canada National Parks Act. The Park Management Plan provides strategic direction for a national park and is mandated by Section 11 of the Canada National Parks Act.

Strategic direction in the Park Management Plan, and all operational and business planning decisions, are subject on an ongoing basis to national policies and guidelines that frame Parks Canada's approach to all national parks, national historic sites, and national marine conservation areas. Some examples include:

- Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies
- Canada National Parks Act, Schedule 4 (community boundaries and maximum commercial space allocations)

- Cultural Resource Management Policy
- Ski Area Management Guidelines
- National Parks of Canada Aircraft Access Regulations
- National Parks Wilderness Area Declaration Regulations
- Redevelopment Guidelines for Outlying Commercial Accommodations and Hostels in the Rocky Mountains National Parks
- Management Bulletin 2.6.10. Recreational Activity and Special Event Assessments
- Banff National Park Special Event Guidelines (2009)

In delivering on its mandate for heritage protection, visitor experience and education, the Parks Canada Agency is accountable for ensuring that management of each national park gives first priority to the maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity. This ensures that national parks will remain unimpaired for the benefit, education and enjoyment of future generations.

A primary tool in achieving this is the application of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and Parks Canada's Policy on Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure thorough, science-based consideration of potential environmental effects, and appropriate public review, in advance of any development, licensing and policy decisions. In addition, Parks Canada has specific obligations under the Species at Risk Act and has demonstrated leadership by completing, in Banff National Park, the first approved recovery plan for an endangered species (Banff Hot Springs Snail) in Canada.

Parks Canada publicly accounts for its performance by publishing, every five years, a State of the Park report that provides a synopsis of the current condition of the park based on key indicators, and assesses performance in advancing the Agency's mandate.

Parks Canada's Strategic Outcome (Corporate Plan 2009/10 – 2013/14) is:

*Canadians have a strong sense of connection, through meaningful experiences, to their national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas and these protected places are enjoyed in ways that leave them unimpaired for present and future generations.*

Parks Canada's corporate priorities that influence this management plan include:

- Parks Canada will continue to lead active management projects in national parks to improve key ecological integrity indicators. Investments will be made in a strategic manner to achieve results on the ground.
- A greater percentage of Canadians will report awareness and understanding of the heritage places managed by Parks Canada. As well, more Canadians will be aware of the increasing number of

- opportunities created for their involvement.
- Targeted Parks Canada initiatives will attract a greater number of visitors to national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas as experiential travel destinations through a Parks Canada focused approach on the creation of visitor experience opportunities.

## **1.4 Co-operative Planning and Management**

Banff National Park includes a town (Banff) and village (Lake Louise) that serve as visitor centres for the millions of Canadians and international visitors who experience the park each year. The park shares boundaries with three other national parks (Kootenay, Yoho and Jasper) that, with Mt. Robson, Hamber and Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Parks in the Province of British Columbia, have been designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site. Other parts of the park boundary adjoin public resource lands and provincial parks administered by the Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

The management plan for Banff, and the park's ongoing management, require collaboration with the other jurisdictions who share in the responsibility for managing this Rocky Mountain landscape and serving the people who depend upon or value it.

### **1.4.1. The Town of Banff and the Village of Lake Louise**

The Town of Banff, administered by the federal government for more than a century, was incorporated as an Alberta municipality in 1990, through an Incorporation Agreement between Canada and Alberta. Although the Town is administered much like comparable communities elsewhere in Alberta, it remains fully a part of Banff National Park and is subject to the Canada National Parks Act and regulations. The federal government retains ownership of all land in the Town and is the ultimate authority on questions of planning, land use, development and environmental issues.

The Town of Banff completed its second Community Plan in 2008 and the plan was approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada in 2009. Land Use Bylaws in the Town of Banff, which implement the Community Plan, are subordinate to and required, under the Incorporation Agreement, to be consistent with the Park Management Plan. The Town is the subject of its own section in this Park Management Plan.

Lake Louise is a visitor centre that also serves as a community for park and business staff who serve park visitors in the western side of the park. Lake Louise is administered by Parks Canada with advice from a community advisory council. The Lake Louise Community Plan, approved in 2001, provides direction

for development and use. The Village of Lake Louise is subject to its own section in this Park Management Plan.

#### **1.4.2. Kootenay, Yoho and Jasper National Parks**

Given the shared importance of these parks as the core protected area in the Central Rockies Ecosystem and, with adjacent British Columbia Provincial Parks, within the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site, it is important that management strategies of the mountain national parks are coordinated and complementary. The 2009 review and updating of the Banff National Park of Canada management plan was conducted simultaneously with reviews of its neighboring national parks and, in fact, with three other mountain national parks in southern Canada: Mt. Revelstoke, Glacier and Waterton Lakes.

Together, the seven mountain parks represent the Columbia Mountains and Rocky Mountains Natural Regions and are the result of the conscious choice of Canadians to preserve a large part of their mountain heritage in a natural condition, so that future generations can continue to be inspired by the kinds of experiences that Canada's mountain environments offer. Visitors, passers-through, residents, and all Canadians benefit from and can contribute to this heritage. Dating back over 10,000 years, traditional use on these lands by Aboriginal people is evidenced by countless archaeological sites and cultural artefacts, as well as the oral traditions of Aboriginal communities. These parks also contain 15 national historic sites representing major themes in Canadian history. Five of the seven parks are also part of two World Heritage Sites, reflecting the global community's recognition of their outstanding universal value.

While much of the direct management of these parks is the responsibility of Parks Canada, it is the advice and support of others that is critical to success. Many hundreds of stakeholders, area residents and volunteers contribute countless hours through consultation groups, partnering initiatives and voluntary stewardship projects. Thousands of Canadians contribute their views during consultations on draft management plans. Parks Canada shares with others the leadership and challenge of perpetuating the mountain heritage to enrich the experience and understanding of generations to come.

All seven mountain national parks share a common vision that aligns with, and frames, each national park's specific vision:

*Canada's mountain national parks are renowned living examples of all that is best in the conservation of mountain ecosystems and history, facilitation of authentic nature-based experience, shared initiative, meaningful learning, and mountain culture. Visitors to these places feel welcomed into experiences that exceed their expectations.*

*The silent peaks, forest mosaics, living waters, wildlife, people, clean air and endless capacity to inspire bring rejuvenation, hope and self-discovery to future generations, just as they have for the many generations that came before.*

### **1.4.3 National Historic Sites**

There are eight National Historic Sites within Banff National Park. Seven of them are under the jurisdiction of Parks Canada and have current management plans that were approved in 2008. Implementation of these plans will ensure the continued commemorative integrity of these sites, while direction in this Banff National Park management plan will expand the relevance and reach of their programming and enhance their contribution to contemporary visitor experience.

## **2. IMPORTANCE OF BANFF NATIONAL PARK**

Banff National Park is Canada's first national park and the third (after Yellowstone in the U.S.A. and Royal in Australia) in the world.

The original reserve around the Sulphur Mountain hot springs was established in 1885. Since then, the success and popularity of protecting and enjoying common heritage, started by the first parks, have grown into a national and a global phenomenon, with 8,500 protected areas in Canada and more than 106,000 around the world.

Banff National Park is renowned for its long history of wildlife research and conservation, its ecological restoration innovations, its role in the Canadian tourism industry and iconic status as a global symbol of Canada, and its contributions to the ongoing evolution of both the theory and practise of protected areas management. Delegations from around the world come to Banff to learn.

Banff National Park is the birthplace of Canadian mountaineering and alpine skiing. It has long been an inspiration to artists and writers who continue to add to a rich body of work that embodies the spirit of the mountains and the connections of people to mountain landscapes. It remains a centre of mountain



culture and outdoor adventure where Canadians build relationships with nature, adventure and one another.

The park welcomes more than 3 million visitors each year, has close to 8000 permanent residents, is bisected by the Trans Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway and has a large number of facilities for visitors – and yet has rare and sensitive wildlife living next to people, including important predators such as grizzly bears, cougars and wolves.

Because of its iconic profile, the park is a source of great pride for Canadians. It is Canada's most popular park and accounts for 25% of all visits to the national parks. Park visitation, while variable from one year to the next, has shown a sustained growth trend over time. Visitors, when surveyed, consistently rate their satisfaction with the park as high.

As one local historian-writer has suggested, one of Canada's greatest cultural achievements may have been the establishment of parks in the Rockies: "It is not what we built that truly makes us unique as a culture, but what we saved". (R.W. Sandford: *The Weekender Effect*, 2008). We have taken the best of the commons and ensured that, generation after generation it will be there for everyone, part of the essence of Canada. And it all started in Banff.

### **3. CURRENT SITUATION**

Banff National Park is visited by over three million people each year. A wide range of services and facilities is available throughout the park. There are approximately 8,000 permanent residents in the communities of Banff and Lake Louise and a fluctuating population of several thousand seasonal workers. Both the Trans Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway cross the park. Roads allow access to many of the iconic features such as the Icefields Parkway and Moraine Lake.

Banff's mountain landscape is characterized by three distinctively different life zones, or ecoregions: the montane, the subalpine, and the alpine. The montane ecoregion occupies the lowest elevations with the mildest climate and amounts to just over 3% of the park. Montane habitats are confined mostly to the Bow Valley east of Castle Mountain. This ecoregion is critical to the park's ecological integrity, as it has the greatest diversity and productivity of vegetation, provides important low elevation habitat and movement corridors for many species, and contains the Vermilion wetlands and the Sulphur Mountain hotsprings. It also contains most of the park's development – communities, transportation routes and visitor facilities – which have come to dominate about 20% of the park's montane. As a consequence, the montane has long been a focus of management attention and continues to be in this amended management plan.

Outside the montane ecoregion, rugged terrain and long winters limit wildlife habitat. Species such as grizzly bears and wolves occupy habitats naturally fragmented by mountain topography and exist at relatively low population levels. A small remnant herd of woodland caribou appears to have been killed by an avalanche in early 2009. Nonetheless, with the exception of bison and, probably, caribou, all wildlife species native to Canada's Rocky Mountains are present in the park. Leading edge mitigations along the Trans Canada Highway (wildlife underpasses and overpasses, fencing) have helped restore connectivity and genetic diversity, however wildlife mortality along the railway remains a significant concern.

Watercourses, previously impaired by engineering works to protect transportation infrastructure and to control water levels, as well as by the introduction of alien fish species, are being actively restored. Canada's first approved endangered species recovery strategy - for the endemic Banff Springs Snail - is being implemented in ways that not only secure the future of this unique species but also enhance opportunities for visitor experience.

Prescribed fire has been introduced, to restore a more natural vegetation mosaic. The park's science program is recognized both for the quality of its applied ecosystem science and innovative visitor research conducted by Parks Canada and for the role the park plays as a setting for investigative research into ecosystem dynamics by academics and other institutions.

Banff National Park includes eight National Historic Sites. Parks Canada manages the Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station, Kicking Horse Pass and Howse Pass. The Alpine Club of Canada manages the Abbott Pass Refuge Hut and Lake Louise ski area manages Skoki Lodge. The Banff Springs Hotel is owned and operated by Fairmont Hotels and, with its associated golf course, remains an iconic part of the cultural landscape that has come to define and distinguish Banff as an international destination.

Ongoing surveys of visitors indicate a shifting pattern of use, with fewer international visitors offset by more Canadians, especially from the surrounding regions. Satisfaction levels remain high for the quality and range of park services, although congestion at some locations is increasingly perceived as a problem and surveys indicate that many visitors are not perceiving value for money in lodgings, retail and some other elements of their experience. In preparation for this amended management plan, visitor experience assessments and focus groups were undertaken, as well as a market analysis and visitor profiling. Not surprisingly, the park disproportionately attracts visitors who have an interest in natural and cultural features relative to those with other interests.

From all this information and the 2008 State of the Park report, the most pressing challenges and opportunities which were identified include:

- an inadequate sense of arrival and welcome at the East Gate

- a need to develop and market opportunities that appeal to new Canadians and youth
- the importance of retaining current visitors and the opportunity to provide more services and connections to through travellers
- opportunities to provide improved information via modern technology, for both non-visitors and for people planning a visit
- opportunities to tailor information and services to different types of visitors based on market segmentation that takes into account tastes, motivations and interests, in order to make the national park relevant to a full range of Canadians and international visitors
- the challenge of responding in a timely and meaningful way to changing tourism markets and recreational trends
- opportunities to refresh and reinvent aspects of visitor experience through special events and introduction of new recreational activities
- using Banff's iconic profile to introduce people to other protected areas in the national system
- growing demand for guide business licences and commercial access to wilderness
- lack of long term certainty for ski areas in the face of growing competition and potential future threats from climate change
- the need for more efficient and co-ordinated engagement of volunteers on advisory groups and opportunities to broaden the range of viewpoints
- the imperative of more meaningful ongoing engagement with Aboriginal peoples
- unsustainable levels of wildlife mortality along the railway
- sustaining progress towards restoring ecosystem health and minimizing risk to sensitive species and habitats
- recent extirpation of caribou
- the need to anticipate and plan proactively for the impacts of global climate change on ecosystems, tourism and hydrology.

#### **4. A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF BANFF NATIONAL PARK**

*Banff National Park reveals the majesty and timelessness of the Rocky Mountains. From the high peaks of the Continental Divide to the alpine meadows and quiet valleys of the Front Ranges, from headwater glaciers to the hot springs at Sulphur Mountain, it is a landscape where nature flourishes and evolves for all time.*

*People from around the world participate in the life of the park, finding inspiration, enjoyment, livelihoods and understanding.*

*Canadians celebrate and renew Banff's mountain heritage – the natural rhythms of the land, the art and literature which it inspired and the tradition of conservation which was born here. Visitors are welcomed into their*

*own personal experiences of mountain ecosystems and culture, and become part of the shared enterprise of sustaining and presenting all that is authentic and valued about the Canadian Rockies.*

*Canadians take pride in continuing the legacy of previous generations who had the wisdom and foresight to protect this small part of the planet. As Canada's first protected area the story of Banff is, ultimately, the story of every national park, national historic site and national marine conservation area in Canada, and of the unique vision and mandate that gave rise to them. As part of a UNESCO-recognized World Heritage Site, Banff National Park is also treasured as a global heritage place.*

*Banff National Park is, above all else, a place of wonder, where the richness of Canada's mountain heritage is appreciated, respected and celebrated for all time.*

## **5. KEY STRATEGIES**

Key strategies are the guiding concepts or “big ideas” that define the specific approach Parks Canada takes in setting priorities, choosing tactics, and evaluating the success of park management. The following eleven key strategies summarize Parks Canada's overall approach to delivering Parks Canada's mandate in the unique context of Banff National Park.

### **5.1 SHOWCASES OF CONSERVATION INNOVATION**

Conservation challenges associated with managing mountain protected areas in a changing world are many and complex. Canada's mountain national parks have long been at the forefront of efforts to re-think and re-design the way in which people interact with landscapes. Parks Canada's mandated obligation to ensure that parks remain unimpaired for future generations, and the high value that Canadians attach to the ecological well-being and cultural heritage of their mountain national parks, focus research attention, innovation and investment on conservation challenges they share with many other mountain landscapes in the world. As a result, the mountain parks have repeatedly led in developing new ways to solve conservation problems.

*This strategy focuses on:*

- sustaining the critical analysis, creative thinking, and innovation that are needed to resolve conservation challenges through adaptive management,*
- ensuring that regional stakeholders, park visitors and broader communities of interest are fully engaged in the*

*creative ferment and learning opportunities associated with the development of new conservation solutions, and*

- *making conservation successes a part of the national park visitor experience and of the story we tell the world, so that they influence thinking and hope.*

#### **5.1.1 Direction**

- approach each conservation challenge not as a problem or a conflict to be resolved, but as an opportunity to engage a diverse community of interested Canadians in sharing information, creatively imagining options, and collaborating to implement solutions that create new stories of conservation successes.
- provide leadership examples of innovative ways to enable grizzly bears and humans to share important habitat areas in ways that ensure the safety of both and engage visitors in stewardship of a keystone species.
- conservation measures such as highway crossing structures, prescribed fires, historic building restoration, salvage archaeology and trail relocations will be designed and implemented in such a way as to enhance experience and learning opportunities
- implement restrictions on use only where necessary to protect sensitive resources or for public safety, subject to effective communication of the rationale and need to those affected by them. Where restrictions are required, provide meaningful alternatives for those affected.
- specific measures for maintaining and improving ecological integrity are detailed in section 5.11

#### **5.1.2 Indicators of Success**

- number of Canadians participating in advisory groups and other forums
- minimal restrictions on use
- number of new learning opportunities associated with conservation measures

### **5.2. WELCOME.... TO MOUNTAINS OF POSSIBILITIES**

*Connecting Canadians to inspiring and authentic park experiences is integral to successful delivery of Parks Canada's mandate. A renewed focus on experiential tourism based on mountain heritage will set the stage for visitors to have the best national park experience possible through the effective collaboration of Parks Canada, the tourism industry, and the broader Banff community. This effort will be evident*

*in every program and activity, and in every aspect of service delivery.*

As Canada's first and busiest national park, Banff is uniquely positioned to introduce Canadians and international visitors to the national parks system.

Visitors to Banff National Park experience authentic mountain ecosystems and become part of the unique human stories that have been shaped by Canada's Rocky Mountains. For those new to Canada, or those experiencing a Canadian national park for the first time, Banff also introduces the stories that define our country – as reflected in the system of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas that Parks Canada manages. For urban Canadians, the park offers contrast, renewal and restoration. For the young, it provides discovery, social networking and adventure. No matter their background or interest, visitors can find in Banff National Park the ability to create exceptional mountain-based experiences that are meaningful and rewarding to them.

The size of the park and the range of year-round activities, combined with the need to integrate tourism and recreation with ecosystem protection, offer both challenges and opportunities. With three world class ski areas, the park provides a robust down-hill ski offer, complemented by high quality cross country skiing and warm hospitality in and around the Town of Banff and the Village of Lake Louise. Recreational and leisure opportunities not usually associated with national parks – like downhill skiing, luxury accommodations and urban shopping – take on a distinctive flavour and meaning in a world-renowned protected mountain landscape.

Alberta's largest city, Calgary, is a mere 90 minutes away. Due to their popularity, several places in the park – the lands around the Town of Banff, Johnston Canyon, Lake Louise and Moraine Lake – offer those unfamiliar with nature an opportunity to experience mountain landscapes in relative safety. Large areas of both accessible and remote wilderness provide exceptional day and multi-day hiking for those who wish to venture into wild places. One of Canada's signature scenic drives, the Icefields Parkway, joins Banff with Jasper National Park to the north.

People with an interest in the park vary greatly in their needs and expectations. For this reason, both Parks Canada and its tourism industry partners rely on extensive demographic and psychographic information, and product development and promotional activities to provide a seamless delivery of products and programs that attract the attention and satisfy the needs of visitors with a wide array of interests and comfort levels.

“**Welcome**” will be a recurring theme at each stage of the trip cycle for visitors. The sense of welcome to a protected mountain landscape will be reflected in the visitor infrastructure, local ambassadors, Parks staff and other service providers. Visitors will be welcomed not only to the mountain ecosystems and history of Banff National Park, but to Parks Canada’s entire family of protected areas and the diversity of Canada which those protected areas represent and celebrate.

Providing visitors with “**Connections to Mountain Places**” will encourage meaningful and enjoyable visits that contribute to opportunities for visitors to create unique memories and become part of Canada’s ongoing celebration of mountain heritage. In collaboration with external representatives and stakeholders in both the environmental and tourism communities, and subject to an assessment process at the national and local levels, Parks Canada will consider proposals for new recreational, leisure and learning activities that support all aspects of the Parks Canada mandate.

Banff National Park’s visitor experience strategy is based on five levels of engagement: the virtual experience; drive-through awareness; the view from the edge; a step into the wild; and Rocky Mountain wilderness.

The first of these, the “**Virtual Experience**”, is targeted to visitors with an interest in mountain ecosystems, culture, history and recreation, anywhere in the world within reach of technology. For these visitors, Parks Canada will provide brief, intense visual and/or auditory experiences of mountain life, delivered through technology or print media. For reluctant travellers, these experiences may “be” the visit; for others, they may be instrumental at the imagining/wishing stage of the trip cycle, and may provoke an actual visit.

Travellers who journey through the park without stopping are targeted in the next type of experience, “**Drive Through Awareness**”. To date, these visitors have been largely ignored. A significant volume on transportation routes, however, they present a tremendous opportunity for connection to place and environmental stewardship. For this group, a drive along the Trans-Canada or other highways – complete with wildlife fencing, overpasses, underpasses and complementary signage – will offer a contrasting experience to that outside the park. Although still primarily a visual experience, subtle interpretation will promote understanding of and support for this ever-protected panorama, and encouragement for a return or longer stay.

Those who prefer to stay close to civilization and park communities represent the second highest volume segment. They may come for a day

or spend a few days in the park as part of a longer vacation or conference. For visitors stopping to snap a picture, have a picnic, go for a short stroll, downhill ski, or take in a festival, the stage will be set for a deeper connection to place, in which all of the senses are engaged. Meaning and value will be added to this “**View from the Edge**” experience, through entertaining programming with heritage themes and through provision of dynamic media that bring the wilderness to the hotel room, day lodge, campsite or gathering place. This will be particularly appealing for those seeking hassle-free travel, rejuvenation and relaxation, or freedom and excitement in outdoor settings.

“**A Step into the Wild**” experience is targeted to visitors who stop and stay in the parks for more than a few hours, or overnight in more rustic accommodations, but who do not venture physically or perceptually from civilization for too long. They may visit attractions or take advantage of commercial guiding and transportation services to venture further from the road in relative safety. Lesser in volume, this segment has more time for personal reflection, in-depth learning, and possibilities of memorable moments with wildlife. Their park experience will give them renewal, freedom and authentic connection to nature and mountain culture.

Visitors who seek “**Rocky Mountain Wilderness**” have an inherent affinity for nature or have progressed through other levels and repeated park use over time. These visitors become immersed physically and/or perceptually. Their carefully planned, intensely personal experiences may include long day hikes, outfitted horse travel in remote valleys, or lengthy, unguided backpacking trips. Their already-strong connection to the park will be maintained through the provision of off-site trip planning information and unobtrusive assistance, and when desired, contact with experts. They themselves will be encouraged to deepen their relationship with place as ambassadors or stewards for the park.

#### 5.2.1. Direction

- Apply a consistent visitor experience framework throughout the trip cycle, from imagining/wishing to remembering, reinforcing that which is most authentic and inspiring about the Rocky Mountains
  - Use traditional methods and new technology to target and attract key segments, enhance the visitor experience, and promote connections to place
  - Give priority to the introduction of new **Virtual Experience** and **Drive-through Awareness** products
  - Position **View from the Edge** experiences as an introduction to the park and invitation to explore further
  - Continually re-evaluate and renew products and promotion associated with **View from the Edge**, **A Step into the Wild** and **Rocky Mountain Wilderness** opportunities



- Build on the success and strength of programs and services for visitors seeking authenticity, cultural exploration and freedom, as well as those seeking opportunities for recreation, relaxation and rejuvenation
  - Work with partners like Travel Alberta, Banff Lake Louise Tourism and park communities to
    - influence patterns of use in an effort to ensure that visitors are directed to the most appropriate opportunities that align with their interests and address capacity issues in the busy summer period, and
    - provide visitors with both the information and motivations they need in order to make choices and adopt behaviours that ensure their personal safety and protect park wildlife and ecosystems from damage
  - Create promotions, products and special events to provoke visitation to activity nodes designed for intensive use and in seasons and locations that have available capacity and sufficient ecological resilience; emphasize authenticity and inspiration as key elements.
  - Use market-sensitive communications to build anticipation and to explain restrictions or limits in ways that reinforce the special nature of parks, offer alternatives, and engage the visitor in shared stewardship of the park
  - Support the work of the tourism industry to regain long-haul domestic markets and destination visitation, and to promote the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site to international markets
  - Respond to the increased environmental sophistication of visitors by providing opportunities throughout the park to learn about and actively participate in stewardship of the park and environment.
- Offer a comprehensive range of recreational and leisure opportunities for visitors by continually reviewing and refreshing the product offer
  - Both internal and external proposals for new recreational activities will be considered
  - Successful proposals will:
    - Clearly align with natural and cultural resource protection goals
    - Facilitate opportunities for enjoyable and meaningful national park experiences

- Promote understanding and appreciation of Rocky Mountain heritage and Parks Canada's program
  - Value and involve local communities
  - Respect the character of place and align with area concepts
- Develop product for market segments identified as new or renewed priorities for the park:
  - *by geography:*
    - domestic long-haul visitors
    - regional markets
  - *by motivations/benefits sought:*
    - gentle explorers
    - no-hassle travellers
    - heritage re-connectors
  - *by demographics:*
    - urban Canadians
    - new (recently immigrated) Canadians
    - young Canadians under 22 years of age
- Invest strategically and sufficiently in front-line services and park assets
  - Cluster and improve reception and orientation facilities and picnic and day-use areas
  - Review and revitalize the park's camping offer by investing in infrastructure for first-time campers, recreational vehicle users, and those seeking hassle-free or luxury camping
- Redevelop the East Gate as a point of welcome and orientation so that visitors and through travellers enjoy the maximum benefit from their time in the park
- Increase knowledge of market segments and measure success of promotional and programming efforts
  - Create and regularly update a comprehensive profile of the park's total visitor population
  - Monitor trends and shifts in visitation
  - Share market intelligence with municipal and commercial tourism providers
- Work with regional partners to ensure that visitors are aware of the full range of opportunities that are available to them for enjoying the Rocky Mountains in the region
- Develop a strategy for enhancing the winter experiences that are available in the park

### 5.2.2. Indicators of Success

- At least 3,200,000 people visit the park in 2010/11 and visitation increases on average 2%/annum in subsequent years
- At least 90% of visitors, in all market segments, are satisfied with all elements of their experience (services, facilities, programs and value for money) and at least 50% are very satisfied
- Number of Virtual Experience products developed/ introduced online and associated market uptake
- Number of Drive Through Awareness products developed/ introduced and associated market uptake
- Increased % of Canadians who understand the importance of their national parks and Banff National Park in particular
- Increased % of Canadians who understand the importance of park stewardship, Parks Canada's role as park stewards and their own role as partners in stewardship
- Increased visitation in targeted market segments
- Reduced incidents of injury to visitors and human-wildlife conflict

### 5.3 SHARING THE EXCITEMENT OF SCIENCE AND STEWARDSHIP

*Management of national parks is policy-based, and science-supported. Banff National Park has a leadership responsibility to actively engage interested stakeholders, park visitors and community members in monitoring programs, research data collection, and the integration and application of science findings. This approach – of delivering science activities in ways that create rich and rewarding opportunities for experience and learning not just for the scientists involved but for the regional community and visitors to the national park – has become a signature characteristic of Banff National Park's approach to science and a key strategy in the management of the park.*

Parks Canada will select monitoring and study approaches that, while maintaining a high degree of scientific rigour and statistical validity, are designed to be delivered collaboratively with as many interested Canadians as possible. Ecosystem science will provide not just insights and advice, but rich opportunities for individual experience and collective learning. As our understanding of mountain ecosystems continues to evolve, science findings will be continually integrated into the stories shared with park visitors.

### 5.3.1 Direction

- Design citizen science programs around core ecological monitoring programs and other ecosystem studies. Share the stories of citizen scientists widely through internet and new media.
- Work with the Montane science committee and the larger Montane advisory committee as primary means to synthesize science findings and develop new adaptive management strategies. Invite these groups to expand their area of interest to the greater park ecosystem, while retaining a primary focus on the highly significant Bow River montane landscapes.
- Create public spaces where scientists, volunteers and visitors intermingle on a daily basis, sustaining intellectual ferment about park ecosystems and facilitating a diversity of learning and experience opportunities
- Feed ongoing research and monitoring findings through the internet and new media to high-visitor-use locations in the national park and beyond, to schools and homes around the world, to enable everyone to share in the continuing excitement of discovery and science adventure.

Sustaining the health of park resources and the quality of the facilities that support park experiences is a shared responsibility to which many Canadians have demonstrated commitment and passion. Parks Canada will actively engage volunteers and park visitors in as many stewardship activities as possible, making the protection and management of the park an enriching source of meaningful experiences.

- Continually re-evaluate all program activities to identify and advance, in collaboration with interest groups and tourism providers, new opportunities for the development of voluntourism products and volunteer opportunities for those who wish to participate actively in stewardship of the mountain national parks.
- Continually expand and improve the use of environmental technologies such as renewable energy, waste composting, recycling and water and energy conservation in campgrounds, day use areas and, through development review, in built facilities.
- Strengthen the market position of mountain national parks and enhance the sense of value and stewardship for park visitors by actively interpreting these initiatives and using them to help define the mountain parks.

- Review and enhance the opportunities for the public to participate in advisory groups that address park management issues

### **5.3.2 Indicators of Success**

- At least 85% of surveyed visitors consider the park meaningful to them
- At least 60% of visitors feel they learned something about the park during their visit
- Stakeholders and partners have opportunities to influence and contribute to park management

## **5.4 HISTORY AND CULTURE INSIDE CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCE**

The mountain parks, since prior to their origins, have been settings where new activities and mountain traditions have merged to shape and enrich human culture. The stories that help to define these places are products of early and contemporary Aboriginal use, European exploration and fur trade, railway and nation-building, the emergence and continuing evolution of recreation and tourism and the unique communities that have come to people these places. The rich cultural heritage of these national parks allows visitors to experience a vivid sense of the past and to personally connect with- and contribute to - this continuing human legacy.

The mountain parks protect important cultural resources in large part by continually reinventing our relationship with them, while protecting their authenticity and historic character.

*This strategy aims to increase the profile of the rich, still-evolving cultural heritage of the mountain parks. The national historic sites and cultural resources within the parks will become integral to contemporary visitor experience and connection to place, integrating history, culture and ecology into the ways in which people experience and understand Canada's mountain parks.*

### **5.4.1 Direction**

- Strengthen the involvement of Aboriginal people in documenting and presenting their cultures and relationships to park landscapes
- Link National Historic Site stories to the broader mountain park landscape and to contemporary visitor experiences – stage modern events and activities at historic places to keep their stories alive and relevant.
- Animate places where visitors concentrate with live theatrical performances, interpretation and other programming that brings the

history and ecosystems of Banff National Park into the contemporary experience of Banff's key attractions.

- Collaborate with tourism and heritage partners to plan and stage heritage-themed festivals and special events.
- Work with local museums, heritage associations and third-party operators of National Historic Sites (e.g. Banff Springs Hotel, Skoki Lodge)
  - to strengthen their role in providing learning opportunities for visitors and
  - to increase visitation to National Historic Sites

#### **5.4.2 Indicators of Success**

- Aboriginal involvement with visitors
- Number of new activities, events and performances
- Visitation level at National Historic Sites increases by 5% each year.

### **5.5 BRINGING THE MOUNTAINS TO PEOPLE WHERE THEY LIVE**

*This strategy is designed to extend the reach of the mountain national parks, through the popular media, modern technology and outreach programming, to bring current, lively and engaging content into homes, schools and communities so that Canadians can choose to make the mountains part of their daily lives.*

To promote an ongoing dialogue and lifelong passion for parks beyond our boundaries, Parks Canada brings the ongoing stories of mountain culture, science, recreation and park management to people who may not otherwise have an opportunity to learn about, visit, or become involved in our national parks and national historic sites.

Almost 80% of Canadians live in urban centres and more than one-fifth were not born in Canada. The mountain parks will reach out to these audiences through innovative communications programming. Outreach initiatives such as environmental education programs at schools, extension events for special groups, “real-time” content on Parks Canada and partner websites, publications, mass media contacts and community events will bring the mountain parks into people’s homes and communities. Wherever they may live, work or gather, Canadians will be introduced to their nation’s remarkable mountain heritage. Canadians will understand and value the mountain national parks and be able to connect with wild places, culture and history.

The high public profile and reputation of the mountain national parks creates both an opportunity and an obligation to link Canadians' experience in these parks to an expanded awareness of and engagement with the entire family of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas.

### **5.5.1 Direction**

- Target youth, urban Canadians and new Canadians with programming that links them to park settings, stories and experiences, researchers, managers and the dynamic environments in each mountain park.
- Collaborate with heritage-based agencies, schools and festival organizers to bring outreach education programming (e.g. Mountain World Heritage Interpretive Theatre) into small communities and larger urban centres in western Canada on a regular basis, with a priority on the Calgary metropolitan region and the Bow Corridor.
- Continually refresh and renew content for an enhanced web presence that provides learning, sharing and experiential opportunities for Canadians and others so that they can experience the excitement of virtually being there.
- Collaborate with Provincial education authorities to tie mountain national park themes, the story of the system of protected areas that has grown from its origins in Banff, and mountain safety messages into school curricula at all levels.

### **5.5.2 Indicators of Success**

- Appreciation: at least 60% of Canadians appreciate the significance of Banff National Park as the birthplace of Parks Canada's system of protected heritage places
- Understanding: at least 80% of Canadians understand the importance of why Parks Canada protects and presents Banff National Park
- Outreach education: an increased percentage of Canadians consider that they learned about the park's heritage
- External communications: an increased percentage of Canadians understand that Parks Canada protects and manages Banff National Park on their behalf

## **5.6 MANAGING DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE THE PARK ENVIRONMENT**

Its long history and popularity have resulted in Banff having extensive development associated with roads, visitor infrastructure, tourism

attractions, utilities and communities. Most development in the mountain national parks is in valley bottoms which include much of the most productive wildlife habitat. If not managed carefully, development and associated activities can compromise the natural and cultural attributes of the mountain parks that are valued by Canadians.

Limits to development in Canada's national parks were established in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a result of extensive analysis and public review and are prescribed within national park and community plans, national park zoning and land use agreements. Within Schedule 4 of the Canada National Parks Act, specific limits to community development are registered. Ski area lease boundaries are set in Schedule 5 of the Act. Large areas in the mountain parks are legislatively protected as "Declared Wilderness" areas, in order to preserve their natural character and the unique opportunities associated with that character.

Areas of concentrated development are important staging areas for visitors to experience the park. In addition, the design of buildings, facilities and signs can directly reinforce the history of the park and the mountain landscape and directly shape the character of visitor opportunities.

The Town of Banff and the Village of Lake Louise form a large part of the history in Banff National Park. Both communities were established shortly after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway and later became centres for visitor services, the location of Parks Canada's administrative offices and places where people who work in the park could live.

The Town of Banff and the Village of Lake Louise will face similar issues during the coming years. The central challenge will be to manage growth and at the same time offer visitors the products and services they need to enjoy the park. This means that residents and visitors must understand the impact of the communities and tourism on the park's resources. Both communities have approved Community Plans.

Communities continue to explore opportunities for valuable visitor experiences for millions of people annually, while at the same time, ensuring that the sense of community character is not adversely affected. Growth management plays a critical role in ensuring the communities' sense of place is sustained.

The Town of Canmore, a community of over 12,000 permanent and seasonal residents just outside the park's east gate, has a strong influence on park operations. It is a community that is continuing to grow at a rapid pace. This growth has the potential to create more traffic and demand for recreational activities within Banff National Park. Without careful



management, it also has the ability to affect the health of the ecosystems that surround the park; maintaining wildlife corridors and effective habitat for wary species is of particular concern.

Canmore continues to provide services for park visitors and employees allowing more travellers to stay in the Canmore area and visit the park during the day. As well, a number of people employed in the park have taken up residence in Canmore. Parks Canada will continue to work collaboratively with the Town of Canmore on tourism, recreation and environmental stewardship initiatives that strengthen the connections of visitors and residents to the mountain landscape and to manage the impact of park use on the Town and the effects of community growth on the park and Central Rockies Ecosystem.

*This strategy reaffirms the importance of maintaining and establishing limits to development while both reinforcing the important role communities, outlying commercial accommodations and other facilities play in supporting and enhancing visitor experience, and encouraging creative approaches to new development that will enable more visitors to experience mountain heritage.*

#### **5.6.1 Direction**

- Maintain strong connections between communities and the surrounding mountain landscape:
  - Implement the Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff strategy
  - Implement the Lake Louise Area strategy
  - Improve way finding and interpretive media within and adjacent to communities
  - Collaborate with the Province of Alberta and the Town of Canmore on recreation and conservation planning
- Protect the role of the town of Banff and Lake Louise village as visitor service centres and ensure they maintain their sense of place as small mountain communities scaled to their national park setting:
  - The Town of Banff boundaries will not expand. Commercial development will be permitted only within the commercially-zoned area and limited to an increase of 32,515m<sup>2</sup> (350,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) from the commercial development base that existed in April 1997. The Town of Banff's land use bylaw will include proactive measures aligned towards the objective of a

population, as measured in the Federal Census, of not more than 8000 permanent residents.

- The Community of Lake Louise boundaries will not expand. Commercial development will be permitted only within the commercially-zoned area and limited to an increase of 3,660 m<sup>2</sup> from the commercial development base that existed in April 2001. No new commercial accommodation operations will be built. The population, as measured in the Federal Census, should not exceed 2200 permanent residents.
- Outside the visitor service centres, development of commercial accommodation will be subject to the 2007 Redevelopment Guidelines for Outlying Commercial Accommodations in the Rocky Mountain National Parks.
- Implement the Ski Area Management Guidelines (2006). In collaboration with each ski area develop site guidelines that include permanent limits to growth in a manner that:
  - supports the maintenance or restoration of the park's ecological integrity;
  - contributes to facilitating memorable national park visitor experiences and educational opportunities; and
  - provides ski area operators with clear parameters for business planning in support of an economically healthy operation
- Outside park communities, OCAs and ski areas, ensure no net increase in the amount of disturbed landscape, by actively restoring previously disturbed areas prior to, or in concert with, any new development. New proposals for facilities directly required for outdoor recreational activities may be considered based on the following principles:
  - Clear alignment with the natural and cultural protection goals of the park
  - Mitigation of any potential site-specific, park-scale or regional impacts including potential conflicts between user groups; where feasible, use existing disturbed sites
  - Facilitation for enjoyable and meaningful visitor experiences that strengthen connection to place
  - Promotion of learning and appreciation
- Consider limits to commercial activities in:

- Zone 1 areas,
  - Environmentally Sensitive Sites,
  - ecologically sensitive areas such as wetland and riparian areas and important habitat for species at risk,
  - remote wilderness settings important for those seeking solitude and reflection, and
  - where crowding or potential user conflict issues require careful management
- Previously disturbed landscapes will be restored to high-value Rocky Mountain habitats such as grassland, aspen parkland, open Douglas fir savannah and wetlands
- Develop a long-term plan for obtaining aggregate material that is required for highway construction and maintenance purposes; the first choice is to acquire material from outside the park, subject to a full accounting of financial and environmental costs; sources within the park will be considered when outside sources are not available or feasible
- When aggregate sources inside Banff National Park are required for highway purposes, their use will be based on a long term strategy that:
  - Prohibits development of gravel sources under rare plant communities and habitat, archaeological resources or locations of high aesthetic importance for visitor experience
  - Ensures active restoration of existing and new gravel sources on an ongoing basis throughout the life cycle of the source
  - Ensures full rehabilitation costs are included in all highway construction and recapitalization budgets.
- Permit changes to the existing system of utilities and communications services when those changes will improve efficiency and safety, yield environmental benefits, and avoid aesthetic effects that could diminish the visitor experience
- Consider options for alternative energy infrastructure in Zone 2 (Declared Wilderness Area) where renewable energy sources can replace existing use of non-renewable energy; ensure new facilities preserve the wilderness environment and the experience of visitors
- Apply environmental stewardship principles and architectural and sign guidelines to all development proposals

### 5.6.2 Indicators of Success

- The limits to development and growth are maintained for communities and OCAs and, when established, for ski areas
- New development supports protection goals and enhances connection to place for visitors
- New development is balanced by reclamation of the same or greater amount of previously disturbed land in the national park, on a five-year running average basis

## 5.7 CONNECTING – RECONNECTING

Mountain landscapes are fragmented by their very nature. The establishment of Banff National Park came about, in large part, as a result of early government efforts to connect a young nation from coast to coast by means of a trans-continental rail line. The establishment of a park, based on the thinking of the day, had the effect of disconnecting First Nations from the ways of life they had known for many hundreds of years previously, and from the mountain landscapes that sustained them. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, followed years later by the Trans Canada Highway, had the effect of connecting Canada while at the same time fragmenting the Rocky Mountains by creating physical barriers to wildlife movement and increasingly serious causes of mortality.

For much of the first century of Banff's existence, it was a place of active and contentious debate between those who valued national parks more for their role in tourism development and those who valued them most for their role in conservation. By the late twentieth century, the divisions in the landscape were reflected by no less sharply defined divisions in the human community. The Banff Bow Valley process and Heritage Tourism Strategy were visionary, concerted efforts to address the problems of fragmentation – ecological and social.

*This strategy is to build on the emergent story of Banff National Park as a place of connecting— and reconnecting— people, landscapes, wildlife populations and waterways. If the first century of Banff's existence was marked by fragmentation and divisiveness that in many ways shrank the landscape of possibilities for Canada's Rocky Mountains, the second century will be about connecting and reconnecting in ways that create new hope, meaning and possibilities for the future.*

### **5.7.1 Direction**

- Actively engage people from a variety of sectors and interests in planning and implementing program activities, and in celebrating and telling shared stories of connection and reconnection
- Maintain and restore secure wildlife corridors within the park (e.g. the Cascade, Fairview and Whitehorn corridors) and collaborate to assist the protection of regional corridors (e.g. Yellowstone to Yukon, Bow Valley-Vermilion Valley corridor)
- Restore connectivity of streams, wetlands and lakes where they have been impaired by dams, culverts and linear developments
- Work with Aboriginal communities to honour and restore cultural connections to the land
- Invite people back to Banff to see it anew, and to see what it has become. Invite visitors to Banff to discover and explore the great variety of national parks and national historic sites that are the legacy of the national park idea that originated here.
- Develop products that remove barriers that keep children, families and new Canadians from making nature and outdoor experience parts of their lives
- Connect Banff Avenue to the far wilderness through webcams, live theatre and interactive media.
- Connect Canadians at home to their mountain heritage through internet and new media.

### **5.7.2 Indicators of Success**

- restored ecological connectivity
- increased aboriginal visits
- number of interpretive programs

## **5.8 IT ALL STARTED HERE**

*From Canada's first park reserve, to a system of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas that reaches from sea to sea to sea....*

*the first – born has unique responsibilities and offers Parks Canada unequalled opportunities to connect Canadians with the places and stories that make us who we are. This strategy involves ensuring that Banff National Park serves Parks Canada and Canadians, not just in Banff, but all across Canada.*

In 1885, when Canada was barely 18 years old, a dream emerged from the steam rising from hot springs at the foot of Sulphur Mountain. A place of spiritual renewal and healing to the Aboriginal people who travelled through the un-roaded mountain valleys of western Canada became, because of the visionary leadership of the government of the day, Canada's first protected park.

The original Hot Springs Reserve became the nucleus of Banff National Park – Canada's first national park and the third, after Yellowstone in the U.S.A. and Royal in Australia, in the world. Today it still offers spiritual renewal and healing, but it has come to represent much more than could have been imagined 125 years ago.

From its beginning in Banff, Canada's system of protected heritage places has grown to become one of the greatest in the world, with 42 national parks, 166 national historic sites and 3 national marine conservation areas from sea to sea to sea. The idea of national parks that was born with Banff was an idea that combined heritage protection and tourism to create a unique model of conservation – protection achieved through and with visitor experience and learning. That idea has also continued to grow and evolve, giving rise to remarkable successes as diverse as the reintroduction of plains bison to Grasslands National Park in southern Saskatchewan, to the protection of ancestral homelands and lifeways with the expansion of Nahanni National Park in 2009.

More than 3 million Canadians and international tourists visit Banff National Park each year, making it the most popular and heavily-visited park in Canada. Because of its location on the Trans-Canada Highway, many millions more pass through the park on their way to other destinations. For these reasons, this is the place where more than 25% of those who get to know Parks Canada's program form their first impressions. Parks Canada will tell its national story in Banff National Park and take advantage of the popularity and profile of Banff to promote awareness of, and visits to, the spectacular array of protected heritage places administered by Parks Canada throughout Canada.

### **5.8.1 Direction**

- Renew the Banff East Gate as a place of welcome and orientation – to Banff and the other mountain national parks, to the Canadian

Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site, and to the family of national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas administered throughout Canada by the Parks Canada Agency.

- Renew the Cave and Basin National Historic Site as Parks Canada's national place – an exciting must-see attraction that animates and celebrates the story of the system that grew from the original Hot Springs Reserve and the remarkable successes in conservation and tourism that were made possible by the unique national park idea that originated there. Ensure that visitors to Banff National Park are inspired at the Cave and Basin to explore other protected places across Canada.
- Refresh the Icefields Parkway as a premiere scenic drive that defines the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site

#### **5.8.2 Indicators of Success**

- Renewed East Gate
- Renewed Cave and Basin
- Increased number of visitors along the Icefields Parkway

### **5.9 FROM EXCEPTIONS TO EXCEPTIONAL**

Banff is not only Canada's first national park, it has long been its most controversial. Throughout its history it has been the focus of debates over the kinds of development and uses that are most fitting in a national park context – from arguments in the early 20th century about whether automobiles should be allowed in the park, to debates in the 1940s and 1950s about whether predators should continue to be killed, to the development controversies of the late twentieth century involving highway expansion, commercial growth in the town of Banff and ski areas. Banff National Park is defined as much by features which could be viewed as unconventional by national park standards – a major trans-continental highway, a railway, three ski resorts, a golf course, the large reservoir (Lake Minnewanka) and canals associated with hydropower development on the Cascade River, and a thriving town with a permanent resident population approaching 8000 – as it is by its mountain scenery, ecosystems and cultural history.

Each of these seeming anomalies offers unique and important opportunities for Parks Canada and its partners to continually enlarge on the significance of this place and its national park status. Indeed, this is exactly what Parks Canada has been doing in Banff for the past century and a quarter.

The challenge of a major highway fragmenting the Rocky Mountain landscape and taking a continuing toll on wildlife led to Parks Canada's successful innovations with highway fencing, wildlife underpasses, and wildlife overpasses. From the pioneering ecosystem restoration experiments in Banff – which might not have happened but for the importance of restoring ecological integrity in Canada's oldest national park – the use of fences and wildlife crossing structures has been adopted now in many important wildlife areas around the world. Without the Trans-Canada Highway, this contribution of Parks Canada to the applied science of ecosystem restoration would not have originated in Banff. In this sense, the presence of a highway in a national park served to greatly increase the conservation significance and role of this park by extending its reach to many other places where roadkills and ecosystem fragmentation needed effective solutions.

Similarly, Banff was the first place in Canada to close its garbage dumps and develop bear-proof garbage containers. The systems pioneered in Banff have since been adopted as a national park standard as well as by many other jurisdictions, and are protecting bears and people in many other parts of Canada.

*A key strategy for Banff National Park is continually to explore new ways to turn what some might see as challenges or anomalies into opportunities to connect Canadians to their heritage, and to provide leadership examples of restoration and conservation through leading-edge management of transportation systems, development review and special events. Banff will continue to change the story of what is possible in conservation and tourism, simply by taking advantage of the fact that it is Banff – a national park of challenging, and exciting, contradictions.*

#### **5.9.1 Direction**

- Collaborate with ski areas, resorts, tour providers and attractions to develop sustainable tourism products rooted strongly in the ecological and cultural heritage of the Rocky Mountains
- Develop and implement new recreational activities and special events that are clearly aligned with ecological integrity and cultural heritage protection priorities and that enhance both visitor experience and learning, through creative and collaborative dialogue fostered through structured review processes.
- Work with CP Rail to minimize the problem of bears and other wildlife being killed by trains



- Actively collaborate in the development of a regional transportation system that expands on the success of the Town of Banff's ROAM buses, to connect visitors to opportunities around Lake Louise, along the Bow Valley Parkway and along the Lake Minnewanka loop, and to reduce the congestion and ecological footprint associated with vehicle traffic.

### **5.9.2 Indicators of Success**

- Number of new visitor opportunities
- Reduced wildlife mortality along the railway
- Introduction of a regional transit system

## **5.10 CELEBRATING THE WORLD HERITAGE SITES**

World Heritage Sites (WHS) are outstanding global examples of the common heritage of all people. They are inscribed in accordance with the guidelines of the World Heritage Convention. Inscription commits the responsible management agencies to maintaining in perpetuity the outstanding universal values for which the sites have been inscribed. Currently there are 176 sites in the world which are inscribed for their natural values. Five of the mountain parks belong to two of these sites.

Waterton Lakes National Park is part of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park WHS. The Site is inscribed for its exceptional natural beauty and for its outstanding examples of ongoing ecological and biological processes.

Banff, Yoho, Kootenay and Jasper National Parks are part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks WHS, together with Mt. Robson, Hamber and Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Parks in BC. The Site is inscribed for its exceptional natural beauty and for its significant ongoing geological processes, including the fossil record of the Burgess Shales in Yoho National Park.

There is currently a proposal to extend the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks WHS by adding provincial parks in Alberta and BC.

*The purpose of this strategy is to celebrate and increase awareness of the World Heritage Sites.*

### **5.10.1 Direction**

- Increase the profile of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks WHS by working in collaboration with partners to make information more widely available
- Provide internet links to the World Heritage Centre and to the WHS website pages of Alberta Parks and BC Parks
- In partnership with Alberta and BC, prepare a nomination for the extension of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks WHS

#### **5.10.2 Indicators of Success**

- Increased awareness of the existence and significance of the World Heritage Site
- Inscription of an enlarged Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks WHS

### **5.11 SETTING ECOSYSTEM PRIORITIES**

While maintaining the ecological integrity of the whole park, prioritize for restoration and intensive management those ecosystem components that are most rare, of exceptional significance, and/or most vulnerable, including keystone species. Incorporate visitor experience and learning opportunities into the management or restoration of these sensitive features.

#### **5.11.1 Direction**

- Montane
  - Collaborate with scientists, interested community members, “citizen scientists” and park visitors on adaptive management experiments aimed at understanding and restoring the ecological processes that sustain Banff’s montane ecosystems, which comprise only 3% of the park’s landscape but are disproportionately important for biodiversity and winter wildlife use.
- Alluvial fans and riparian areas
  - Redirect development and disturbance away from alluvial fans and riparian areas; prioritize these for ecosystem restoration activities and measures to mitigate existing development impacts.
- Grizzly bears

Parks Canada, along with provincial partners in British Columbia and Alberta, has established a goal of maintaining a non-declining grizzly bear population in the Rocky Mountains. The survival of reproductive females is the key factor affecting population persistence.

Grizzly bear research across North America has led to the development of key concepts and analytical tools for managing grizzly bears. These include habitat security and maintenance of core reproductive areas.

Habitat security includes the consideration of physical habitat quality and levels of human disturbance within that habitat. Grizzly bear habitat is considered secure when the animals have a low probability of encountering humans, and can go about their activities with little human-caused disturbance. High habitat security is a close proxy to high-quality environments for wilderness experience, so managing for habitat security also maintains the unique character of place that contributes to visitor experience and enjoyment.

Predictability of human activity helps bears avoid people. When human activity is predictable in space and time, there are fewer bear-human conflicts, fewer human injuries and fewer human-caused bear mortalities.

Banff National Park will continue to use habitat security as a key tool in managing for a healthy grizzly bear population and to that end has defined 27 landscape management units (LMUs) that are roughly equivalent in size to the area of a single female grizzly's home range. (See Annex 2 for a map of the LMUs and their habitat security ratings). Parks Canada will strive to maintain or improve habitat security in each of these landscape management units

- Pursue all measures to eliminate sources of unnatural grizzly mortality, including food attractants along the CPR line.
- Relocate trails out of high-quality grizzly habitat and into settings that offer improved recreational experiences and aesthetics (e.g. out of riparian areas and onto the slopes above where the trail tread is better-drained and the scenic views are improved).
- Minimize risk to female grizzlies and to people by educating visitors on safe enjoyment in bear country, minimizing food attractants, modifying infrastructure and, where necessary, seasonally closing or controlling recreational use of areas important for grizzlies when feeding and travelling. The

priority will be to intensively manage the park's four core reproductive areas for grizzlies to optimize the ability of bears to safely use all available habitat in:

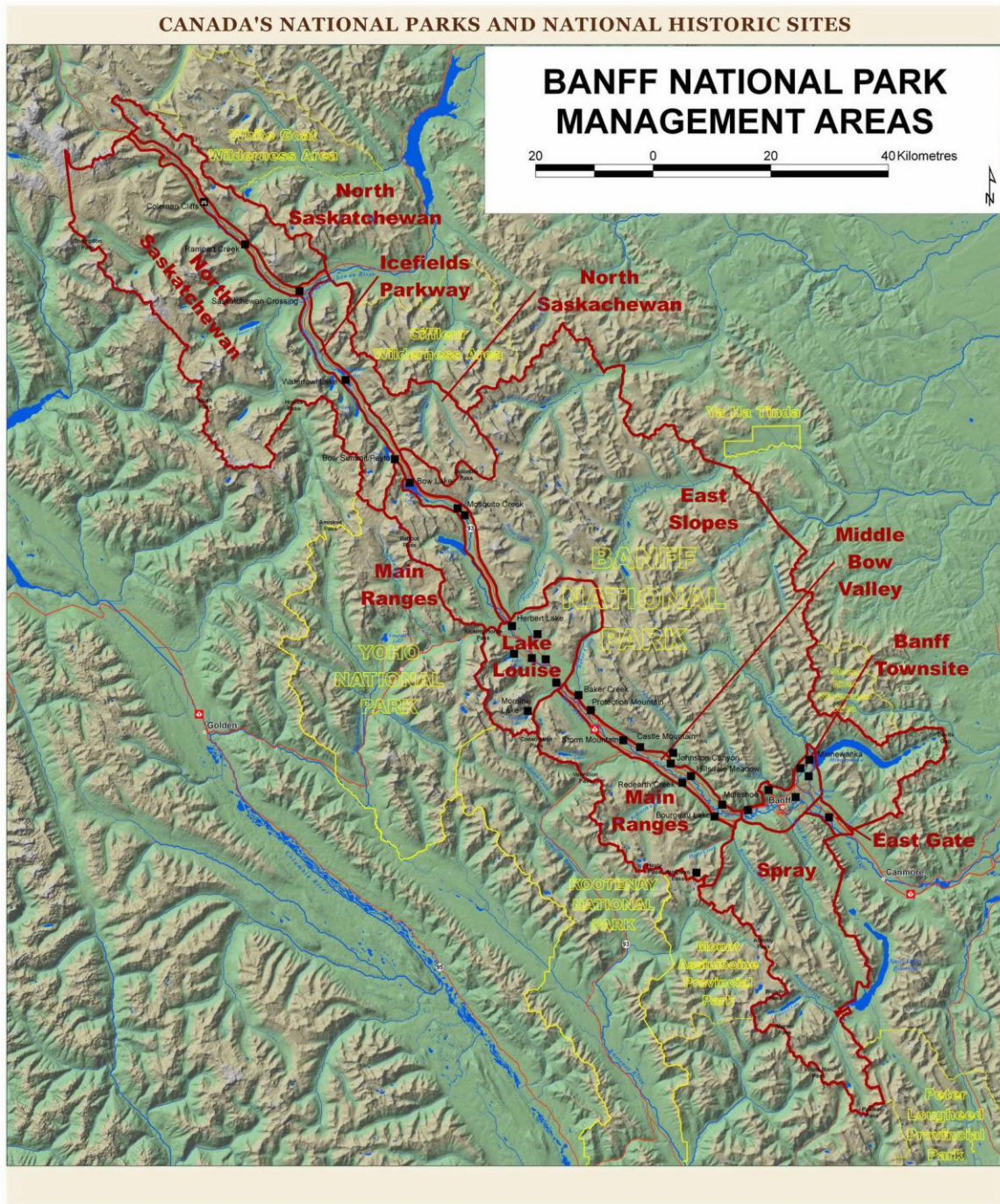
- Pipestone/Baker/Skoki watersheds
  - Flints Park
  - Red Deer/Panther
  - Middle Spray and Bryant Creek watersheds
- Work with adjacent land managers to maintain and, where possible, improve habitat connectivity through secure high quality corridors, allowing genetic exchange and population connectivity between adjacent wildlife populations.
- Native fish species
  - Develop and promote new visitor experience opportunities by engaging anglers and other interested Canadians in activities to eliminate or reduce populations of non-native fish species that pose a risk to native fish populations through displacement or hybridisation.
- Species at risk
  - Restore a breeding population of the extirpated Plains Bison
  - Investigate the feasibility of restoring a breeding population of the extirpated Woodland Caribou
  - Integrate protection and education measures for the endangered Banff Springs Snail into a renewed visitor experience offer at the Cave and Basin National Historic Site.
  - Collaborate with stakeholders to implement proactive measures that will keep other species from being added to Canada's list of threatened and endangered mountain species
- Grasslands and forest savannas
  - Maintain a core Parks Canada program, and enhance this with new volunteer-based experience opportunities, to:
    - Eliminate invasive non-native weed plants
    - Restore the vegetation structure of fire-maintained vegetation types like Douglas fir savanna.
- Restoration and replication of ecosystem processes

- Fire: through prescribed and wild fire, ensure that all parts of the park are within at least 20% of their long term fire cycle
- Predation: minimize displacement of wary carnivores such as wolves and cougars, especially in the montane ecoregion, to ensure that predators have effective use of all Zone 1, 2 and 3 areas of the park throughout their life cycles

#### **5.11.2 Indicators of Success**

- Healthy, functioning ecosystems
- Reduced disturbance footprint in alluvial fans and riparian areas
- The annual known, human-caused mortality of independent female grizzly bears does not exceed one per year, based on a 4-year running average.
- At least 21 of the park's 27 landscape management units achieve or exceed 78% habitat security for grizzly bears
- Distribution and abundance of non-native fish species are reduced
- Bison successfully re-established and, pending the outcome of the feasibility analysis, caribou also re-established
- Wolves denning and wintering in the montane Bow valley
- Banff Springs snail habitat is enhanced and protected
- Prescribed fire targets are achieved

## 6. AREA CONCEPTS



## **6.1 Lower Bow Valley**

### **6.1.1 At Its Future Best**

The welcome to the mountain parks begins at the East Gate, where staff provide a wide range of personalized orientation and information on current events and opportunities to visitors who have already obtained passes and information online or through third-party providers.

Undisturbed landscapes immediately surround the visitors as they enter the national park and the fenced highway prevents wildlife collisions, so that they can relax and enjoy the dramatic views of Mt. Rundle and Cascade Mountain. Excitement builds as they travel through natural vistas, deeper into the park and into new adventures, mentally switching gears. For some, the transition means cycling the Banff Legacy trail at a more leisurely pace. Those travelling through, en route to or from BC, are welcomed into the iconic scenery of the Rockies, introduced to the significance of the wildlife crossings, and encouraged to return for a longer stay.

### **6.1.2 Current Situation**

- Approximately 8 million people enter the park each year, of whom 4.7 million are passing through to destinations beyond the parks
- The East Gate is primarily a fee collection point; at peak periods there are long line-ups to enter the park
- No visitor facilities are provided and the sense of welcome is limited
- The bypass lane is not always apparent to through travellers who do not need to stop to purchase a park pass
- Once inside the park, no further information is provided until the off-ramps for the Town of Banff

### **6.1.3 Objectives**

- The East Gate becomes a point of arrival, welcome and orientation, rather than primarily a fee collection point
- All travellers, both park visitors and through travellers, are welcomed to the park and provided with the current information and basic orientation that they need to make the most of their time in the park
- Traffic line-ups are eliminated or, to the extent that they persist, are incorporated into the national park experience through innovative media and personal service approaches.

### **6.1.4 Key Actions**



- With stakeholders, develop an action plan for re-developing the East Gate area as a welcome point
- Provide the capability for visitors to purchase their passes online or through third parties ahead of their arrival

#### 6.1.5 Indicators of Success

- All visitors including pass-through traffic, are aware of the significance of the national park and world heritage site by the time they cross into the park
- Traffic line-ups are reduced
- At least 90% are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with the sense of arrival and welcome
- Gate attendants become visitor information providers

## 6.2 Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff

### 6.2.1 At its Future Best

The Town of Banff welcomes, orients and inspires millions of visitors each year, connecting them to the history, culture and ecological diversity of Canada's Rocky Mountain landscapes. A thriving community with strong connections to place takes pride in its environmental leadership and the small town atmosphere that keeps the town scaled appropriately to its enclosing montane ecosystem and inspiring mountain scenery. Architecture, land use, way-finding and special events all combine to maintain strong connections between the town's urban environment and the surrounding mountain landscape.

The Bow Valley surrounding the Town of Banff is a showcase of ecological restoration where people and wild animals co-exist close to each other, where nature encloses and enters the town. Visitors continue to enjoy the wide variety of opportunities that are available close by and that make this one of the world's premier mountain destinations – a unique blend of nature close-up, world class recreational experiences and exceptional learning opportunities, just minutes from the familiar urban surroundings of the town. Nature trails, natural hot springs, lake and river boating, skiing, golfing, horse and mountain bike riding are all available, supplemented from time to time by special events that deepen people's appreciation of the park. The area is the base for excursions into other parts of the park and, for some, a safe environment from which to enjoy the surrounding wild areas. It provides a transition from urban development to wilderness.

### 6.2.2 Current Situation

- The area is located in the lower Bow Valley and includes the Town of Banff and adjacent areas, from the west end of Lake Minnewanka and



Johnson Lake to the entrance to the Bow Valley Parkway, and from Mt. Norquay ski area to the Banff Springs golf course

- The Town of Banff and adjacent areas are the most heavily developed and visited parts of Banff National Park – in fact, the area is globally unique for the degree of development in a national park. There are almost 7,000 permanent residents in the town and about 3 million visitors each year. Limits on the footprint of the town and the commercial space within the town are significant ways in which development impacts on adjacent areas are contained.
- Adjacent to the town are campgrounds, a ski area, a championship golf course and many kilometres of hiking, horse riding and mountain biking trails; travellers on the Trans Canada Highway enjoy the views as they drive through
- A steady stream of visitors, many of them frequent repeat visitors from surrounding regions, attest to the continuing appeal of this area of Banff National Park; because of the great diversity of services, from rustic to five star, visitors of all interests are attracted and many new Canadians enjoy the area
- An important part of the park's small area of montane habitat is located in the valley bottom, with about 20% of it occupied by the town and the many other facilities
- The Vermilion Lakes wetlands are the park's largest and most diverse; hotspots along the base of Sulphur Mountain provide specialized habitat for numerous species, including the endemic Banff Springs Snail, and the water flowing from the springs has created a warm water marsh
- The clear, turquoise Bow River bisects the area and flows through the middle of the town; it provides important riparian wildlife habitat, especially for waterfowl, as well as aquatic habitat for a number of fish species; it is also a focal scenic feature for visitors, especially the section through the town
- Several regional wildlife movement corridors intersect in the vicinity of the town and restoration in recent years has improved the ability of wildlife to move through this valley bottom pinch point
- The Cave and Basin hotspots are the birthplace of Canada's national park system and a National Historic Site
- The airstrip will be re-listed for emergency and diversionary uses only

#### 6.2.3 Objectives

- The vegetation diversity and predator-prey dynamics of the montane ecoregion surrounding the town, including wetland and riparian areas are actively restored
- The area showcases all aspects of the park's natural and cultural heritage
- More than 3 million visitors each year enjoy a wide variety of recreational opportunities that enrich their connection to Canada's mountain heritage

- Because of the wide array of facilities provided by Parks Canada and commercial businesses, the area introduces many visitors to safe enjoyment of the outdoors and to the park's natural and cultural heritage
- Grizzly bear habitat security is improved

#### 6.2.4 Key Actions

- Implement the Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff concept plan (2007) with priority on continued implementation of approved actions:
  - re-design the trail system and provide:
    - safe crossings of the Trans Canada Highway and the CPR
    - mountain bike trails
    - loop trails around the town and Tunnel Mountain campground
    - decommissioning of unsanctioned trails which create environmental impacts
    - reduced fragmentation of wildlife habitat
  - upgrade all day use areas to improve visitor experiences, provide more interpretive media and eliminate localized environmental impacts
  - re-develop the Vermilion Lakes area as a premiere destination close to town for introducing visitors to the aquatic environment of the valley bottom where they can relax and enjoy the iconic views of Mt. Rundle
  - investigate the feasibility of a gondola from the Town of Banff to Mt. Norquay ski area
  - collaborate with the towns of Banff and Canmore, Alberta Parks and the business communities to ensure seamlessness of experience for visitors to the park and the Bow Valley, to minimize human-wildlife conflicts, and to protect sensitive wildlife areas.
- In conjunction with re-development of the Cave and Basin National Historic Site, tell the story of the origin and the current extent of the national system of protected areas and the evolution of the protected heritage idea in Canada
- Restore at least 2/3 of the previously-disturbed area at the Cascade Pits (gravel pit and aggregate storage area) to native grassland species, aspen forest, and wetland. Develop the remainder as a day use area for staging special events and interpreting the montane environment.
- Work with the Town of Banff to restore Forty Mile Creek through dam removal and reclamation
- Utilize the many existing day use opportunities to introduce a wide variety of Canadians to safe enjoyment of other parts of the park and of the outdoors
- Revise the National Park Aircraft Access Regulations to re-list and maintain the airstrip at its current size for emergency and diversionary purposes only:
  - no commercial or recreational use will be permitted;

- private aircraft and associated facilities, including hangars and fuel tanks, will be removed
  - wildlife displacement will be minimized by directing random human use to other nearby areas such as Cascade Ponds
- Ensure that use of the Bow River is managed conservatively to protect important riparian values such as nesting and rearing habitat for waterfowl and provide un-crowded opportunities for quiet enjoyment and reflection; only non-motorized uses will be permitted
- Parks Canada's *Ski Area Management Guidelines*, and Site Guidelines and Long-Range Plans, will guide all future ski area management at Mount Norquay ski area, including summer use

#### 6.2.5 Indicators of Success

- Completion of all trail projects
- Redevelopment of day use areas
- At least 60% of visitors consider that they learned about the area
- At least 90% are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- Presence and movement of all species of wildlife in the full range of montane habitats and wildlife corridors throughout the area
- Improved grizzly bear habitat security
- Uncrowded conditions and successful fledging of waterfowl along the Bow River
- Mt. Norquay Ski Area has long-term development certainty

### 6.3 Town of Banff

#### 6.3.1 At Its Future Best

The Town of Banff is a quintessential mountain town – offering a rich range of services for visitors and community residents, in a setting that sustains and complements its wilderness surroundings. Views, landscaping, architectural motifs, green spaces, human scale, nearby wildlife – all convey the message that the town is a truly unique community – a small, sensitive enclave within the wilds of the Rockies. Visitors enjoy the town's extensive range of opportunities, from rustic to five star, that enable them to explore the enclosing park land and experience the mountain culture and human history that have grown up in this unique community

The town is a global model of sustainable development, attracting a wide range of visitors because of its reputation for leadership and quality. The town's footprint, commercial space, building heights and population are all controlled - by the tourism economy, legislation and a deliberate choice of residents - so that the special attributes associated with the national park and World Heritage Site are sustained for all time, and so that visitors today and tomorrow are assured an authentic, rich and meaningful set of opportunities to experience a unique, world-

class mountain destination. A convenient transit system encourages both visitors and residents to explore the town and adjacent park areas in an environmentally and user- friendly way. The conscious choice to protect the community's character creates the authentic experiences that continue to attract Canadians and international visitors and to distinguish this as a place like no other. Residents take pride in their unique stewardship role in one of the world's premier destinations and enthusiastically welcome visitors into their special place.

All Canadians, and Banff residents in particular, proudly recognize the town as an icon of how a community can protect, celebrate and enjoy our shared natural heritage.

#### 6.3.2 Current Situation

- The town is the most visited part of the park, with at least 80% of visitors spending some time in the community – more than 3 million each year
- A wide range of visitor services is available and at peak periods there are thousands of visitors at any one time
- Visitors report a low level of satisfaction with value for money
- A popular transit system provides convenient access within the town and is proposed to be expanded into a regional system
- In order to manage the town's impact on surrounding park lands, the municipal boundary is set in legislation, commercial space is limited to a maximum of 361,390 m<sup>2</sup> (not all is currently developed) and the permanent population is intended not to exceed 8,000 (Federal Census estimates current population around 7000)
- Building heights are restricted to provide an appropriate scale and ensure views of the surrounding mountains from throughout the town
- Anyone living in the town must comply with the regulation governing eligible residency
- The Town of Banff Incorporation Agreement sets out the purposes and objectives for the Town:
  - a) to maintain the townsite as part of a World Heritage Site
  - b) to serve, as its primary function, as a centre for visitors to the Park and to provide such visitors with accommodation and other goods and services
  - c) to provide the widest range of interpretive and orientation services to Park visitors
  - d) to maintain a community character which is consistent with and reflects the surrounding environment
  - e) to provide a comfortable living community for those who need to reside in the townsite in order to achieve its primary function
- The Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw, and other planning documents, provide detailed guidance for implementation of the Incorporation Agreement and provide the administrative tools to implement the commercial space, building height and population caps

that help to ensure that the size and character of the town, and its potential effects on the national park, are controlled.

- The adjacent community of Canmore also provides a full range of visitor and resident services and provides an alternative for additional visitor and resident needs that cannot be accommodated within the town of Banff

#### 6.3.3 Objectives

- The Town of Banff serves, as its primary function, as a centre for visitors
- The town provides a familiar environment from which visitors can safely enjoy the surrounding natural areas of the park
- The town is a global model of sustainable development and an example of living harmoniously in a natural environment
- Commercial development in the Town does not exceed a maximum floor area of 361,390 m<sup>2</sup>
- It is anticipated that the population of the town, as measured by the Federal Census, shall not exceed 8,000 permanent residents
- All Town planning documents reflect and reinforce the park management plan
- Parks Canada and the Town of Banff work closely together to achieve these objectives
- Visitors are very satisfied with all aspects of their visit
- Visits to National Historic Sites and cultural heritage features increase

#### 6.3.4 Key Actions

- Interpretive and educational opportunities will be expanded in the town, for example by:
  - Bringing remoter areas of the park into town via webcams, videos, signs and interpretive media along trails
  - Providing integrated trails between the town, Tunnel Mountain campground and adjacent park areas
  - Developing a ring trail around the town
  - Reserving and using the east side of the 200 block of Banff Avenue for visitor experience and interpretive services provided both by Parks Canada and its heritage tourism partners
  - Periodically refreshing interpretive media in the transit buses and including such material in the expanded transit system
  - Increasing the profile of the World Heritage Site
  - Raising the profile of the National Historic Sites and the many cultural heritage features throughout the town, so that visitors stay longer and include them in their itineraries
- Work with the Town of Banff and the business community to improve visitors' level of satisfaction and perceptions of value

- Make the town a hub for the proposed regional transit system, so that visitors and residents can access locations throughout the Bow Valley via transit
- Ensure all community planning documents reinforce the town's primary function as a centre for visitors and its location within a national park and world heritage site, and support the development and population targets
- The permanent population (Federal Census) will not exceed 8,000 and all decisions of Parks Canada and the Town of Banff will proactively take into account the requirement to adhere to this limit
- In order to reflect the town's setting and to blend with surrounding natural landscapes, existing green space within the town will retain its designation as public park and environmental protection land
- All future commercial development will occur only in land use districts designated for commercial purposes and will be subject to the cumulative total commercial floor space maximum of 361,390 m<sup>2</sup>.
- The use of lands within the Public Service (PS) district is limited to uses of an institutional, government, educational or community service (non-commercial) nature that are necessary to meet the needs of eligible residents of the town
- The height restriction in the commercial downtown or CD district shall be a maximum of 3 stories or 10.8m; the third storey shall be limited to residential use by eligible residents
- The height restriction in the Commercial Accommodation - Banff Avenue or CA district shall be a maximum of 3 stories or 11.5m.
- Parks Canada will assemble, develop and maintain lands on the east side of the 200 block of Banff Avenue for the purpose of enhancing the visitor experience of Banff National Park and the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site, and sustaining the strong connection between the Town of Banff and the National Park within which it is located
- Commercial leases located on the east side of the 200 block of Banff Avenue are not part of the commercial space allocation and cannot be re-allocated elsewhere; to comply with the commercial space limits, they shall be rezoned to non-conforming public service and, on expiry of existing commercial leases, the land shall revert to the Crown
- In anticipation of the Town's approaching the commercial floor area and permanent population limits, Parks Canada and the Town of Banff will work together to guide the Town's future as a sustainable centre for visitors; it is intended that the limits will be retained in order to minimize the Town's physical and ecological footprint and to ensure that it remains an authentic mountain community that welcomes Canadian and international visitors and provides them with memorable visitor experiences

#### 6.3.5 Indicators of Success

- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with the quality of services and experiences and with value in the town

- Residents consistently rate the town highly for its quality of life and their sense of connection to the national park in which it is located
- Visitors spend longer periods of time in the town
- Increased participation in cultural features and events
- Increased use of the transit system within the town and, in time, of the regional transit system
- The Banff Community Plan, Land Use Bylaw, and land use decisions clearly align with the Town of Banff Incorporation Agreement and the Banff National Park of Canada management plan and are designed to proactively avoid future land use conflicts
- The area of commercial space and the permanent resident population remain within the established limits
- The town is recognized as a global leader in sustainable development
- Visits to the National Historic Sites increase by at least 5% each year during the next five years

## **6.4 Spray Area**

### **6.4.1 At Its Future Best**

The Spray is the park's most southerly area, a long narrow wedge bordering provincial parks in Alberta and BC and with numerous interconnecting trails. It is a gentle wilderness, readily accessible and offering a variety of experiences. Mountain bike riders enjoy the Lower Spray loop and the Goat Creek trail, both close to town, as well as the lower part of Brewster Creek trail. Horse riders take overnight rides to Sundance and Halfway Lodges in Brewster Creek Valley, escaping the hikers on so many other trails.

Hikers travel into and through the Bryant and Upper Spray Valleys on trails which originate on provincial lands in Mt. Assiniboine, Height of the Rockies and Kananaskis Country Parks. The expansion of the World Heritage Site to include all these parks has strengthened the close collaboration amongst park agencies and provided seamless wilderness experiences for visitors. The hike to Mt. Assiniboine is a classic of the Rockies.

Female grizzly bears find ideal conditions for raising their cubs, especially in the Middle Spray Valley which is set aside for their secure use, and to minimize risk to park visitors. Other measures, such as prescribed fire to restore habitat, the removal/relocation of the Bryant Creek shelter and seasonal protective measures at Allenby Pass, have all improved grizzly bear population viability in the important Bryant Creek habitat.

In winter, backcountry skiers visit the lodges in the Brewster Creek Valley and many travel through the Bryant Valley to Mt. Assiniboine. Others enjoy short ski trips from town around the Spray loop.

#### 6.4.2 Current Situation

- The area extends south from the Bow Valley, between the western ridge of Brewster Creek and Mt. Rundle; much of the area is bounded by the park boundary
- The east side is bordered by Alberta provincial parks – Bow Valley, Spray Valley and Peter Lougheed; part of the west side is contiguous with Mt. Assiniboine Park in BC and Height of the Rockies Park abuts the southern boundary
- The area is transitional to the drier southern Rockies, with open pine forests, valley bottom meadows and larches at higher elevations; lakes are few, the main ones being, Gloria, Marvel, Owl and Leman; glaciers are mostly limited to the higher elevations adjacent to Mt. Assiniboine
- The Bryant/Middle Spray is one of the park's four core grizzly bear reproductive areas; the Middle Spray is closed to public use from early spring to late fall to minimize the risk of human-bear encounters and ensure security of grizzly families
- Grizzly bear habitat security is 70% or higher throughout the area
- The Bryant Valley is a major access route to Mt. Assiniboine Park, in both summer and winter, with the entry point at Mt. Shark day use area in Spray Valley Provincial Park
- Brewster Creek is used primarily by horse riding guests of Sundance and Halfway lodges
- The lower Spray is physically separate from the rest of the area and is a popular day use area adjacent to the Town of Banff; mountain biking is the main activity, with some hiking and horse riding; the Spray Loop is a well used ski trail
- Old logging roads permit ATV access close to the park boundary in the vicinity of Leman Lake, increasing the potential for illegal vehicle entry, poaching and illegal fishing and reducing the backcountry atmosphere
- Backcountry lodges are located in the BC Rockies at several places near the Banff boundary and helicopter overflights transporting guests and gear to these lodges are increasingly common.

#### 6.4.3 Objectives

- The Spray area and contiguous provincial parks are managed collaboratively as one large ecosystem and as part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site
- Visitors enjoy a variety of superlative backcountry recreation opportunities in an accessible wilderness setting
- The Middle Spray/Bryant functions effectively as a major grizzly bear reproductive area

#### 6.4.4 Key Actions



- In collaboration with Alberta Parks and BC Parks, consider a nomination to add contiguous provincial parks to the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site
- Optimize grizzly bear reproductive success by limiting the potential for contact between grizzly bears and people and by maintaining a diversity of fire-generated habitats
- Remove or relocate the Bryant shelter to minimize the potential for conflict between bears and people.
- Encourage Sundance and Halfway lodges to investigate alternative power generation possibilities
- Collaborate with British Columbia land managers to limit motorized access near national park boundary areas.
- Work towards minimizing helicopter overflights and concentrating helicopter use in one or more corridors where the potential for impairing the wilderness experience of park visitors is minimized.

#### 6.4.5 Indicators of Success

- Enlargement of the World Heritage Site
- Habitat security is above 78% and there is annual recruitment of grizzly bears to the regional population
- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their backcountry experiences

## 6.5 East Slopes

### 6.5.1 At Its Future Best

Wide shrubby valleys beneath tilted limestone peaks, open alpine ridges, clear streams and wild herds of bighorn sheep, elk and deer – the Eastern Slopes of Banff National Park offer one of the last and best opportunities close to the 49th parallel for exceptional, multi-day wilderness adventures. The trails are basic, marked by boot prints, horses' hooves and the tracks of grizzly bears, wolves and other wildlife. Visitors expect, and find, solitude and a sense of connection to the aboriginal people who continue to travel through these quiet places, the early park wardens and their families who lived in isolated park outposts in these Front Range valleys, and the backcountry characters whose stories have become part of the spirit of the place.

The landscape is enduring yet dynamic, its patterns reshaped continually by fire and flooding, and visitors to this area must be self-reliant. Guided group travel introduces less experienced travellers to the wilderness and its stories, while respecting the character of the place through low-impact camping practises and voluntary trail stewardship.

Along the southern and western margins, close to park roads, popular hiking trails give many visitors a taste of the big, wild country beyond. Those enjoying the boat cruises on Lake Minnewanka catch a glimpse of the rugged wilderness that lies out of sight of the roads. Visitors to the more accessible parts of the national park nonetheless have their imaginations stirred by the proximity of these big, wild valleys through stories, art and electronic imagery that brings the wild to the very edge of the pavement and beyond, through new media, to the homes of Canadians across the country.

#### 6.5.2 Current Situation

- The area includes almost all backcountry parts of the park that are east and north of the Bow River; Lake Minnewanka is included, except for the day use area at the west end
- This is the park's largest management area, reflecting the large scale of the landscape – wide valleys, lower mountains with few glaciers, extensive meadows and open ridges, wildlife roaming throughout and a long history of aboriginal use and guided outfitting
- Wildlife sightings are encounters with animals whose behaviour is rarely shaped by people, rather than opportunities for viewing habituated animals
- Natural processes predominate and the area is suitable for large scale programs such as the use of prescribed fire or the re-introduction of free-roaming bison
- Flint's Park and the Red Deer/Panther area are two of four core grizzly bear reproduction areas in the park
- Grizzly bear habitat security exceeds 78% throughout most of the area; it is lower where there are well used day use trails
- The Clearwater Valley is Zone 1, Special Preservation because of its undisturbed natural features such as caribou habitat. The Fairholme Range south of L. Minnewanka is an Environmentally Sensitive Site because it is the largest remaining area of undisturbed montane habitat in the park
- Many of the park's popular and well maintained day hiking trails, such as the Ink Pots and Helen Lake trails, enter the southern and western edges of the East Slopes, between the Town of Banff and Bow Lake; however, most of the area is remote, with trails of varying standards,
- Use is light in the remoter parts and includes guided hiking and horse groups; the relatively well-drained soils and drier conditions lend themselves to horse travel and most horse riding occurs in this area
- Boating is popular on Lake Minnewanka and commercial boat tours enable many visitors to experience a wilder part of the park
- The East Slopes area is ideal for those who want to immerse themselves in the park, for a day near the roads or a week in the remote parts; others could be provided the opportunity to enjoy the area vicariously via films, books and possibly webcams

### 6.5.3 Objectives

- This area is maintained as mountain wilderness at its best – one of Canada’s southernmost and most spectacular places for self-reliant, no-frills backcountry adventure
- The full suite of native wildlife is restored and ranges freely through landscapes where natural forces of fire, flooding and predation are the dominant influences on their distribution and behaviour
- The continuing presence of grizzly bears is a defining element of the entire area, and the Flint’s Park and the Red Deer/Panther areas function effectively as major grizzly bear reproductive areas
- Visitors and non visitors learn about the stories and personalities of those who came before – Aboriginal people, early explorers, backcountry park wardens and legendary outfitters –and deepen the sense of connection to a wild place where stories arise from people interacting with landscape, solitude and risk

### 6.5.4 Key Actions

- Conduct market research and focus group analysis of the area concept and options to connect visitors to wilderness opportunities
- Maintain the range of high quality day hiking trails that encourage visitors to immerse themselves in the landscape; provide needed information and interpretation at trailheads, as well as basic facilities such as privies
- Manage the parts of the East Slopes that lie outside the Bow River and lower Cascade watersheds for those seeking wilderness experiences consistent with wild settings, isolation and self reliance
- Bring all trails and campsites in remoter areas to a standard consistent with wilderness travel:
  - single-track, low maintenance trails that ford streams rather than cross on bridges; exceptions may be key crossings of larger-volume streams, where cables or simple log-construction bridges may be warranted
  - minimal facilities based on log construction techniques
  - no roofed or walled accommodation
  - wheeled use will be limited to mountain bikes on the Cascade trail and the Lake Minnewanka shoreline trail
- Minimize helicopter overflights to those required only for critical emergencies or essential resource management activities
- Develop non-intrusive media (annotated maps, GPS-based material, books) that link the stories of the place to the users. Collaborate on training and coaching of outfitters, guides and others who have opportunities to connect visitors to the nature and history of these wilderness valleys

- Work with the tour boat company at L. Minnewanka to provide current and accurate information that builds connection with the East Slopes landscape amongst a wide variety of visitors
- Explore ways to link wilderness into experiences on Banff Avenue or at home e.g. radio collared animals, remote sensing stations associated with prescribed burns, etc; feeding real time info to websites
- In remoter areas, manage for small guided trips, especially youth groups, that are aligned with the opportunities/experiences described here and managed so as to be compatible with the quality of experience sought by others using the same areas
- Maintain a park staff presence consistent with expectations of users e.g. horseback patrols, foot patrols, Parks Canada operational cabins screened or set back from trails
- Restore landscape-scale fire through prescribed burning
- Re-introduce free-roaming bison
- Investigate the feasibility of re-introducing caribou; maintain low levels of human use and minimal infrastructure in historic caribou range until it is determined whether the species can successfully be reintroduced
- Manage Flint's Park and the Red Deer/Panther area as two of the four core grizzly bear reproduction areas in the park, with the emphasis on minimizing the habituation or displacement of female grizzly bears with cubs
- Infrastructure will not be provided in the Fairholme Environmentally Sensitive Site and visitors will be invited to share in stewardship of this area by voluntarily limiting their use to one visit or less per year

#### 6.5.5 Indicators of Success

- Sustained or increased use levels for day use trails
- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their backcountry experiences
- Backcountry facilities which are maintained in or converted to a rustic condition
- More youth connected with the backcountry
- Number of transmissions of information to off-site audiences
- Number of visitors receiving park messages on the boat tours
- Presence of reproducing populations of plains bison and, pending the outcome of the feasibility analysis, of caribou
- Achievement of prescribed fire targets
- Grizzly bear habitat security is maintained where it exceeds 78% and improves closer to or above 78% elsewhere
- Continued use of Flint's Park and Red Deer/Panther area as grizzly bear reproductive areas

## **6.6 Middle Bow Valley**

### **6.6.1 At Its Future Best**

The diversity of montane habitats along the middle Bow Valley is valued and recognized as key to the ecological well-being of Banff National Park. Visitors are welcomed to opportunities to discover and experience nature and are provided with the means to share in the stewardship of wildlife and vegetation.

The drive between Banff and Lake Louise epitomizes the scenic splendour of the Rockies. For through travellers it is the most spectacular section of the Trans Canada Highway in the country, with views of the Sawback Range, Castle Mountain and Mt. Temple.

Those passing through to destinations elsewhere can pause at a number of outstanding viewpoints to learn about the park and about the fencing and other measures to ensure their safety and eliminate wildlife mortality. Self-explanatory symbols tell the story of the park's renowned wildlife overpasses and the significance of this conservation success story is highlighted in interpretive media both at roadside pull-offs and through radio and other forms of electronic media.

For those enjoying the park at a more leisurely pace, the Bow Valley Parkway continues its tradition of outstanding viewing of wildlife and scenery. In fact, the area is renowned for wildlife living safely in close proximity to people. The collaboration of Parks Canada and its various partners ensures that the important montane habitat of the middle Bow Valley provides secure high quality habitat for a variety of species, including grizzly bears and wolves, and that mortality problems such as the railway have been resolved. The area is a model of partners working to improve conditions for wildlife and for visitors who come to view them.

The Bow Valley Parkway is popular for cycling, part of a long – distance route connecting Canmore to Jasper through the heart of the Rockies. Public transit has become a popular transportation option, increasingly preferred by visitors over private vehicles. A wide variety of opportunities entice people to stop and learn, and rustic campgrounds, a hostel and commercial accommodations allow visitors to enjoy peaceful overnight stays.

### **6.6.2 Current Situation**

- The area is a broad valley, on both sides of the Bow River; three, roughly parallel transportation routes follow the valley – Canadian Pacific Railway, Trans Canada Highway and the Bow Valley Parkway
- The area provides important low elevation wildlife habitat year round and especially during spring green-up for ungulates and bears. The montane habitats (grasslands, aspen stands, shrub meadows and riparian areas)

along the Bow River floodplain and along the north side of the valley are notable for their diversity, productivity and relative scarcity in the park.

- Work to complete twinning of the Trans Canada Highway is underway, with wildlife crossing structures included. Monitoring indicates that the fencing and highway crossing structure work have been successful even for the most wary wildlife species, changing the TCH from a major fracture zone in the international mountain ecosystem that extends from Yellowstone to Yukon, to an important part of restoring the genetic diversity and connectivity of wildlife populations.
- Fencing prevents wildlife/vehicle collisions along the highway but wildlife mortality along the railway is a significant continuing concern; lower traffic speeds along the Bow Valley Parkway minimize wildlife mortality concerns
- Large numbers of vehicles travel through on the highway and there is little to indicate to them that they are in a national park
- The Bow Valley Parkway is a very popular sightseeing route, with a variety of visitor facilities; traffic use has been stable in recent years; cycling use will increase with completion of the Banff Legacy trail
- Each spring travel is voluntarily restricted along the eastern part of the Bow Valley parkway to provide undisturbed early morning and evening times for wildlife; compliance has been limited and monitoring indicates some displacement, especially of wolves

#### 6.6.3 Objectives

- Visitors use a variety of transportation and accommodation options to enjoy the exceptional scenery and wildlife viewing along the Bow Valley Parkway
- Through travellers on the Trans Canada Highway are aware that they are in a national park and of the international significance of the mitigation measures that have been incorporated for their safety and to protect wildlife
- Wildlife mortality along the CPR is minimized
- Grizzly bears, wolves and other sensitive species occupy montane habitats throughout their life cycles
- Wildlife habitat and movement corridors are maximized to the extent that permanent facilities allow

#### 6.6.4 Key Actions

- With a broad range of stakeholders, develop a detailed action plan that achieves the objectives of the Middle Bow Valley at its best
- Until such time as an alternative management approach is approved, the current annual seasonal restriction to motorized vehicles will remain in place
- Develop and install graphic media on wildlife overpasses to communicate their function. Install an interpretive exhibit at a scenic pull-off along the

Trans Canada Highway to enable through travelers to learn about the innovative approach to ecological restoration and traffic safety represented by the fences and crossing structures. Develop and deploy new media (eg: radio broadcasts, podcasts, etc.) with similar themes

#### 6.6.5 Indicators of Success

- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- Increased numbers of visitors enjoy the Bow Valley Parkway via a variety of transport options
- Through travellers are aware that they are in a national park and understand the function of the fences and wildlife crossing structures, and feel motivated to return and experience the park as visitors
- Grizzly bears, wolves and other wildlife are able to use all available habitat without displacement or impacts from habituation.
- Mortality of female grizzly bears from unnatural sources such as train collisions is minimized
- Grizzly bear habitat security improves

### 6.7 Main Ranges

#### 6.7.1 At Its Future Best

Classic examples of alpine lakes and meadows – Bow Lake, Taylor Lake, Sunshine Meadows, Harvey Pass and many others – draw visitors into the heart of the mountains along the Continental Divide. Here they enjoy ever-changing views of stratified mountains rising vertically for hundreds of metres, the home of sheep and goats. Views of distant Mt. Assiniboine and the Wapta Icefield dominate vistas. Because of the wetter conditions close to the Divide, lush flower meadows are everywhere and, in the fall, the brilliant gold of larch forests. This is a hiker's paradise. Well maintained trails, free of horses, lead into each of the valleys and visitors are aware of the rich mountaineering and ski exploration history of these high places.

A commercial summer transport service at the Sunshine ski area enables access by a wide variety of people into the scenic wonders of the largest expanse of alpine meadows in the park. The Egypt Lake area, with its readily accessible campground and public shelter, is the park's most popular destination in the backcountry and, for many, their introduction to the backcountry. Others choose the comfort of Shadow Lake Lodge or huts managed by the Alpine Club of Canada. Despite the popularity of the trails, grizzly bears occupy all the available habitats in the area and human-bear conflicts are minimal. Wildlife range freely between the west slopes in BC and Alberta through a regional corridor between the Bow and Vermilion valleys.

In the winter, downhill skiers, from near and far, are drawn to the deep powder snow, outstanding vistas and international calibre skiing at Sunshine, and to high quality cross country ski trails. Backcountry skiers head to Egypt Lake, Bow Pass or across the Wapta Icefield. Overnight winter accommodation allows visitors to enjoy the nighttime serenity in backcountry settings.

This area is timeless. A short distance from the trailheads, visitors are immersed in pristine mountain landscapes that have inspired artists, climbers and backcountry adventurers since the advent of rail travel in the late 1800s.

#### 6.7.2 Current Situation

- This area consists of two units: lands southwest of the Trans Canada Highway between the ridge east of Healy Creek and Panorama Ridge and, secondly, lands west of the Icefields Parkway, between the Trans Canada Highway and Bow Pass
- The area is comparatively wet because of its location adjacent to the Continental Divide, with longer winters and deeper snows than the eastern part of the park; this is a major attribute of Sunshine ski area
- The wetter conditions also support lush wildflower meadows and larch forests
- The park's most extensive alpine meadows extend from Sunshine northwards to Healy and Harvey Passes and are contiguous with alpine meadows in BC's Mt. Assiniboine Park
- Because of the wetter soils, horses are excluded from the Main Ranges area
- The Healy Creek-Ball Pass area is an important regional wildlife movement corridor, connecting the Bow and Vermilion valleys; wildlife use is expected to increase as habitat improves in Kootenay National Park as a result of the extensive forest fires in 2003
- Healy Creek drainage provides important seasonal grizzly bear habitat, and pockets of high quality habitat are associated with many of the cirque basins and wet meadows along the divide.
- Grizzly bear habitat security is above the 78% threshold in the Upper Bow LMU and below in the Panorama, Massive and Sunshine/Egypt LMUs
- Because of summer bus access, the Sunshine Meadows are a popular day hiking destination for a wide variety of visitors; the service also provides a convenient departure point for overnight trips, south towards Mt. Assiniboine and west to Healy Pass and beyond
- Egypt Lake is the park's most popular backcountry destination, partly because of the public shelter near the campground
- Numerous busy day hikes, such as those to Bourgeau, Taylor and Boom Lakes penetrate from the highway to cirque basins, but there are few loop trails; a shorter stroll around Bow Lake enables many to enjoy close-up views of Bow Glacier Falls



- Sunshine ski area is an international destination, renowned for its deep, natural snow and long season
- Backcountry skiing is popular at Healy and Bow Passes and across the Wapta Icefield

#### 6.7.3 Objectives

- The Main Ranges are a popular introduction to the park's wilder areas and its alpine climbing and skiing history for a broad range of visitors
- The public shelter at Egypt Lake, Shadow Lake Lodge, and huts operated by the Alpine Club of Canada introduce many to overnight backcountry enjoyment
- The regional wildlife corridor between Banff and Kootenay National Parks remains completely functional
- Grizzly bears continue to use all available habitat, and human-bear conflicts are minimized
- Ski development at Sunshine is sensitive to views from surrounding ridges and meadows

#### 6.7.4 Key Actions

- Maintain all trails to a high standard
- Provide strong thematic links between contemporary experience and the stories of early exploration associated with alpinism, alpine skiing and outfitted wilderness travel
- Restore Egypt Lake shelter and investigate options for additional hut development
- Parks Canada's *Ski Area Management Guidelines*, and Site Guidelines and Long-Range Plans, will guide all future ski area management at Sunshine ski area, including summer use

#### 6.7.5 Indicators of Success

- Continued popularity of trails, campgrounds and the public shelter at Egypt Lake
- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- Grizzly bear habitat security is maintained where it exceeds 78% and improves closer to or above 78% elsewhere
- Sunshine Ski Area has long-term development certainty

### 6.8 Lake Louise Area

#### 6.8.1 At Its Future Best

The Lake Louise area is the heart of the Rockies, where history and wild nature blend, where visitors marvel at iconic views from heritage teahouses.

The world famous scenes of Moraine Lake and the Valley of Ten Peaks and of Lake Louise and Victoria Glacier constantly draw people from far and wide to the highest peaks which are readily accessible. Rugged nature, on an overpowering scale, is safely appreciated from high quality viewpoints for all and from surrounding mountain destinations for those who hike.

A wide variety of interpretive media, provided by both Parks Canada and its partners, tell the stories – of the aboriginal people who first shared this place with visitors, the birth of Canadian climbing, led by Swiss guides, the historic lodges and teahouses, the early days of skiing and the tourism promotion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The mountains visibly tell their own stories, of uplift and glaciation, short summers and long, snowy winters and of how plants and animals adapt.

Summer visitors hike classic trails to spectacular mountain vistas, in the hopes of seeing grizzlies that still roam these mountains because their habitat and travel corridors have been well managed; in fact, the Lake Louise area remains a critical nursery for grizzlies. In winter, visitors and locals alike take advantage of the long cross country ski season, downhill skiing at the large Lake Louise resort and backcountry skiing to historic Skoki ski lodge where it all began.

Traffic congestion has been eliminated with the introduction of a transit system, giving visitors, whether based in Banff or Lake Louise, more leisurely opportunities for enjoying the area. The small village of Lake Louise provides all their basic needs. Those passing through enjoy glimpses of the surrounding mountains from the safety of a fenced and twinned highway, and know that the overpasses help wildlife live in the surrounding park.

Lake Louise remains the number one destination in the Rockies.

#### 6.8.2 Current Situation

- This area straddles a short section of the Bow Valley. The southern part includes Lake Louise, Moraine Lake, Consolation Lakes and their surrounding basins. Across the valley, it encloses the ski area and areas between Pipestone and Baker Creeks north to Skoki Valley.
- The area is the most popular destination in the Canadian Rockies and has the highest percentage of international visitors
- Traffic congestion is a major problem during peak periods at upper Lake Louise and Moraine Lake and is reflected in lower satisfaction scores in visitor surveys
- Because of the iconic views, good access and safe surroundings, the area attracts visitors from every walk of life

- The area has a long winter, with the earliest access to cross country skiing; the Lake Louise ski area is an international destination and hosts World Cup events
- Larch Valley is a very popular attraction in the fall when the larch trees turn golden
- The Lake Louise area is one of the park's four core grizzly bear reproduction areas; numerous management actions have been implemented to improve habitat and travel corridors, however, continued mortality on the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks exceeds the level at which population declines could result
- Twinning of the Trans Canada Highway is being completed, with wildlife mitigation measures
- The Bow River provides important habitat for harlequin ducks, mergansers and other waterfowl

### 6.8.3 Objectives

- Grizzly bear mortality is minimized on the railway and a self-sustaining population exists while human-bear conflict is minimized
- Visitors enjoy the wide range of services which are provided and satisfaction scores are consistently high
- Visitors seeking a "view from edge" experience at Upper Lake Louise and Moraine Lake will expect high levels of use. Management actions will seek to improve these experiences and ecological conditions.
- The Skoki, Pipestone and Baker areas will provide a premier "Rocky Mountain Wilderness" experiences for visitors and secure habitat for grizzly bears.
- Wildlife corridors north and south of the Village are protected; the effectiveness of the Whitehorn corridor is maintained or improved; the Fairview corridor effectiveness is improved.
- Traffic congestion is reduced through mass transit options and other innovative approaches
- All partners contribute to increased story-telling via a variety of media

### 6.8.4 Key Actions

- Work with Canadian Pacific Railway to implement effective measures to minimize wildlife mortality along the railway tracks
- Incorporate measures to restore wildlife habitat and ensure wildlife security as part of all development decisions
- Implement a regional transit system and provide parking areas for private vehicles away from destinations and attractions
- Encourage Skoki Lodge to investigate alternative power generation possibilities

- Expand the range of interpretive opportunities, including stories about the area's ecological and cultural heritage
- Parks Canada's *Ski Area Management Guidelines*, and Site Guidelines and Long-Range Plans, will guide all future ski area management at Lake Louise ski area, including summer use
- Provide opportunities for through travellers to learn about the park

#### 6.8.5 Indicators of Success

- Female grizzly bear mortality remains consistently below the threshold
- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- A successful and popular transit system
- Improved grizzly bear habitat security
- Presence of self-sustaining populations of all wildlife species
- Lake Louise ski area has long term development certainty

### 6.9 Village of Lake Louise

#### 6.9.1 At Its Future Best

Lake Louise is a small mountain village in the heart of the park. Surrounded by spectacular, classic Rocky Mountain scenery, it blends into its surroundings and provides basic services for visitors who have come to experience the iconic views. The small size of the village, the low profile of the buildings and the architectural motifs all convey the message that it is the mountains that prevail and that the village is a tiny enclave in the vastness of the natural setting.

A regional transit system has replaced the former congestion and visitors can leave behind their vehicles to enjoy leisurely, educational visits to Moraine Lake, upper Lake Louise and the Bow Valley Parkway.

All visitors to the classic mountain lakes pass through the village and can learn about the area's natural and cultural heritage at the exceptional visitor centre.

Through its sensitive design and modest range of services, the village of Lake Louise is a fitting base from which to explore the surrounding park land.

The community of Lake Louise is a partner in the delivery of every aspect of the Parks Canada mandate. Important natural and built heritage is protected. Commercial operators in Lake Louise demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship and contribute to the preservation of park values through their commitment to this special place.

#### 6.9.2 Current Situation

- The community and adjacent destinations are the most popular locations in the park for international visitors

- The community's safe environment encourages visits by new Canadians
- Visitor surveys indicate limited perception of value for money
- The boundary of the community is fixed in legislation
- The 2001 Community Plan allows an additional 3,660 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space, to be phased in over a minimum of ten years; 27.12% of the space has been allocated
- The total commercial space cap is 96,848 m<sup>2</sup>
- No additional commercial accommodation may be built
- The limit for commercial accommodation is 2,700 overnight visitors
- The maximum residential population is 2,200
- Anyone living in the community must comply with the regulation governing eligible residency
- The community is managed by Parks Canada, with the advice of a local advisory council

#### 6.9.3 Objectives

- The community of Lake Louise serves as the visitor centre for the west side of the park and for adjacent areas of Yoho National Park
- The community retains its small scale and blends into its setting
- Services are limited to basic visitor needs and other community services are provided in the Town of Banff
- Visitors rate the value of services, facilities and experiences in the Lake Louise area highly

#### 6.9.4 Key Actions

- Establish the community as a hub for the regional transit system
- Retain Parks Canada management of the community
- Integrate the community more closely into the surrounding landscapes e.g. by providing interpretive walks in the community as an introduction to the natural environment
- Work with local businesses to improve visitors' level of satisfaction and perceptions of value
- Provide a 2 km cycle trail between the Bow Valley Parkway and the Icefields Parkway, to complete a new long-distance, off-highway cycle route from the East Gate to Jasper

#### 6.9.5 Indicators of Success

- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- The community introduces visitors to the natural environment
- The community remains within defined growth limits
- Bear-human conflicts are minimized
- A regional transit service is provided and well used

- Completion of the cycling link

## **6.10 Icefields Parkway**

### **6.10.1 At Its Future Best**

Canadians and visitors from around the world who come to the Icefields Parkway in Banff and Jasper national parks find themselves immersed in a dramatic landscape of ice-draped ridges, jagged peaks, turbulent headwater streams, sweeping vistas of forest-carpeted valleys and alpine meadows bright with wildflowers.

Great rivers arise here at the very backbone of the North American continent, born of melting snow and ancient glaciers, and flowing to three oceans.

Timeless pathways along the Bow, Mistaya and North Saskatchewan Rivers guide travellers on a breathtaking journey from valley bottom to two of the highest passes that can be reached by paved road in Canada. In this place, people find some of the wildest and most beautiful landscapes in the world, protected for all time.

The Icefields Parkway is known internationally as an icon of Canada's national park system and of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site.

### **6.10.2 Current Situation**

- A public participation process that involved Parks Canada, a dedicated group of stakeholders and First Nation representation helped envision the future best of the parkway and the content of this strategy
- The Icefields Parkway is one of the best known features of Banff and Jasper National Parks
- Visitors who may not be comfortable with wilderness adventure can travel through the heart of the mountains and along the backbone of the continent, viewing alpine meadows, glaciers and icefields and turquoise lakes
- The Parkway is a leisurely recreational drive, without the heavy commercial traffic of the Trans Canada Highway; it is unfenced, winding and undulating and only two lanes wide with paved shoulders
- Many viewpoints, short trails and rustic campgrounds encourage slow-paced enjoyment
- The Parkway provides access to wilder parts of the park for day and overnight hikers and skiers

### **6.10.3 Objectives**

- The Icefields Parkway will have a single, distinctive identity as a scenic heritage destination that gives all visitors, no matter how they travel, “access to the spectacular.”
- The Parkway will reflect the three fundamental aspects of Parks Canada’s mandate -- education, experience and protection. Maintaining the ecological integrity, cultural resources, and visual integrity of the setting are fundamental for memorable visitor experiences and opportunities to learn and to appreciate the natural surroundings.
- As part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site and two national parks, the Parkway will inspire visitors through its high standards for ecological integrity and cultural resource protection. Key elements of ecological health include maintaining or restoring ecological processes (e.g., fire), aquatic ecosystem health, viable wildlife populations, key habitats and habitat connectivity, and ensuring that human-caused wildlife mortality and disturbance does not increase.
- Concentrating efforts on the most popular day use areas, viewpoints, and campgrounds will ensure a safe, enjoyable experience for visitors and make the most efficient use of investments. Services and facilities at less well-known sites will provide additional opportunities. At both primary and secondary locations, experiences and opportunities to learn will engage visitors with different needs and interests.
- Planning will focus on the quality of visitor opportunities.
- Providing incentives or removing barriers will encourage visitors to stop more often along the Parkway. Better use of existing accommodation, especially campgrounds, means people will be more inclined to stay overnight.
- Maintenance of this scenic heritage highway will focus on experiences and safety rather than through traffic.
- Parks Canada will play a leadership and coordinating role in enhancing visitor experiences, and a stronger role in promoting broad national awareness of the Parkway, Banff and Jasper National Parks and the World Heritage Site, by working cooperatively with relevant destination marketing organizations and with individual operators who provide opportunities along the Parkway.
- Parks Canada will collaborate with stakeholders, commercial operators and partners to develop common key messages about the Parkway and its national park and World Heritage Site status for staff training and for visitors. These groups will build seamless, high-quality visitor experiences by working together to develop products, sharing best practices for presentation and stewardship, and cooperating on promotion.
- Visitors from the region are a primary market for the Parkway. By providing satisfying experiences, the Parkway will continue to resonate with Canadians and visitors from other countries and maintain its international status.
- Consistent and clear information will allow visitors to plan their trip, visit the Parkway and share their memories.

- Discovery and learning will be fundamental. Key themes reflecting the area's environment and culture will shape opportunities and infrastructure. The Parkway is a natural "interactive space" where visitors can gain personal insights into the area's ecological and cultural heritage.
- Parks Canada, Aboriginal people and tourism partners will cooperate in managing visitor opportunities, storytelling, and fostering the comfort, safety and convenience of travelers.
- Monitoring programs for both the parks and the Parkway will help determine the need for mitigation or management adjustments. Of particular interest are the numbers of visitors, patterns of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, wildlife mortality, wildlife conflicts, etc.

#### 6.10.4 Key Actions

This section represents an overview of the detailed action plan prepared as part of the public participation process for the Icefields Parkway.

- Management of the Parkway will facilitate three type of experiences:
  - “View from the edge”
    - Enhance these opportunities through review and renewal of relevant facilities and infrastructure (eg. picnic areas or viewpoints)
    - Address the needs and safety of visitors, improve operational efficiencies and reduce environmental impacts by consolidating, clustering redesigning or revitalizing facilities
    - Increase the presence of Parks Canada staff at popular sites
    - Increase basic awareness and appreciation for the mountain parks and historic sites through interpretive programs/exhibits appropriate to a view from the edge experience
  - “Step into the wild”
    - Provide introductory level self-guided learning and exploration opportunities
    - Create and implement a camping strategy that improves visitor opportunities, considers the needs of a wide range of campers, and facilitates a multi-day camping experience along the entire length of the parkway
    - Maintain the rustic ambiance and design elements that characterize the Parkway
    - Work with Aboriginal groups to determine the potential for a site or sites for ceremonial use along the Parkway
  - “Rocky Mountain wilderness”
    - Work with outlying commercial accommodations and hostels on opportunities for learning that are consistent with the area's themes (see below)



- Ensure basic summer and winter maintenance, highway signs and trailhead infrastructure contribute to the start of these experiences
- Provide opportunities for a continuous visitor experience that engage interest from pre-trip planning to post-trip memories
  - Create a distinct sense of welcome, anticipation, arrival and departure and the three Parkway entrances
  - Create and consistently use a common look and feel for Parkway facilities and information
  - Link visitor opportunities to the following key themes:
    - Backbone of the Canadian Rockies
    - The Wild Side: Habitats and Wildlife of the Canadian Rockies
    - Glaciers and Flowing Waters
    - People and the Land
    - Protected Landscapes
- Work closely with stakeholders to design and implement key actions and monitor success
  - Develop and share best practices for orientation and training programs, education, stewardship, marketing and other activities
  - Identify opportunities to implement strategies with individual organizations (e.g. Interpretive Guides Association)
- Adopt and celebrate stewardship practices and designs that maintain or restore the natural environment
  - Expand the use of meaningful and effective practices such as alternative energy and rigorous wastewater treatment
  - Base communication on key ecological objectives (eg: forest health, wildlife connectivity and corridors)
  - Reduce environmental impact when building or modifying infrastructure (e.g. improve highway culverts for fish passage)
- Retain the quality of the Parkway as a scenic drive and an important link between Banff and Jasper
  - Provide a highway standard that recognizes the heritage drive experience within the limitations of the existing right-of-way
  - Review the needs of cyclists and develop options to enhance opportunities
  - Create realistic expectation about summer and winter road conditions and emergency communications
  - Give priority to highway design standards that encourage a leisurely drive with frequent stops

#### 6.10.4 Indicators of Success

- Visitor numbers increase and include a wide range of Canadians
- An increase in the number of cyclists
- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- New interpretive stories are provided, in a variety of formats, and include information about aboriginal history and about the National Historic Sites

- Online material is provided for those who cannot visit in person
- Wildlife mortality is reduced

## 6.11 North Saskatchewan

### 6.11.1 At Its Future Best

This is the park at its wildest. The terrain is rugged, with extensive glaciers and icefields along the Continental Divide. A small number of popular day trails penetrate the edges (Cirque/Chephren, Glacier Lake, Sunset and Nigel Passes, Parker Ridge) but otherwise trails are few and long, with difficult creek and glacier crossings. Climbers and experienced backcountry travellers enjoy the area in small numbers.

Distant views of the peaks are enjoyed from the Icefields Parkway and enhanced by interpretive stories at places such as the Howse Pass viewpoint. Parker Ridge gives many the opportunity to hike a short trail into the alpine, for spectacular views of the Saskatchewan Glacier, and Mistaya Canyon shows them the power of river erosion.

The area's wildlife rarely sees people except along the narrow strip of the Icefields Parkway; they live in a largely natural and timeless world. Caribou have re-established themselves in areas east of the Parkway.

The area's special features – the historic aboriginal and fur trade route over Howse Pass and Castleguard Cave and Meadows – are shared widely off-site via a variety of media.

Apart from occasional climbing guides leading parties to distant peaks, this area is wild and free of commerce and crowds. It is the place for visitors to escape and challenge themselves, where nature sets all the rules.

### 6.11.2 Current Situation

- This area is located on both sides of the Icefields Parkway, from Bow Pass to Sunwapta Pass
- The Castleguard Cave and Meadows area and the Siffleur Valley are Zone 1 Special Features because of outstanding natural features (alpine meadows, a large cave system, caribou)
- Grizzly bear habitat security is substantially above 78% throughout most of the area and slightly below in the Mistaya and Upper Bow LMU
- There is a small and important area of montane habitat in the vicinity of Saskatchewan Crossing; prescribed fire is being used to re-establish this habitat
- Visitor use is concentrated on the day hiking trails and distant parts see very few visitors

- Access to Castleguard Cave is restricted because of severe safety hazards
- Siffleur Valley is important caribou habitat, though the population was likely extirpated in an avalanche in the winter of 2008/2009

#### 6.11.3 Objectives

- The area provides exceptional backcountry opportunities for adventurous visitors and outstanding day hiking near the Icefields Parkway
- Stories of the North Saskatchewan area are available along the Icefields Parkway and off-site via various media
- Grizzly bears have secure access to all available habitats and conflicts between bears and humans are minimized
- Montane vegetation diversity is maintained through natural processes of fire, herbivory and flooding
- If feasible, a self-sustaining population of caribou re-occupies traditional habitat

#### 6.11.4 Key Actions

- Investigate the feasibility of re-introducing caribou; maintain low levels of human use and minimal infrastructure in historic caribou range until it is determined whether the species can successfully be reintroduced
- Use prescribed fire to restore and maintain montane habitat
- Share stories of the area along the Icefields Parkway and off-site
- Limit commercial activity to licensed climbing guides
- Maintain current low levels of infrastructure to sustain Rocky Mountain Wilderness visitor opportunities and wildlife habitat values

#### 6.11.5 Indicators of Success

- At least 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% very satisfied with their visit
- Interpretive stories about cultural and natural heritage are developed and widely available
- Grizzly bear habitat security is maintained where it exceeds 78% and improves closer to or above 78% elsewhere
- Montane habitat is restored
- If re-introduction is feasible, a self-sustaining population of caribou occupies traditional habitat

## **7.0 ZONING AND WILDERNESS AREA DECLARATION**

### **7.1 National Park Zoning System**

The zoning system is an integrated approach to the classification of land and water areas in a national park. Areas are classified according to the need to protect the ecosystem and the park's cultural resources. The capability and suitability of these areas in providing opportunities for visitors is also a consideration in making decisions about zoning. The zoning system has five categories, which are described in Parks Canada: Guiding Principles and Operational Policies (Parks Canada, 1994).

### **7.2 Zones in Banff National Park**

The zones in Banff National Park remain the same as approved in the 1997 Management Plan.

#### **Zone 1 - Special Preservation**

Zone 1 lands deserve special preservation because they contain or support, unique, threatened or endangered natural or cultural features, or are among the best examples of the features that represent a natural region. Preservation is the key consideration. Motorized access and circulation is not permitted. This plan identifies four Zone 1 areas that cover approximately four per cent of the park.

#### **Clearwater-Siffleur Zone I Area**

The Clearwater-Siffleur Area contains the southernmost Woodland caribou habitat in Alberta and a number of physiographic and biotic resources that are rare in the park. These resources include hoodoos, permafrost, rare plant and animal species, prehistoric cultural sites, elk and bighorn sheep range, and wolf and grizzly bear habitat.

#### **Castleguard Cave System and Meadows Zone I Area**

The Castleguard Cave System is a karst system that is internationally recognized for its physical development, diversity of features, and rare and unique fauna. At more than 16 km, it is the longest cave in Canada and the second deepest cave in the country. The entire Castleguard Cave System contains a notable variety of special features including stalagmites and stalactites, precipitates of gypsum, hydromagnesite and rare cave minerals. The Castleguard area not only contains significant surficial karst features but is also an outstanding example of pristine alpine vegetation.

#### **Cave and Basin Marsh Zone I Area**

The discovery of the Cave and Basin springs on Sulphur Mountain led to the establishment of the Canadian national park system. The Cave and Basin Complex has been designated as a National Historic Site in recognition of its

historic significance. The warm water of the Cave and Basin marsh supports a number of invertebrates and provides a unique habitat for reptiles and amphibians. The Cave and Basin area is the most important habitat for snakes in the park. The Vermilion Wetlands and the Cave and Basin marsh constitute the most productive bird habitat in the lower Bow Valley.

#### Christensen Archaeological Site Zone I Area

This deeply stratified site contains archaeological evidence of at least nine separate periods of occupation dating back some 8,000 years. Protection of not only the artifacts but the entire area is important.

#### Zone II - Wilderness

Zone II contains extensive areas that are good representations of a natural region and that are conserved in a wilderness state. The perpetuation of ecosystems with minimal human interference is the key consideration. Zone II areas offer opportunities for visitors to experience, first hand, the park's ecosystems and require few, if any, rudimentary services and facilities. In much of Zone II, visitors have the opportunity to experience remoteness and solitude. Motorized access is not permitted. Most of the park will be managed as Zone II. Much of this land consists of steep mountain slopes, glaciers and lakes. Zone II areas cannot support high levels of visitor use and facility development. Facilities are restricted to trails, backcountry campgrounds, alpine huts, trail shelters and warden patrol facilities. Sections of the park will continue to have no facilities.

#### Zone III - Natural Environment

In Zone III areas, visitors experience the park's natural and cultural heritage through outdoor recreational activities that require minimal services and facilities of a rustic nature. Zone III covers approximately one per cent of the park; it applies to areas where visitor use requires facilities that exceed the acceptable standards for Zone II. No motorized access is permitted, except for snowmobiles used to set tracks and service backcountry facilities and off-season servicing by helicopters. Access routes and land associated with backcountry commercial lodges are in Zone III.

#### Zone IV - Outdoor Recreation

Zone IV covers approximately one per cent of the park and accommodates a broad range of opportunities for understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the park's heritage. Direct access by motorized vehicles is permitted. In Banff, Zone IV includes frontcountry facilities and the rights-of-way along park roads. Zone IV nodes occur at Lake Minnewanka and the three ski areas.

#### Zone V - Park Services

The Town of Banff and Hamlet of Lake Louise are the Zone V areas; they cover less than one per cent of the park.

#### Environmentally Sensitive Sites

This designation applies to areas with significant and sensitive features that require special protection.

#### Vermilion Lakes Wetlands ESS

The Vermilion Lakes Wetlands support a diversity of vegetation and many rare and significant plant species. These communities are important habitat for a variety of birds and mammals. The area is also important for wildlife movement and contains many special features: lakes, ponds, springs, rare birds, moose winter range, elk calving areas and ungulate mineral licks. The alluvial landforms on the north and east shores of the lakes and adjacent wetlands are also rich in significant archaeological resources from at least 10,700 years ago.

#### Middle Springs ESS

The upper and lower Middle Springs remain the only relatively undisturbed hot springs on Sulphur Mountain. The warm mineral waters create a unique habitat for rare plants and invertebrates. This area is located in the wildlife corridor on the shoulder of Sulphur Mountain.

#### Fairholme-Carrot Creek Benchlands ESS

The Fairholme range area from the East Gate to Johnson Lake is the largest remaining intact block of secure montane wildlife habitat in the park. Human use of this area, particularly during the summer, can restrict wildlife movement. Off-road bicycling will not be permitted and trails will not be maintained in this area. A voluntary access restriction is in place.

### 7.3 Wilderness Area Declaration

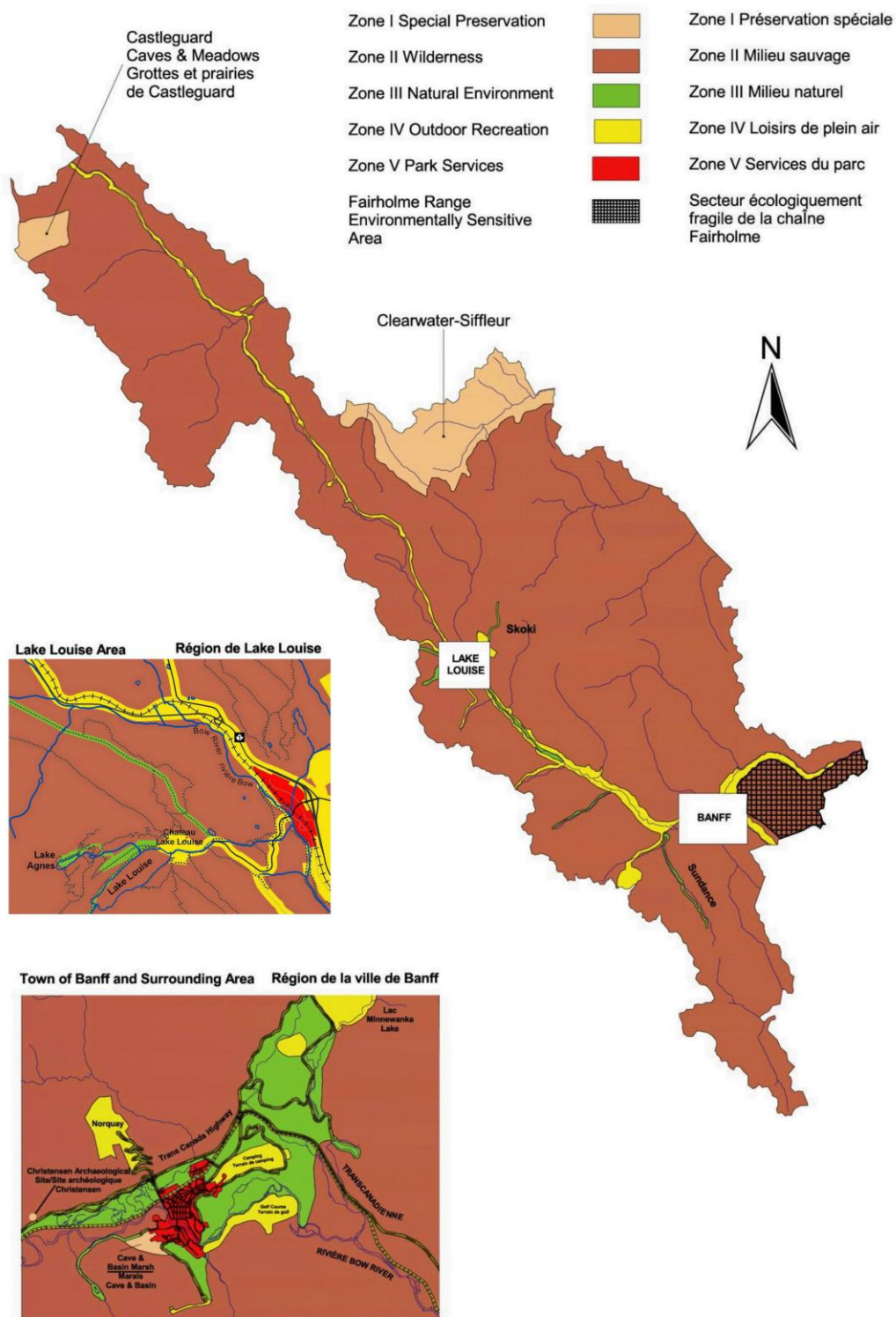
Large tracts of protected wilderness are becoming a scarce and valuable resource. The intent of the wilderness designation is to maintain the integrity of areas that are large enough to preserve their wilderness values. Only development required for essential services and the protection of park resources is allowed in designated wilderness areas.

Most of Zone 2 is registered as Declared Wilderness, in which natural conditions prevail.

An amendment to the Declared Wilderness boundary will be introduced to provide for:

- Permanent lease boundaries for ski areas
- Future gravel extraction adjacent to highways 1 and 93
- Limited future development of new facilities, renewable energy and communications towers.

## Land-Use Zoning, Banff National Park / Zonage, parc national Banff



## **8.0 Monitoring and Reporting**

### **8.1 Condition Monitoring**

Condition monitoring measures the general state of park ecosystems, cultural resources, visitor experience and education programming. A number of key measures are tracked and rolled up into broad indicators and trends, which are reported in State of the Park Reports.

The following indicators will be used in the next State of the Park Report, scheduled for completion in 2014.

#### Ecological Integrity:

- Native Biodiversity
- Climate and Atmosphere
- Terrestrial Ecosystems
- Aquatic Ecosystems
- Regional Landscapes

#### Cultural Resources:

- Resource Condition
- Selected Management Practices

#### Visitor Experience:

Note: Some of these national level indicators are still under development.

- Connection to Banff National Park
- Attendance
- Visitor Satisfaction
- Learning
- Activities and Services
- Visitor Safety

#### Public Education:

Note: These national level measures are still under development.

- Appreciation
- Understanding
- Outreach Education
- External Communications



## 8.2 Management Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring measures the success of management actions by determining if planned actions achieve the intended results. The specific measures to be tracked during the initial 5 years of this management plan include:

To be completed

## 9.0 Summary of strategic environmental assessment

To be completed when draft plan finalized

## 10. Summary of Priority Actions

To be completed when the management plan is finalized.

Related Key Strategy / Area Concept	First 5 Years Actions
<b>Key Strategy</b>	
Showcases of conservation innovation	
Welcome.... To mountains of opportunity	
Sharing the excitement of science and stewardship	
History and culture inside the contemporary experience	
Bringing the mountains to people where they live	
Managing development to enhance the Park environment	
Connecting – reconnecting	
It all started here	
From exceptions to exceptional	
Celebrating the World Heritage Site	
Setting ecosystem priorities	

**Area Concept**

Lower Bow Valley

Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff

Town of Banff

Spray

East Slopes

Middle Bow Valley

Main Ranges

Lake Louise Area

Lake Louise Village

Icefields Parkway

North Saskatchewan

## ANNEX 1 Performance Measurements

In development.

Indicators	Measures	Targets	Reference Section
<b>Program Activity 2: Heritage Resource Protection</b> <i>Outcomes:</i> 1. Natural systems and their component native species function and evolve in a stable condition and continue to represent the Rocky Mountains Natural Regions. 2. Cultural heritage.....			
Native Biodiversity		LMUs Grizzly bear mortality Caribou/bison re-introductions	
Terrestrial Ecosystems			
Aquatic Ecosystems		Water quality targets	
Regional Landscapes		Prescribed fire targets	
Cultural Resource Condition			
Selected Cultural Management Practices			
<b>Program Activity 3: Public Appreciation and Understanding</b> <i>Outcomes:</i>			

Appreciation	Canadians appreciate the significance of Banff National Park and support its continued protection and presentation		
Understanding			
Outreach Education			
External Communications			

#### **Program Activity 4: Visitor Experience**

Connection to Banff National Park			
Attendance			
Visitor Satisfaction			
Learning			
Activities and Services			
Visitor Safety			

#### **Program Activity 5: The Town of Banff** (The Town of Banff is a self-governing municipality)

No net negative environmental impact			
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Leadership in environmental stewardship and heritage conservation			
The management of appropriate use			
A growth management strategy that reflects a maximum annual growth of 1.5% for commercial development			
Proposed insulation and water use efficiency targets in the Town's Environmental Design Guidelines			

## Annex 2 Grizzly Bear Habitat Security by Landscape Management Unit



### Grizzly Bear Habitat Security by LMU

Landscape Management Unit	% <2500m non-secure due to human use	%< 2500m non-secure due to small size	% <2500m secure
Alexandra	6	1	93
Howse	0	2	98
Mistaya	22	2	76
Sask. Crossing	10	0	90
Upper N. Sask.	20	2	79
Siffleur	1	1	98
Baker Creek	14	0	86
Lake Louise	68	26	7
Massive	33	5	62
Panorama	29	4	67
Pipestone	18	1	81
Sawback	32	1	67
Skoki	27	1	72
Upper Bow	18	1	82
Clearwater	1	2	97
Lower Red Deer	0	0	100
Upper Red Deer	0	2	98
Panther	6	0	94
Banff Town	67	3	30
Brewster Creek	24	1	75
Bryant	25	5	70
Upper Spray	23	1	76
Middle Spray	7	0	93
Sunshine/Egypt	47	8	45
Cuthead	20	0	80
Cascade	27	1	71
Minnewanka	15	0	85

N.B. areas above 2500m do not provide suitable habitat because of rock and ice.