

## Good News About Waterton Lakes National Park

*January 25, 2019*



Today Parks Canada committed \$20.9 million to help Waterton Lakes National Park recover from the 2017 Kenow wildfire. AWA congratulates the Canadian government for making this significant investment in one of Alberta's stunning national parks.

"This announcement is especially welcome," said AWA's Ian Urquhart, "if Parks Canada uses these additional dollars to strengthen the ecological integrity of Waterton Lakes." In 2016 Parks Canada ranked Waterton Lakes National grasslands and forests ecosystems as "poor." This financial boost should allow Parks Canada to work hard to improve these rankings. Only the park's freshwater enjoyed a good ranking in 2016.

Today, Waterton Lakes National Park Field Superintendent Salman Rasheed said his Park is considering how to allocate these funds. He told Urquhart the

Park is now assessing and planning its options. Hydrological, slope stability, and avalanche assessments will guide the Park's next restoration steps.

Some key details were missing from this morning's news conference. Parks Canada couldn't say whether these funds will be spent over one fiscal year or more than one year. Nor could Parks Canada say how these funds will be allocated between restoration priorities.

"AWA agrees that visitor services infrastructure should be a high priority," said Urquhart. "But we need to see significant investments into the cultural heritage research, ecosystem monitoring, and on-the-ground conservation priorities.

This restoration program cannot treat these priorities as poor cousins."

**For more information:**

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