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# Banff National Park


## Management Plan

### SUMMARY



Canadian  
Heritage  
Parks  
Canada

Patrimoine  
canadien  
Parcs  
Canada

Canada 

# Banff National Park

## Management Plan

SUMMARY

April 1997

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# Minister's Message

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In Canada, our wild and wide-open spaces are synonymous with the history, the art, the economy and the very identity of our country. When Canadians work together to protect these spaces and build upon our parks system, we are doing much more than preserving our environment — we are preserving the things that make us Canadian and unique to this planet.

That is why protecting and preserving Banff National Park, which is so firmly at the heart of our country's identity, is one of our greatest responsibilities as a nation. As Prime Minister Jean Chrétien said to the World Conservation Congress last fall: "We are determined to protect the ecological integrity of Banff for Canadians and the citizens of the world — forever."

To meet the challenge launched by the Prime Minister, we needed to find the proper tools: a better understanding of the immediate and long range ecological pressures on the park; a better way to integrate commercial and tourist activities in this magnificent, finite environment; a higher level of local and national input in decision making; and a better, clearer vision for the future.



*Banff National Park  
... a place where  
nature will always  
be the integral part  
of everyone's visit,  
responsibility  
and lives.*

The Banff-Bow Valley Task Force was formed because we needed to change the ways we did things in the park. We needed to find a new common ground on which Canadians could build a new future for the park.

After more than two years of extensive research, consultation and discussion, the Banff-Bow Valley Study was released, and many of its recommendations are incorporated here in the new park management plan. The Study made a unique contribution to helping us better understand the role that science plays in making our decisions. And it also made a unique impact by getting people involved, through the Banff-Bow Valley Study Round Table, in defining what the future of Banff should be. We are going to build on those foundations.

The Banff-Bow Valley Study will continue to be a source of inspiration for decades to come. Its conclusions were reached by looking 50 years into the future and trying to picture what the park should look like. This is how we should ensure the future of the park.

The *Banff National Park Management Plan* is the blueprint for action into the 21st century. This

vision could be a model for all our parks, for generations to come. The new park management plan spells out what we will do in the next 15 years and lays the groundwork for more action afterwards.

This Plan makes it very clear that Banff National Park is, first and foremost, **a place for nature**. Ecological integrity is the cornerstone of Banff National Park and the key to its future.

It also recognizes that the park is **a place for people** and **a place for heritage tourism**. Tourism gave birth to this park, and it will always be a place to visit, to experience, and to learn. We now know that this can only be done if we preserve the ecological integrity of the park.

The park is also **a place for community** and **a place for environmental stewardship**. Residents take a special pride in living in the park. Everyone — businesses, visitors, Parks Canada and residents — take a special pride in behaving in the most environmentally friendly way. And Canadians have a special responsibility to be mindful of wildlife when they travel within or through the park's boundaries.

Banff National Park is all of these places, but it is also one, all-encompassing place: a place where nature will always be the integral part of everyone's visit, everyone's responsibility and everyone's lives. The challenge is to find the proper way to do so in the park so that it can remain a wonderful oasis of incredible beauty and a model for sustainable use practices.

The *Banff National Park Management Plan* requires all Canadians to understand that the stresses and strains of human development cannot be allowed to snap back and injure the wild places we are pledged to protect in Banff National Park. It requires us to make open, transparent decisions on the park, and to make decisions that prohibit human use whenever and wherever it can be demonstrated that such use will cause severe environmental consequences.

The Plan makes sure that we do things a lot more cautiously, and with a lot more foresight. This is a landmark document for a major landmark in our nation's history. Banff National Park is Canada's first park, and it is one of the greatest gifts a country could ever share with the world.

On behalf of all Canadians, I would like to express my gratitude to the many people who participated in the development of this Plan and the Banff-Bow Valley Study. You had the foresight and the courage to look into the future and see what we needed to do to get our act together today, to make sure that the park will exist for centuries to come.

Let us act thankfully, and carefully, to preserve and enjoy this cherished creation of planet Earth — forever. It is my fervent hope and desire that this document will help us meet this challenge.



Sheila Copps  
Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister of Canadian Heritage



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# Core Vision

## Banff National Park

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Banff National Park reveals the majesty and wildness of the Rocky Mountains. It is a symbol of Canada, a place of great beauty, where nature is able to flourish and evolve. People from around the world participate in the life of the park, finding inspiration, enjoyment, livelihood and understanding. Through their wisdom and foresight in protecting this small part of the planet, Canadians demonstrate leadership in forging healthy relationships between people and nature. Banff National Park is, above all else, a place of wonder, where the richness of life is respected and celebrated.

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# Banff

## A Park of Many Places

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Established in 1885, Banff is Canada's first and best known national park. It is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site that covers 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> of some of the most spectacular and ecologically significant areas in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. It is also unique in our system of national parks. Its popularity, its ecological and cultural importance, its contribution to the economy, and its services to visitors all serve to create a park that is quite unlike any other protected area in Canada. The challenge of managing this national park reflects this complexity. Park management must consider many points of view — environmental, cultural, social and economic.

### Why a New Management Plan?

Management plans are required by law and are submitted for tabling in Parliament. This plan is the result of a review that began in 1993 and incorporates several important changes that have taken place since the park's first management plan was published in 1988. Among these are the release of *Canada's Green Plan* (1990), Parks Canada's new policy statement *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (1994), and the incorporation of the Town of Banff in 1990. The landmark Banff-Bow Valley Study, a two-year independent investigation into the ecological integrity in the Bow Valley, has provided the most incisive direction to this plan.

The public has played a key role in shaping the revised management plan, beginning with national consultations in 1994. Open houses in Banff followed, along with an intensive two-year

round table process that was part of the Banff-Bow Valley Study.

The revised management plan recognizes that Banff National Park is not one place, but many places. It is a place where people can discover the wonder of the natural environment and appreciate, first hand, the richness of their heritage. It is a place that recognizes and celebrates the past. It is a place where people recognize their role in the ecosystem and their responsibility to act accordingly. It is, above all, a place for nature — where the intricate relationships that make up the web of life continue to evolve as they have for thousands of years.

This document highlights the major elements, key actions and new directions contained within the revised management plan. It is a summary and distillation that does not detail all initiatives contained within the *Banff National Park Management Plan*.



## The Vision for Banff National Park

The park management plan is a key tool for defining and shaping the future of Banff National Park as a symbol of Canada, where nature is able to flourish and evolve, where people from around the world can participate in the life of the park, and where the richness of life is respected and celebrated.

By following the direction outlined in this plan during the next decade, the park will become a place where:

- species such as grizzly bears, wolves, wolverines and cougars flourish in their natural environment;
- there are limits to growth in the Town of Banff, the Hamlet of Lake Louise, overnight accommodation, ski areas, as well as limits on day use for some areas;
- decisions are based on ecological, cultural, social and economic factors and take into account the health of the Central Rockies Ecosystem;
- quality scientific, social and economic information is integrated into decision making, gaps in information are identified and researched;
- the public is engaged in an open, participatory and informative manner in achieving the objectives of this plan;
- the park's *Heritage Tourism Strategy* serves as a model of joint tourism planning;
- historical and cultural resources are protected;
- environmental stewardship supports ecological integrity and heritage tourism, and sets a standard of excellence;
- the Fairholme – Carrot Creek Benchland, the largest area of secure wildlife habitat in the montane ecoregion, is set aside as an environmentally sensitive site; and
- overnight and day use on key trails is managed in a way that helps visitors enjoy their experience and at the same time minimizes their impact on the park.

# A Place for Nature

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The *National Parks Act* and Parks Canada's policies place priority on the protection of ecological integrity in the management of Canada's national parks. In keeping with that direction, the management plan's key actions are designed to reduce stress on the environment and to restore natural processes wherever possible. This will require close cooperation with other land managers in neighbouring jurisdictions on issues such as land use, fire management, wildlife mortality and habitat security. It will also require programs to help people understand the effect of their actions on the ecosystem.

## Vegetation

Ecosystems in Banff National Park have evolved as a result of natural disturbances such as fire and floods. These disturbances help to preserve the diversity of vegetation and habitats that is so critical to a healthy ecosystem. The suppression of fire in the park during the past century has impacted many native vegetation communities and threatens the survival of species like aspen. The integrity of these plant communities is also threatened by non-native plants.

### Key Actions

- Develop and implement with other interested parties a Vegetation Management Plan.
- Restore the role of fire in preserving the variety of vegetation in the park where the safety of the public, facilities and neighbouring lands are not at risk.
- Complete a Bow Corridor Fire Protection Plan.
- Eliminate non-native species that threaten native plant communities.

- Promote a better understanding of the role of fire in the ecosystem.

## Aquatics

During the past century, the aquatic resources in Banff National Park have suffered because of activities such as the construction of dams, the introduction of non-native fish, and the release of nutrients and other chemicals into the water. The management plan seeks to maintain and, if possible, restore natural water flow, water levels, and the biodiversity of the park's aquatic ecosystems.

### Key Actions

- Allow sport fishing to continue where it does not threaten fish stocks or native fish species.
- Identify aquatic systems that can be used as benchmarks to measure ecosystem health.
- Investigate the possibility of removing Forty Mile Creek Dam to restore more natural



water flow in Forty Mile Creek and in downstream wetlands.

- Work with TransAlta Utilities to restore more natural water flow in the Cascade and Spray systems.

## Wildlife

While some species adapt well to the presence of humans, many others, such as grizzly bears and wolves, are more sensitive and avoid areas where there are even small numbers of people. The management plan proposes a variety of ways to

maintain and restore viable populations of these sensitive species.

One important measure will be to improve habitat security. This means making sure that facilities or activities do not interfere with wildlife's ability to use an area for food or refuge. Reducing the number of wildlife that die from unnatural causes and ensuring the protection of wildlife movement corridors is also a priority. All these actions will require cooperation from visitors, residents, businesses, and the people who own or manage land outside the park's boundaries.



# Land-Use Zoning, Banff National Park

Castleguard  
Caves &  
Meadows

Columbia  
Icefields

Saskatchewan  
Crossing

Clearwater-Siffleur

Zone I - Special Preservation

Zone II - Wilderness

Zone III - Natural Environment

Zone IV - Outdoor Recreation

Zone V - Park Services

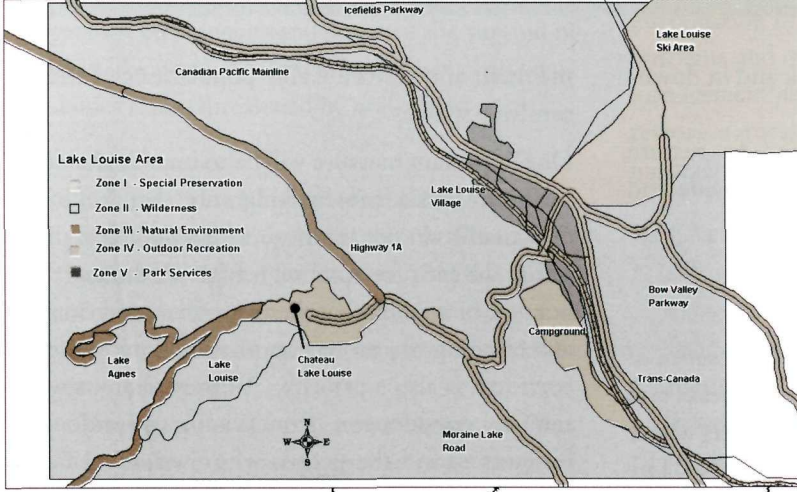
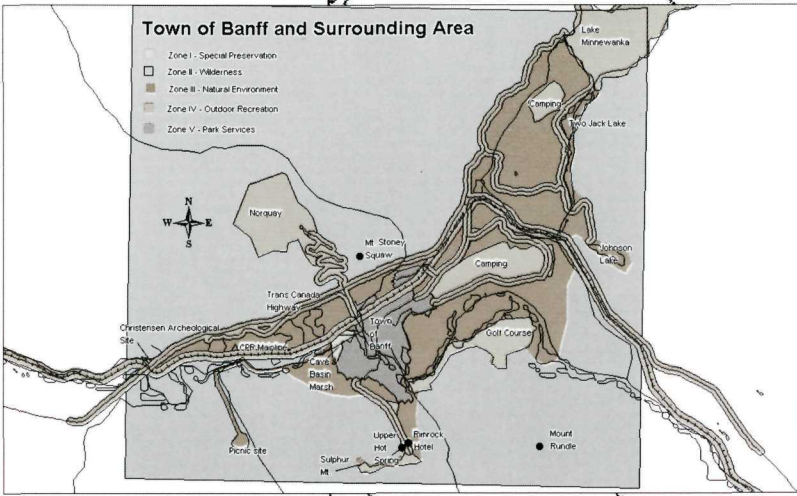
Mentane Ecoregion

Lake  
Louise Area

Banff  
Area

Fairholme Range  
Environmentally  
Sensitive Site

CALGARY



**Key Actions**

- Restore the security of predator habitat, particularly in areas where elk are abundant.
- Continue research on the predator-prey relationship between wolves and elk.
- Continue measures to reduce wildlife mortality on the Trans-Canada Highway and other park roads.
- Adopt a human use management program that will secure habitat for carnivores and ensure maintenance of viable populations.
- Implement measures to restore and maintain secure, essential wildlife movement corridors.
- Adopt measures that allow wildlife to move safely across the Trans-Canada Highway and the railway.
- Improve habitat effectiveness in the Bryant Creek area by closing the trail to mountain bikes beyond Trail Centre.
- Prepare an area plan for the Vermilion Lakes Wetlands.

## **Fairholme – Carrot Creek Benchland Environmentally Sensitive Site**

The portion of the Fairholme Range from the park's east entrance to Johnson Lake is the largest remaining block of secure wildlife habitat in the montane region. This habitat is very rare in the Rocky Mountains. Thanks to its location in the valley bottom, the montane is relatively warm and dry, making it prime wildlife habitat, especially in winter.

**Key Actions**

- Set aside the Fairholme – Carrot Creek Benchland as an environmentally sensitive site.
- Remove the Carrot Creek campsite and the

facilities at the head of the Carrot Creek trail.

- Build a wildlife crossing over Two Jack Canal.
- Keep trails immediately around Johnson Lake open for hiking, and end maintenance of all other trails in the area.
- Prohibit off-road bicycle use.

## **Cascade Wildlife Corridor**

Wildlife corridors are important for many species, particularly those that roam over vast territories like wolves and grizzly bears. Corridors allow these animals to move between suitable habitats both inside and outside the park. An area of particular concern with respect to wildlife movement is the Cascade Corridor between Cascade Mountain and the Trans-Canada Highway. The Timberline Lodge, the road to Mount Norquay, Forty Mile Creek Reservoir, horse corrals, the bison paddock, the airstrip, the road to Lake Minnewanka and the Army Cadet Camp are all located here.

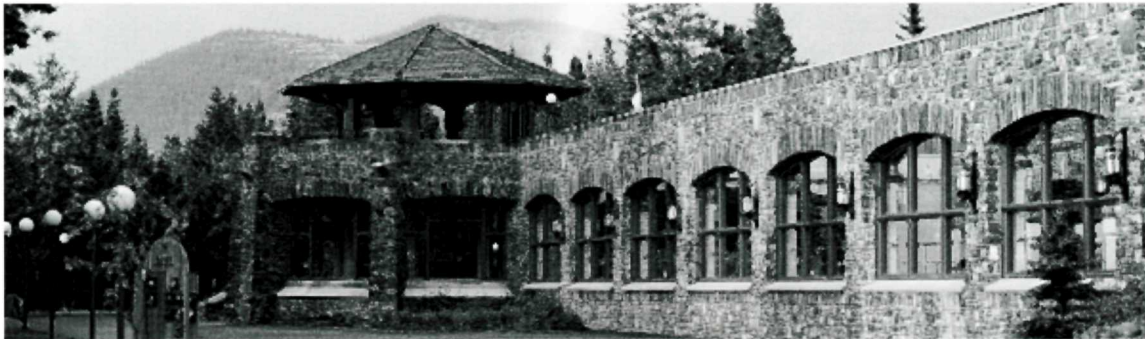
**Key Actions**

- Close the airstrip.
- Begin relocation of the horse corrals by fall 1997.
- Remove the bison paddock at the end of the 1997 summer season.
- Ensure the Timberline Lodge does not expand beyond its current developed footprint and use mitigative measures as required to conserve natural and cultural resources.
- In cooperation with the operators of Mount Norquay, monitor wildlife movement in the area and use information from this study to determine if changes to summer use of the Norquay access road are needed.
- Relocate the Cadet Camp.



# A Place of Historical and Cultural Significance

Banff National Park is almost as old as Canada itself. Its story is, however, very brief when compared with the history of Canada's Rocky Mountains. Archaeological evidence suggests that people came to this area as much as 11,000 years ago. Parks Canada recognizes the importance of understanding and commemorating the people and events that have shaped the park we see today. Historic buildings, artifacts, interpretive programs and seven national historic sites all help today's visitors appreciate the park's rich and distinctive historic and cultural heritage.



## Key Actions

- Complete commemorative integrity statements for the park's national historic sites and a plan for their conservation and maintenance.
- Involve First Nations in identifying, interpreting and protecting the resources that reflect their historic connection to the land.
- Modify the regulations governing the protection of heritage structures where deficiencies exist and offer incentives to support any changes to the regulations.
- Adopt a systematic approach to managing leases and licences of occupation for heritage buildings.
- Cooperate with others to maintain and protect heritage railway stations, in keeping with the *Heritage Railway Stations Policy*.
- Evaluate the potential for the Vermilion Lakes archaeological site to become a national historic site.
- Ensure decisions about the North Saskatchewan River reflect its status as a Canadian Heritage River.
- Nurture partnerships to protect and present cultural resources and events.

# A Place for People

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From the beginning, Banff National Park has been a place for people. It provides inspiration, rejuvenation, and relaxation to millions of people each year. In the years to come, Banff National Park will continue to be a place where residents and visitors can participate in activities that help them understand and respect Canada's natural and cultural heritage. However, the park's annual visitation of more than four million people requires that Parks Canada takes measures to ensure that these people, and the activities they enjoy, do not threaten the park's ecological integrity.

## Heritage Tourism Strategy

Heritage tourism fosters an appreciation of nature, history and culture, and within the national park, includes stewardship of these vital resources. Parks Canada has recognized the importance of forging partnerships with the tourism sector.

### Key Actions

- Work together with the Bow Valley Heritage Tourism Working Group to implement a Heritage Tourism Strategy based on the model described in the Banff-Bow Valley Study.
- Adopt a Code of Ethics based on the code of the Travel Industry Association of Canada (TIAC).

## Frontcountry Management

Banff National Park offers a variety of accessible visitor services, activities and accommodations outside of the communities of Banff and Lake Louise. Parks Canada manages roadside facilities such as picnic sites, viewpoints and an extensive network

of day-use trails and attractions, while overnight accommodation is provided at park campgrounds, outlying commercial accommodation, and hostels. It is important for Parks Canada to offer people the opportunity to enjoy quality experiences and services while at the same time fulfilling its mandate to protect ecological integrity.

### Key Actions

- Ensure, directly or through others, the availability of a range of recreational and tourism opportunities, facilities, and services to enable people with varying interests to enjoy the park.
- Coordinate and foster quality communications through various means including: a Parks Canada interpretive program, establishing a "community of communicators" to ensure park messages are widely available, and by examining the feasibility of building a high quality interpretive centre.
- Keep the impact of facilities outside the Town of Banff and the Hamlet of Lake Louise to a



minimum through various means including: application of the *Four Mountain Park Outlying Commercial Accommodation Redevelopment Guidelines*, not releasing any new land for commercial development, prohibiting construction of new hostels and maintaining the current capacity of frontcountry campgrounds.

## Human Use Management

Parks Canada is committed to a policy of effective human use management in the park that will allow people to enjoy wilderness experiences and activities while protecting the park for future generations.

### Key Actions

- Prepare a single backcountry management plan for Banff, Yoho, Kootenay and Jasper National Parks, and maintain current numbers of commercial activities offered in the backcountry until the plan is complete.
- Phase in implementation of a human use strategy and work with stakeholders to identify priorities and procedures.
- Use techniques such as quotas, relocating trails and campgrounds, moving visitors in groups, removing trail signs and trail head facilities, and reservations to manage human use in the backcountry.
- Apply restrictions, such as temporary closures,

when necessary for public safety or to protect sensitive natural or cultural resources.

- Develop a model for managing day use in the Skoki area and apply it to other locations where appropriate.
- Respect current restrictions on the capacity of backcountry lodges, huts and trail shelters and prohibit new facilities for overnight accommodation.
- Continue to allow the Trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies, the Skyline Hikers, and the two resident horse outfitters to operate group camps in specified locations.

## Ski Areas

Mount Norquay, Skiing Louise and Sunshine are three world-class ski areas that are major attractions for many park visitors in winter. The development and operation of these facilities, particularly during the summer, requires resolution of a number of environmental issues.

### Key Actions

- Ensure the overall direction for the three ski areas respects the long-range plans, including specified capacities.
- Prepare guidelines for operating and maintaining the ski areas, in cooperation with ski hill operators and the public.
- Facilitate and ensure ski hill operators adopt environmentally friendly practices as part of their operations.
- Complete a review of existing summer activities at Skiing Louise within one year; recommend whether these activities should continue and, if so, any changes needed to protect the

environmental integrity of the area.

- Prohibit summer use of the lifts at Banff Mt. Norquay.

## Sulphur Mountain

Because of its long popularity with tourists and its proximity to the Town of Banff, Sulphur Mountain has experienced levels of human use and development that have had an impact on wildlife and on the mountain's natural and cultural resources.

### Key Actions

- Prepare an area plan for Sulphur Mountain and the adjacent sections of the Spray and Sundance Valleys.
- Continue to allow private vehicles to use Mountain Avenue.

## Banff Springs Golf Course Area

The golf course location at the mouth of the Spray Valley, an important wildlife corridor between Kananaskis Country and the Bow Valley, has long affected wildlife movement through this area. Between 100 and 400 elk range here on a year-round basis.

### Key Actions

- Prohibit expansion of the golf course.
- Allow only modifications to the golf course that benefit the environment.
- Keep the golf course unfenced.
- Experiment with road closures to improve wildlife habitat and movement.
- Develop options for managing habituated elk in the golf course area and within the town.



# A Place for Community

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The Town of Banff and the Hamlet of Lake Louise have a long history in Banff National Park. Both communities were established shortly after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway and over the years became centres for visitor services, the location of Parks Canada administrative offices and places where people who work in the park could live.

While playing host to millions of visitors creates opportunities, it also threatens the character of these communities. Growth management will be critical if the unique character and sense of place of the communities are to be preserved.

## Town of Banff

One of the most important events in the town's history occurred on January 1, 1990 when an agreement between Canada and Alberta granted local government to the Town of Banff. Under this agreement an elected Council now administers the town, although the federal government is still the authority on planning, land use, development, and environmental issues.

The following are the main aspects of policy and legislation that apply to the Town of Banff:

- The town community plan will provide for a balanced community whose permanent population will not be more than 10,000 people. By-laws will address the protection of heritage buildings, streetscapes and architectural design;
- The *Incorporation Agreement* sets out the purpose and objectives of the town. These will become part of the park's management plan;

- The municipal government will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the town. Parks Canada will work closely with the town on planning, visitor services, regional initiatives, land use and environmental issues;
- Parks Canada will respect the approvals for Middle Springs II but Middle Springs III and IV will never be developed;
- The town boundaries will not expand;
- The town will continue to show leadership in practising environmental stewardship;
- Parks Canada will work with the Town to develop a working model for managing types and levels of visitor services within the community.

## Hamlet of Lake Louise

Development at Lake Louise began in 1883 with the construction of a siding for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Tourists soon followed and, by the turn of the century, Lake Louise had become



a North American mountaineering centre. Today the community offers park visitors the services, supplies and information they need to explore and enjoy the park.

In 1979, the *Lake Louise Action Plan* described a low-growth scenario that capped the number of guests staying in commercial accommodation. To address the issues currently facing Lake Louise, Parks Canada, in collaboration with the Lake Louise Advisory Board, has begun work on the Lake Louise Development and Use Framework. This document will respect the intent of the original *Lake Louise Action Plan and Development Guidelines*.

### Key Actions

- Examine land use in the community and make changes needed in the areas of housing and transportation.
- Maintain the community's role as a service centre that offers only those services that meet the immediate needs of visitors and residents.
- Lake Louise will not become a self-governing municipality.
- Recover the cost of providing municipal services.
- Limit the capacity of commercial accommodation to 3,500 guests.
- Remove the trailer court by 2005.

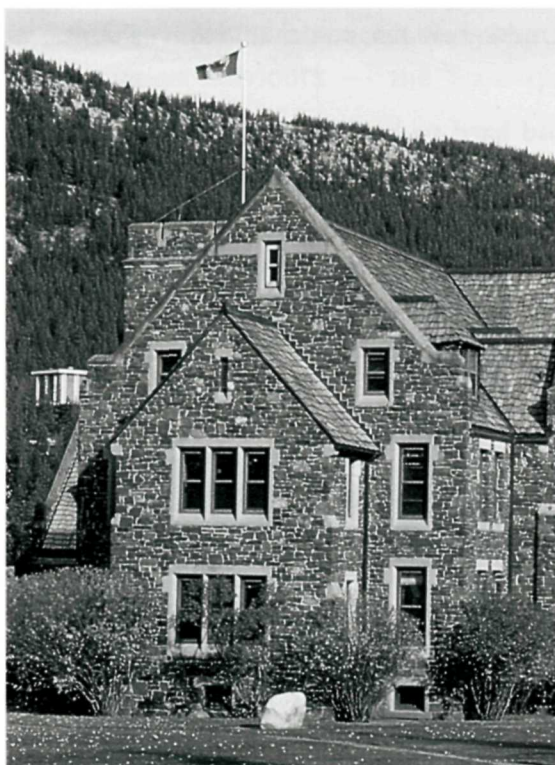


# A Place for Open Management

Banff National Park belongs to the people of Canada. All citizens should have the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect the park, and should feel confident that those decisions are made in a consistent, fair, open, and responsive environment.

## Key Actions

- Adopt a clear and open process for reviewing development proposals.
- Modernize the park's approach to managing leases.
- Set up an annual review including a round table where the public can learn how well the park is meeting the objectives set out in the management plan; this forum will also allow people to review other projects and proposals.
- Invite the public to review proposed changes in park use and to assess these changes against the 10 criteria for appropriate use decision making developed by the Banff-Bow Valley Study Round Table.



- Participate in the key committees that have been set up in the Central Rockies Ecosystem to discuss issues of common concern, e.g., the ecological integrity of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, transportation, regional limits to growth, reducing wildlife mortality, and cooperative research.
- Work with the Town of Canmore to manage the impact of park use on their community and the effects of growth in Canmore on the park and the larger ecosystem.
- Work with other regional agencies to design a coordinated research program and data base.

# A Place for Environmental Stewardship

Environmental stewardship occurs at many levels. Individuals contribute by reducing, reusing and recycling. Large-scale programs to manage waste or contaminated sites require a more coordinated effort. As a World Heritage Site, Banff National Park must meet the highest standards of environmental stewardship. Parks Canada cannot, however, fulfill this responsibility alone. It must rely on communities, residents, visitors, businesses and institutions for their help.

Parks Canada has worked hard to lead by example and to adopt practices that reduce the impact of visitors' activities on the ecosystem.

## Key Actions

- Reduce the use of phosphate in the park.
- Adopt targets for treated sewage that meet or exceed levels obtained by tertiary treatment and ensure they are met.
- Test the effectiveness of wastewater treatment at selected outlying commercial accommodation, campgrounds, etc., and take corrective action where required.
- Ensure the environmental assessments of proposed developments in the park are of a superior quality.
- Clearly outline and enforce environmental standards and expectations.



- Work with the province and neighbouring communities to achieve excellence in environmental stewardship.
- Begin a program to conserve water in the Hamlet of Lake Louise.
- Enlist the support of volunteer organizations, municipalities, commercial enterprises, educators, and residents in developing and implementing a comprehensive stewardship program.
- Work with partners in the region to set up a Regional Waste Management Authority.

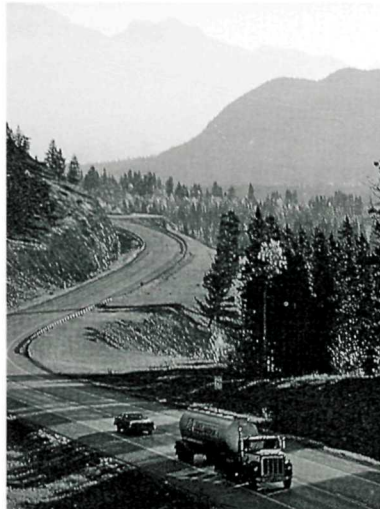
# Transportation

In a national park, transportation is more than just moving people between destinations. This is particularly true in Banff, where roads like the Icefields Parkway offer visitors opportunities to see and explore the park's mountain wilderness. Unfortunately these same roads and railways have a considerable impact on the environment. In Banff National Park, the transportation question is particularly complicated because of the existence of two major, national transportation corridors — the Trans-Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) main line.

Given the economic and social significance of the CPR and the Trans-Canada Highway, and the lack of suitable alternatives, these routes will remain in the park. Ways to reduce their environmental impact must be identified.

## Key Actions

- Complete a review of transportation issues that will face the park to the year 2010.
- Restrict motor vehicle use of the Bow Valley Parkway between Five Mile Bridge and Johnston Canyon from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. daily during the period from March 1 to June 25, and expand scientific knowledge.
- Close Highway 1A to motor vehicles, year-round, from Lake Louise to the Great Divide Picnic Area.
- Allow motor vehicles on the Vermilion



Lakes Road only as far as First Lake.

- Close the western section of the Minnewanka Loop Road in winter, from the intersection with the road to Johnson Lake to the Lake Minnewanka concession, on an experimental basis beginning in the winter of 1997-98.
- With Transport Canada, pursue regulations to govern aircraft that fly over the park.
- Identify ways to reduce the impact of the railway on wildlife mortality and water flow.



# Park Zoning

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Land use zoning is used to establish the desired level of protection, use and facility development on specific park lands. There are five land use zones used by Parks Canada. The map on page six shows how this zoning is applied to Banff National Park.

Zone I lands require 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. This plan identifies four zone I areas.

Zone II lands contain extensive areas that are good representations of a natural region and that are conserved in a wilderness state. Most of the park will be managed as zone II.

Outdoor recreational activities that require minimal services and facilities of a rustic nature are contained in zone III areas.

Approximately one percent of the park is within zone IV where a broad range of facilities are accommodated, including park roads and ski areas.

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

# Environmental Assessment

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The environmental assessment of the revised management plan concluded that it responds to an urgent situation in Banff National Park. The assessment also found that:

- the plan is consistent with the legislation and policies that govern national parks;
- the plan has been prepared in consultation with the public and has been subject to peer review; and
- the proposed actions are feasible given existing technology.

Most importantly, the assessment found that the combined effect of all the actions described in the revised management plan would improve the park's ecological integrity.

