



What We Heard

MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARKS

Executive Summary

Introduction

New management plans are due in 2020 for all the mountain national parks (Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, Yoho, Waterton Lakes, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier). Management plans lay out the future direction for the parks including a vision, key strategies and objectives over the next 10 years. They are developed through engagement with Indigenous groups, stakeholders and interested Canadians.

In early 2019, Parks Canada asked for input on what key considerations and opportunities should be addressed in drafting management plans for the mountain national parks. Each park has produced *What We Heard* summaries and this executive summary outlines the common themes heard between all mountain parks.



Feedback heard during engagement will inform the development of the draft management plans. Once complete, the draft plans will be shared with Indigenous groups for further input as well as posted on the Parks Canada website for stakeholder and public feedback.

About Management Planning

National park management plans guide the long-term strategic direction of all national parks and contribute to reaching Parks Canada Agency's mandate, vision and priorities. Plans are intended to reflect the values and views of Canadians. Engagement processes are key instruments for connecting with Indigenous peoples and other Canadians about the management of national parks.

National park management plans are required by the *Canada National Parks Act* and Parks Canada Agency policies for management planning and reporting. Current legislation requires that every management plan be reviewed by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change a minimum of every 10 years and any resulting amendments be tabled in Parliament. The review and tabling in Parliament of national park management plans for the mountain parks (Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, Yoho, Waterton Lakes, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier) are due in 2020. As many key issues, partners and stakeholders are the same, the mountain national park management plans have been proceeding together for consistency and efficiency.

The management planning process is divided into stages. The first stage defines the scope, collective vision and important priorities to be addressed in the draft management plan. Feedback is a key component of this stage— Parks Canada offered Indigenous groups, stakeholders and other Canadians a variety of opportunities to provide their input and ideas.

The summary of comments below were collected during this stage of the management planning process. This information, along with State of the Park Assessments, government priorities, regulatory and policy obligations, the previous national park management plans, research and trends, are all carefully considered in drafting the management plans.

Who We Heard From

Between January and July 2019, Indigenous peoples, stakeholders and the public were invited to provide feedback through a variety of forums including online surveys, public meetings and workshops, as well as meetings with key organizations such as Indigenous and stakeholder groups. Most of the input came through the *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* webpage, an online engagement platform. While input was received from Canadians across the country, most of the participants were from Alberta and British Columbia. A



significant number of submissions received were identical emails resulting from an environmental advocacy campaign.

Multiple local and regional face-to-face meetings were held with Indigenous representatives, as well as youth, special interest groups, other government organizations and regional stakeholders. Details on participation are outlined in each park summary.

What We Heard

While each of the mountain parks sought input from regional Indigenous groups, stakeholders, partners and other Canadians, common themes emerged from the input provided. The following is a summary of these themes. Detailed *What We Heard* summaries for each individual mountain park are also available below.

... FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Representatives of Indigenous groups are engaged in ongoing conversations regarding management planning in the mountain national parks. Through early discussions, key themes arose regarding the desire for recognition within future management plans that their cultures, spiritual identities and ways of life are rooted in their attachment to and stewardship of the land. A summary of common themes heard are listed below.

Involvement and Park Management

Groups noted that it is important to build strong relationships over time based on open dialogue that involves all levels from Chief and Council to Elders, youth, and community members.

Indigenous peoples want to be involved in decisions regarding park operations and management. Examples of ways to achieve this include collaborating on field work, planning, delivering projects, monitoring and evaluation, as well as incorporating ceremony and following cultural protocols in various aspects of park management.

Indigenous peoples expressed a strong desire for continued involvement in management planning. Groups highlighted that Parks Canada needs to better understand and respect proper protocols when seeking to engage Indigenous groups, have cultural awareness training for staff and show openness to using Indigenous approaches to working together.



Authentic Presentation

Indigenous peoples expressed that the authentic integration and presentation of Indigenous histories, languages, artwork and cultures within the mountain parks is important moving forward. This includes working with Parks Canada as well as with businesses and regional decision makers. They stated that they would like to provide more opportunities for park visitors to learn about Indigenous cultures and histories from Indigenous peoples themselves. Suggested ways of moving forward include improving interpretation, story sharing and signage within the parks, and ensuring Indigenous artwork and crafts within the parks are authentic.

Caring for the Land

Caring for the land came through as a common theme in discussions with Indigenous peoples. This showed up as an underlying theme in multiple areas including sharing stories, histories and cultures in the parks; to being part of park management; to concerns about climate change.

Indigenous groups shared that valuing and profiling Indigenous Knowledge would strengthen appreciation and understanding of the area for all visitors. They also shared the desire to be part of environmental stewardship, studies and assessments as a way to rebuild relationships and ties to the land.

Some Indigenous participants expressed concern about climate change and its environmental impacts. Participants stated that addressing this issue is urgently needed and that Parks Canada should place more importance on taking care of the land for future generations. Some groups also suggested that the parks could be used as places to teach people about climate change.

Access

Indigenous participants emphasized the importance of being able to use and access the lands within national parks for traditional, spiritual and wellness reasons, and identified barriers to accessing traditional resources and locations. Indigenous peoples indicated a wish to work with Parks Canada to improve access.

Employment Opportunities

Indigenous peoples stated an interest in employment opportunities through field-based training programs, contracting and leasing, and assistance navigating the Agency's hiring process.



... FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

A number of central themes were identified during stakeholder and public engagement. These groups shared their thoughts and ideas on a wide range of topics including Indigenous presence within the parks, ecological integrity, visitation levels, and wilderness management. A summary of common themes, guiding principles and values for the future are listed below.

Guiding Principles and Values for the Future

Public and stakeholder respondents stated that protection of ecological integrity should continue as the guiding principle for future management and decision-making. They wish to see clear consideration for ecological thresholds and for Parks Canada to use precautionary measures where these thresholds are not known. It was suggested that park management plans should recognize the importance of ecosystem services that national parks provide to areas beyond their boundaries.

Other key principles that respondents wanted to see applied to future park management actions and decisions included:

- using science as a basis for decisions;
- ensuring public interest takes precedence over private interests;
- being publicly transparent and accountable;
- fostering accessibility and inclusivity;
- using landscape-level management and working across boundaries;
- ensuring quality verses quantity (of experiences); and,
- engaging respectfully with Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Presence

Many respondents recognized the importance of supporting Indigenous peoples in reconnecting to their traditional territories in the park, as well as having their histories, cultures and languages as a visible presence in the park. Respondents wish to see meaningful participation of Indigenous groups and the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge in park management.

Climate Change

Climate change was one of the topics most frequently mentioned by public and stakeholder participants. Understanding and adapting to the effects of climate change on human use of the parks and on all natural systems was cited as a key issue.



Respondents expressed that this should be a key consideration for all future park planning and decision-making.

There was a desire to see Parks Canada establish itself as a leader in climate change research and education. Potential courses of action which respondents flagged for Parks Canada's attention included:

- Placing emphasis on fire, watershed and conservation management;
- Taking action to become a leader in green initiatives (example: fossil fuel use, encouraging businesses to also take action);
- Linking local changes to larger trends and patterns and sharing this information widely;
- Using research in the mountain parks to contribute to an understanding of the impacts of climate change within the park boundaries and to guide collaboration with governments and partners;
- Improving education on climate change—there are concrete examples that can be pointed to within the mountain parks; and
- Encouraging businesses to adhere to higher environmental protection standards.

Ecological Integrity

A majority of respondents from the public and stakeholder groups clearly supported ecological integrity as Parks Canada's first and foremost consideration in managing the mountain parks. Overall, respondents wanted to see Parks Canada make decisions guided by ongoing research and monitoring programs, and based on landscape-level management principles. Specific areas of suggested work are outlined below.

Respondents expressed concerns about the impact of visitors on the landscape and wildlife and wanted to see more protection of intact ecosystems. Suggestions to Parks Canada included: limiting access and managing visitation through seasonal areas closures, visitor quotas and public education. It was also stated that wildlife habituation and human-wildlife coexistence should also be a focus. Respondents wanted to see Parks Canada collecting more data on human-wildlife conflicts, and continuing to educate visitors on the significance of the parks, their ecosystems and how to enjoy them in a respectful manner.

The public expressed a concern about wildfire risk in relation to townsites, park use and visitor safety.

Respondents wanted to see Parks Canada taking action to prevent new threats and manage existing concerns from invasive species, insects and disease, and contribute to the long-term recovery of species at risk.

On lands adjacent to the parks, there were concerns about the effects of industrial development, logging, commercial tourism and the spread of invasive species. It was suggested that Parks Canada should work with other parks and across boundaries with



neighbouring jurisdictions to tackle important ecological challenges and promote environmental stewardship at a landscape level.

Visitation Levels and People Management

While the protection of healthy ecosystems was of high importance to stakeholders and the general public, providing quality visitor experiences was also seen to be important. There was a desire to maintain authentic, nature-based experiences while improving accessibility (including but not limited to affordability, access for varying physical abilities and ease of access to certain areas of the parks). Respondents also wished to see Parks Canada respond to changing demographics of visitors, evolving recreational uses, new technologies, and increasing use of social media.

While perspectives varied significantly, managing the volume of visitors based on ecological carrying capacity was important to respondents. The specific sentiment expressed was that visitation and use of the park should not occur at the expense of natural resources. More popular sites within the parks were identified as overcrowded and there was concern regarding vehicle congestion on the roads and at these sites. Numerous tools or tactics for managing visitation levels were mentioned, including: increasing reach of public transportation, visitation caps, seasonal/area restrictions, differential fee structures, reservation systems, lotteries, reducing private vehicle access at some locations, etc. However, other respondents stated that there were already too many restrictions in the park and users' right to access all parts of the park should not be further impeded.

Visitor Education

Stakeholders and respondents from the general public recognized the importance and positive impact visitor education can have on the parks, and suggested that the focus should be placed on educating visitors on the significance of the parks and on how to enjoy them in a respectful manner. There was a desire to connect visitors to these special places and inspire them to be park stewards. Respondents offered a variety of ways in which Parks Canada could achieve these connections: youth programs, citizen science, story-telling, regular communication on how park management decisions are made, providing digital information that is easy to share and having more Parks Canada staff on the ground to interact with visitors.

Respondents wanted to learn more about topics such as Indigenous histories, cultural heritage, fire ecology, wildlife and climate change.

Development and Wilderness Management



Perspectives on development were varied from stakeholders and the general public. Overall, there was emphasis on low impact, nature and culture-based activities as more conducive to the character of national parks than infrastructure-based activities.

Improving, restoring and maintaining existing infrastructure, such as trails, bridges and campgrounds, was important to respondents. While many respondents felt that the current developed footprint should be maintained, there was some recognition that a modest increase in visitor infrastructure (specifically campsites, campgrounds and backcountry lodges) could be considered in some parks. There was support for continuing with limits to commercial development, maintaining fixed boundaries for ski areas and communities and the eligible residency guidelines in Banff and Jasper.

Transparency

Respondents from stakeholder groups and the general public urged Parks Canada to base management planning decisions on transparent, two-way communication with Indigenous groups, local residents, stakeholders and other Canadians.

Detailed Summaries of What We Heard

While common themes emerged from the mountain parks, each place has its unique set of opportunities and challenges. The following links contain summaries of input received by each mountain park.

- [BANFF NATIONAL PARK](#)
- [JASPER NATIONAL PARK](#)
- [YOHO NATIONAL PARK](#)
- [KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK](#)
- [MOUNT REVELSTOKE AND GLACIER NATIONAL PARKS](#)
- [WATERON LAKES NATIONAL PARK](#)

Next Steps

This *What We Heard* document is a summary of the comments and perspectives shared during the first round of discussions with Indigenous groups, stakeholders and the public in the spring/early summer of 2019. This feedback is an integral part of management planning. Views and input from various people and organizations, including Indigenous peoples, local communities and visitors play an important role in helping to shape and develop park management plans.



Each park will draft their respective management plans over the fall/winter of 2019. Comments received will help identify key issues and guide the priorities to be addressed in the plans. This information, along with State of the Park Assessments, Parks Canada mandate and vision, government priorities, regulatory and policy obligations, previous national park management plans, research and trends, are all carefully considered and will inform the development of the individual mountain park management plans. At this stage, the direction outlined in the draft plans will also undergo a strategic environmental assessment to understand the cumulative impact of the plan's direction and actions on the environment.

Once the draft management plans are complete, they will be made available for continued Indigenous comment and a second phase of stakeholder and public engagement and in early 2020. Following the second round of discussions with Indigenous groups, stakeholders and the public, Parks Canada will consider this feedback as the park management plans are refined and finalized. The final management plans will be brought through the Parks Canada management planning approval process and recommended to the Minister for final approval and tabling in Parliament in fall of 2020.

Management planning is an example of how Parks Canada is involving Canadians in implementing its main priorities as identified through the Minister's Round Table: to **Protect and Restore** national parks and historic sites; to enable people to further **Discover and Connect** with national parks and heritage; and to **Sustain** these places for generations to come.





Banff National Park

The Engagement Process

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Discussions about Banff's future, the next national park management plan, and preferences for engagement in the development of a new plan, began in 2016 at the Banff National Park Annual Planning Forum. Working from that initial input, the planning team identified engagement activities and discussion questions for the scoping phase of the Banff National park management plan review.

Providing the framework for all face-to-face meetings, as well as the online survey, the discussion questions focused on:

- the vision for Banff National Park, including what components of the park and its experience are most important to protect going forward;
- which trends might affect future park management;
- the values and principles that should guide future park management;
- topics that Parks Canada should address in the planning process;
- which aspects of the current plan/approach should continue in future; and
- ways and means to work together going forward.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

The engagement activities were carried out between January 29 and June 13, 2019, and resulted in about 4,500 written and oral responses, as summarized below:



Activity	Responses
Face to Face Meetings (10)	853
Online Survey	1269
Online / email comments - Individual	195
Email comments - Organizations	7
Advocacy Campaign Submissions (identical comments sent online)	2191
Total	4515

The responses ranged in length from a few words to multi-page submissions. About 48% of the comments were identical email submissions appearing to originate from an advocacy campaign initiated by an environmental, non-governmental organization. Every submission and comment was carefully read and considered by the planning team in conducting its analysis.

Some individuals participated in more than one activity (and submitted more than one response), consequently the number of participants is estimated at 18% less than the total number of responses, or about 3 700 people. Nearly all individual participants seemed familiar with Banff National Park, having either visited (often multiple times) or worked in the park. Most responses originated from Alberta, however responses were received from seven Canadian provinces and from the United States.

Ten face-to-face meetings were held where participants included: Indigenous representatives from Treaties 6, 7, and 8, the Métis Nation of Alberta; the Pespeswellkwe Nations from B.C.; other government organizations; youth; special interest groups; and Banff's Round Table of stakeholder representatives.

What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

... About Banff's Future

Modern day Banff sits in the Treaty 6, 7 and 8 territories, the homeland of the Métis Nation of Alberta, as well as the traditional territories of many other Indigenous groups originating on both sides of the Continental Divide. Comments were received from Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, Montana, Pespeswellkwe and Treaty 8 Confederacy First Nations, as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta.

Indigenous representatives focused on the fact that modern-day Banff National Park, is a part of their long-standing traditional territory; consequently, in the future,



Indigenous histories, languages, cultures and perspectives should be accurately and honestly reflected throughout the park and in the next management plan.

Authenticity was cited as being very important to Indigenous groups, with artworks, crafts and symbols made by non-Indigenous peoples, currently being displayed / sold in Banff, seen as disrespectful. Indigenous representatives expressed the hope that businesses and the municipal government would work more closely with them in future, to ensure that authentic Indigenous products and information was part of the Banff 'brand' and a value-added component of the park experience.

Indigenous representatives also expressed the view that in the future, place names of local landmarks should be changed to Indigenous names, and there should be consistent acknowledgement throughout the park that Indigenous peoples were living here before Europeans arrived. They also commented that there should be more opportunities for park visitors to learn about Indigenous culture and history, especially from Indigenous peoples themselves. It was further noted that capacity-building and employment of Indigenous peoples is central to their future inclusion in the life and management of the park.

... About Guiding Principles and Values for the Future

Some Indigenous representatives shared the view that the next national park management plan should consider the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples*, and the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada report, in setting any guiding principles or determining any future actions.

Other representatives emphasized that collaboration between Indigenous groups and Parks Canada was critical for the future, and this should involve all levels—Chief and Council, Elders/knowledge keepers, technicians, youth and communities. Relationship building was recognized as important to building effective collaborations and takes time. It was noted as important for both sides to keep an open dialogue and to positively influence our respective decision-makers.

Assessment and protection of culturally important places and items was also mentioned as an important principle.

It was also flagged that the cultures, spiritual identities, and ways of life of Indigenous peoples is rooted in their connection to the land, and the next management plan should recognize this relationship and Indigenous stewardship of the land, as well as reflect the potential for Indigenous communities and Parks Canada to work together on environmental stewardship, studies and assessments.



... About Climate Change

Concern was expressed about climate change and its environmental consequences. It was stated that addressing climate change in the next plan is urgently needed, and that Parks Canada should focus less on “economics” and visitors, more on the importance of taking care of the land. It was stated that if the wrong decisions are made in the coming years, the next generation will be born into a landscape that is not “hospitable”.

... About Other Matters

Comments from Indigenous representatives also touched on the following:

- The need for Parks Canada and others in Banff to understand and respect the proper protocols when seeking to engage Indigenous groups, and the importance of seeking different or mutually beneficial ways of working together, such as Indigenous approaches, rather than the usual western or “colonial” processes;
- The need for Parks Canada, other levels of government and businesses to have cultural awareness training with each Indigenous group so there is an understanding of the proper protocols (including ceremonies) and the historical and value context of Indigenous peoples;
- The need for Parks Canada to ensure early discussions with each nation as to how to continue management plan discussions, and that these discussions happen in a way that is inclusive and respectful of elders (Parks Canada has committed that these discussions will continue);
- The role and responsibilities of the Banff Indigenous Advisory Circle should be formalized and recognized in the next park management plan;
- The need for Indigenous peoples to be able to use and access the land for traditional, spiritual and wellness reasons is important; and
- The need for continued inclusion of Indigenous peoples in the management planning process.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

... About Banff's Future Best

Stakeholders and the general public expressed a desire to see Banff retain its reputation as a place of great natural beauty and wilderness. They also commented that Banff in the future should be a place that is:

- a showcase for ecological management and cultural identity;
- protected and managed as part of the broader landscape;
- accessible to all (including affordability, right to enter, and accommodating for those of different physical abilities);



- known for its authentic, nature-based experiences, and well maintained facilities;
- a model of respectful, sustainable use and/or growth by residents, visitors and businesses; and
- a welcoming, comfortable and safe place for Indigenous peoples to relate their histories and practice their cultures, and engage in the day-to-day life and management of the park.

Some respondents expressed the view that accessible, untouched wilderness and natural landscapes, are key to what makes Banff, Banff. Any loss of large tracts of undeveloped areas or ecosystem impairment, would result in Banff failing in its core mission as a national park and its sense of place would irrevocably change. Other respondents stated that if Banff were managed firstly as an ecological place, its reputation and desirability as a destination, and its social relevance and support from Canadians, would follow.

... About Trends that Might Affect Future Park Management

Respondents commented on future trends largely as an intensification of current ones; specifically, continuing globalization, population growth and demographic shifts, and climate change were collectively predicted to lead to increasing visitation, pressure for development, and challenges to managing for ecological integrity. Concerns were also expressed that increasing visitation may also drive up the cost of visiting the park, potentially making it less accessible to the ‘average Canadian’.

In tandem with globalization and demographic shifts, respondents also commented on the fact that visitor expectations, values and needs would also shift, and this in turn would have a trickle-down effect on patterns of use in the park, appreciation and understanding of the place, safety practices, and sense of responsibility. Accordingly, some respondents urged Parks Canada to put more effort into educating visitors on the park’s significance and how to use it in a respectful manner.

Other respondents flagged that future park management was also likely to be affected by: changes in technology and transportation; shifting government priorities; and public and Indigenous expectations for greater engagement and influence in decision-making.

... About Which Current Approaches and Initiatives Should Continue

Respondents commenting on this topic were largely of the view that ecological integrity must continue as the first priority in making decisions, along with limits to commercial development. Some also made specific mention of initiatives from the last plan that should continue including: bison restoration; wildlife corridor restoration; biking opportunities, and effluent treatment leadership targets. Other respondents noted that Parks Canada’s public transportation efforts of recent years (e.g. public transit,) should continue as a means to ease congestion, improve access and reduce our carbon footprint.



... About Guiding Principles and Values for the Future

Consistent with the views expressed in other areas, respondents stated that protection of ecological integrity should continue as a guiding principle for future management and decisions, with clear consideration for ecological thresholds and use of the precautionary principle where these thresholds are not known.

Some respondents held the opinion that Banff's significance extended beyond its boundaries to the broader landscape and perhaps even in the world. Specific comments on this topic noted that Banff National Park provides ecosystem services far beyond its own boundaries, including provision of clean water to millions of people in Calgary and other downstream communities, and that this role and responsibility should be recognized in the next management plan.

Other key principles that respondents wanted to see applied to future park management actions and decisions included:

- using science as a basis for decisions;
- ensuring public interest takes precedence over private interests;
- being publicly transparent and accountable;
- fostering accessibility and inclusivity;
- applying landscape-level thinking to decisions; and
- ensuring quality verses quantity (of experiences).

Some respondents also noted that a principle whereby Parks Canada would engage with Indigenous peoples on their own terms and in their own timeframes would be important if there is to be progress in reconciliation.

... About Climate Change

Climate change was one of the most frequently mentioned topics. The overall sentiment expressed by respondents was that climate change is already and /or will dramatically change human use and natural systems, and that this should be a key consideration for all future park planning and decision-making. Some respondents were of the opinion that Parks Canada's planning and response to climate change were already lagging behind.

Other respondents were of the opinion that Banff National Park is the ideal venue for Parks Canada to establish itself as a leader in research and education on climate change effects on hydrology, glaciology, alpine and subalpine regions, species distribution changes, and the links between climate change impacts and human activities, use, and development.

Some respondents encouraged Parks Canada to both demonstrate and foster stewardship to reduce contributions to climate change by itself, park residents, visitors and businesses. This included Parks Canada influencing or even requiring park businesses to adhere to higher standards in respect of waste generation, energy



consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and water treatment / conservation. It was recommended that the next national park management plan should place additional emphasis on watershed conservation and management, and fire management.

... About Visitation Levels and People Management

Visitation was another frequently commented upon topic. Perspectives varied significantly on this subject; however, the prevailing view was that Banff National Park is “overcrowded”, with experiences on park roads and parking lots, in and around the communities of Banff and Lake Louise, at popular day-use areas, and on front-country trails in the summer, being cited as examples. In the opinion of some respondents, high levels of visitation increase the pressure for more development in the park. Comments on this topic also noted that visitation and use of the park should not occur at the expense of natural or cultural resources, and ideally should reflect respect and appreciation for the place.

Some respondents expressed the view that current visitation levels are already damaging to the environment or have the potential to, and that further increases are not ecologically sustainable. Parks Canada was encouraged to identify both ecological and visitation thresholds (for the park as a whole and/or for specific areas in the park), and to develop strategies to actively manage visitors within the identified capacity. Numerous tools or tactics for managing visitation levels including: caps, seasonal / area restrictions, differential fee structures, reservation systems, lotteries, etc. were also mentioned, however other respondents stated that there were already too many restrictions in the park and users’ right to free access should not be further impeded.

... About Development

Development was another popular topic, and it was often tied to comments about visitation. Perspectives on the level of development in Banff National Park varied, with some respondents expressing the view that the park was overdeveloped, others expressing the idea that there was more development needed, and still others commenting that the level of development was about right. Some respondents appeared to see the re-development within the town of Banff as an indicator of high / increasing levels of development in the park as a whole.

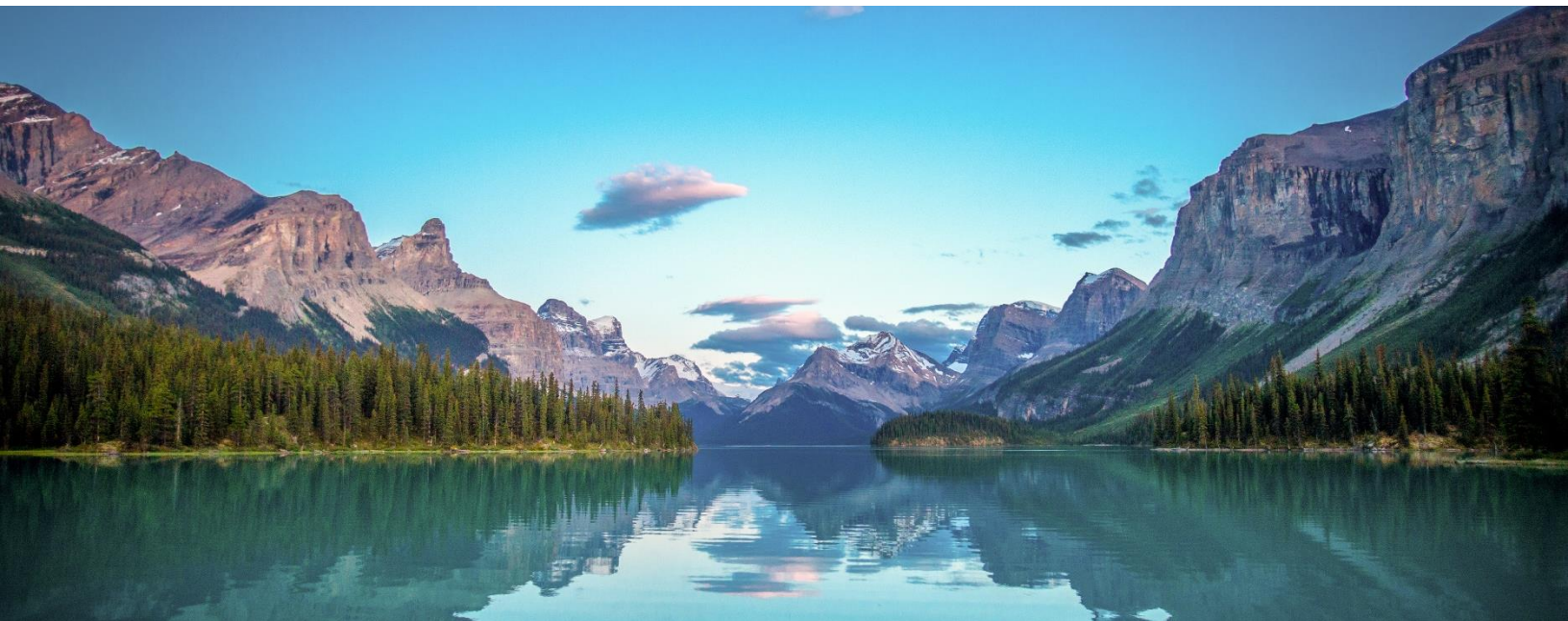
Respondent comments on this subject indicated support for:

- Continuing (or implementing) limits to commercial development and for concentrating development in specific areas (Note: While some respondents understood that limits to commercial development were already in place, others did not appear to be aware that limits existed);
- Maintaining the fixed boundaries for ski areas, the communities, and the “population cap” for the Banff town site (Note: there is no specific “cap” on the town’s population);



- Parks Canada challenging the business community to respond to visitor demand and measure its success through means other than development and/or growth;
- More emphasis on low-impact, nature and culture-based activities instead of infrastructure-based activities; and
- Ensuring that any development that does occur is sympathetic to Banff as a natural park and protected area, and not a “theme park.”





JASPER NATIONAL PARK

The Engagement Process

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Engagement and consultation activities for the scoping phase of the management plan review for Jasper National Park were held from January 29 to May 14, 2019.

Parks Canada asked Indigenous groups, stakeholders and the public three main questions:

- What should we know about seven key topics identified by Parks Canada? Topics were: Ecological Integrity, Visitation, Wilderness Management, Managing Development, Community of Jasper, Indigenous Relations and Climate Change
- What other topics should we consider during the planning process?
- How can we involve you in the planning process going forward?



Parks Canada reached participants through a variety of activities:

Activity	Number of Participants
Website with feedback forms	1,225 visited the website 651 downloaded documents / visited 2+ pages 184 provided comments
Public meetings (Jasper and Edmonton)	95
Meetings with Indigenous groups	70
Meetings with stakeholder organizations	34

The engagement website was the main venue for public comment submission and was organized around seven key topics: Ecological Integrity, Visitation, Wilderness Management, Managing Development, Community of Jasper, Indigenous Relations and Climate Change.

The seven key topics were also used to frame discussions on management planning at public meetings and meetings with stakeholder organizations. Similar information was presented at three meetings with Indigenous groups, with focused discussions on subject themes that fall under the umbrella of Indigenous Relations, such as access to the park and Indigenous Knowledge.

Parks Canada raised awareness of the engagement website at outreach events outside the park, at public meetings, and through direct communications with stakeholders, a direct mail out in the community of Jasper and social media posts. Thank you to organizations who shared information about the scoping phase on their websites and with their membership.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

By the end of the scoping phase of the management plan review, Parks Canada had received:

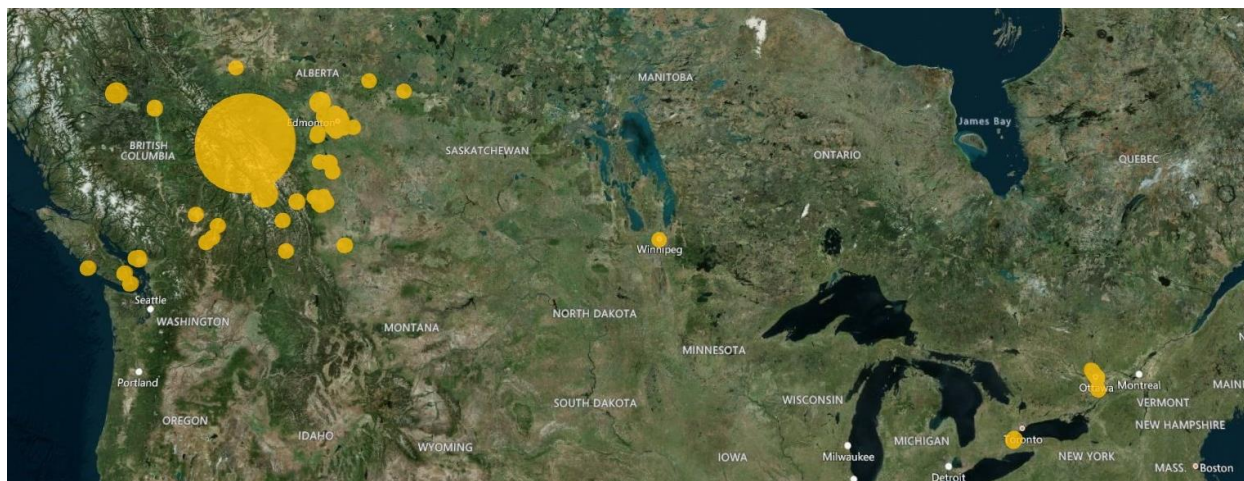
- 595 comments from the public through the engagement website;
- 5 written submissions from organizations and individuals;
- 500 identical written submissions from members of a non-governmental organization;
- Feedback from representatives of 17 Indigenous groups; and
- Feedback from public meetings in Jasper and Edmonton and from meetings with stakeholders representing four governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Website participants were primarily from Alberta and British Columbia. Residents of Jasper comprised almost a third of all participants with other clusters in the Edmonton



and Calgary areas. Approximately 4% of engaged participants were from other provinces in Canada.

MAP – *Geographical distribution of website participants from Canada*



What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Parks Canada received feedback from Indigenous groups about seven key topics, as well as additional topics outlined in the table below.

List of preliminary Indigenous Relations topics identified by Parks Canada	List of additional topics identified by Indigenous groups
Involvement in park management and decision-making Indigenous Knowledge Access to the park and park resources Cultural programming Resource conservation activities Economic and employment opportunities Reconciliation Participation in park operations Indigenous languages	Indigenous presence Spiritual connection and wellness Cultural protocols Co-management Caribou Indigenous science and Western science Cumulative effects United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples & Consultation Other ecological integrity topics

Indigenous presence

Indigenous peoples would like more opportunities for participation in the park and to improve public awareness of their history and cultures.

Parks Canada should encourage public engagement with Indigenous peoples in the park through interpretive programming, signage, and other personal and text-based interactions.



Authenticity of content was a concern, as was ensuring multiple narratives and the distinctiveness of Indigenous groups are presented (“telling our own stories”).

Parks Canada should facilitate Indigenous employment opportunities through field based training programs, entrepreneurship and assistance navigating the Agency’s hiring process.

An Indigenous interpretive or cultural center was proposed.

Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous Knowledge should be incorporated into park operations and management through, for example, field work, community reviews, following cultural protocols, and incorporating ceremony.

Access

There are still barriers to access to traditional resources and locations within the park that are essential for spiritual (re)connection and wellness.

Park management

Involvement in planning throughout the lifespan of projects is desired.

Indigenous groups would like to move beyond an advising role to collaborate on issues such as wildlife conservation and managing development.

Future involvement in management planning

There is strong interest in participating in draft plan development.

Inviting representatives from all the communities with interests in Jasper National Park to meet together was the preferred way of sharing information and discussing management planning.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Parks Canada has organized the feedback received from the public and stakeholders under seven main headings, reflecting the seven key topics identified at the outset of the scoping phase. Many of these topics are inter-related and similar comments (or themes) were frequently provided under multiple headings. We have, however, reported on each theme under only one topic heading. For example, comments about limiting development were made under Ecological Integrity, Visitation and the Community of Jasper, but have been consolidated and are described under Managing Development.



Generally speaking, there were only slight numerical and content differences between comments received from Jasper residents and non-residents on all seven key topics and sub-themes.

Visitation

Visitor experience

There are a range of perspectives about Jasper National Park, both positive and negative.

Jasper National Park is appreciated for its scenery, wildlife and uncommercial townsite.

The park and townsite are too busy or becoming overcrowded, especially in summer at popular day-use areas and trails.

Parks Canada needs to find a balance between quality visitor experiences and ecological integrity.

Visitor management

Parks Canada should more actively manage visitors and limit visitor numbers.

The target to increase visitation should be removed from the national park management plan.

The ecological and social carrying capacity of the park should be evaluated and visitor use management strategies developed (e.g. consolidating or dispersing use, implementing permits or lottery systems).

Visitor education

Parks Canada should provide more information to visitors about how to behave around wildlife, wilderness etiquette, driving safely in the park, and responsible use of the park.

Meaningful personal interactions with Parks Canada staff, park-operated education programs, and increased responsibilities for tourism operators are the best ways to educate visitors.

Parks Canada presence

More Parks Canada staff are needed to manage wildlife issues, check permits, ensure compliance with park rules and carry out maintenance, particularly in the backcountry.



Transportation systems

Parks Canada should implement transportation systems (e.g. public transit, bike paths) to ease congestion, improve access and reduce carbon outputs.

Affordability and accessibility

Public and private park facilities and services (e.g. accommodation) are too expensive, and this is making the park less accessible to Canadians.

Ecological Integrity

Forest health and wildfire

The visible impacts of the mountain pine beetle outbreak is prompting concerns about the health of park ecosystems and about wildfire risk in relation to townsites and visitor safety.

Prescribed fire is the preferred tool for reducing forest fuels and restoring vegetation communities.

Caribou

Caribou conservation is important and more action is needed to recover caribou numbers.

Human activities in caribou habitat may be impacting caribou; winter travel restrictions are supported by the majority of respondents.

Extirpation may be inevitable; Parks Canada should focus its resources elsewhere.

Wildlife

Wildlife habituation and conflicts with people (e.g. illegal feeding, unsafe photography practices) are key concerns.

Parks Canada should be attentive to wildlife displacement and habitat connectivity / fragmentation.

Parks Canada should collect more data on human-wildlife conflicts, and include human-wildlife conflict reporting and mitigation in the management plan.

Wildlife would benefit from more wildlife management staff, greater enforcement of park rules, and periodic trail or area closures to maintain wildlife corridors or secure habitat.



Other themes

Ecological integrity should be the first priority in park management.

There are concerns with the effects of industrial development and activities on lands adjacent to the park, grain spills on the railway, invasive species, pollutants in waterways, other aquatic issues, species-at-risk, and the management of rare or sensitive ecological areas.

Managing Development

Limits to development

Development should be carefully managed, especially large commercial developments, in order to maintain ecological integrity.

Parks Canada should maintain or shrink current limits, such as the fixed townsite boundary, the developed footprint and existing commercial development (within and outside the townsite).

Upgrading facilities or making better use of existing spaces is preferable to expanding or building new facilities.

Other themes

More emphasis should be placed on low-impact, nature and culture-based activities instead of infrastructure-based activities.

Certainty, for example, around lease tenures and infrastructure maintenance, is important for commercial operators.

Parks Canada should consider adding some facilities to the park, particularly accommodations (e.g. more campsites, campgrounds, backcountry lodges).

Parks Canada should encourage tourism development in gateway communities instead of in the park.

Wilderness Management

Backcountry maintenance

Parks Canada needs to improve the maintenance of trails, bridges, campgrounds and other facilities in the backcountry.

Access to some wilderness areas is becoming difficult because of damaged bridges and trails in poor condition.



Camping reservations

It is difficult to secure reservations for popular campsites (the majority of comments were about backcountry sites but this also applies to frontcountry campgrounds).

Parks Canada should consider holding some locations back from reservation until closer to the time of visiting, requiring campers to check in before departing on their trips, and providing better incentives for cancelling reservations.

Other themes

Jasper's wilderness is important and appreciated, even by those who do not regularly visit the backcountry.

Parks Canada should provide more information on trail options and increase promotion of less popular trail alternatives.

Community of Jasper

Housing

Housing pressure is a central issue for the community of Jasper.

The supply of affordable housing could be increased by, for example, reducing land release fees; capping private home accommodations; rezoning areas of the townsite to facilitate infilling; and updating policies to encourage the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units.

Environmental stewardship

Parks Canada should work to improve waste and water management, mass transit, bike-ability, and other environmental stewardship measures.

Other themes

Increased funding for municipal infrastructure and services is needed.

The Municipality of Jasper and Parks Canada should share accountability for municipal decisions.



Indigenous Relations

Education

Respondents would like to know more about how Jasper National Park works with Indigenous peoples.

Parks Canada can improve public awareness about Indigenous activities through more online communication, by increasing Indigenous content in interpretive panels, and by fostering a visible Indigenous presence in the park through visitor programming.

Other themes

Respondents support efforts towards reconciliation for all Indigenous groups who have historic ties to what is now Jasper National Park.

Indigenous Knowledge and land use should be incorporated into park management.

Climate Change

Green initiatives

Environmental stewardship should be part and parcel of Parks Canada's commitment to protect natural heritage; Parks Canada should take action to become a leader in green initiatives, especially around fossil fuel use.

Planning

Park management should take into account climate change, how to mitigate its effects, and how to make the park more energy efficient and operationally sustainable in the face of a changing environment.

Other themes

Parks Canada has a role to play in engaging and educating the public on climate change; retreating glaciers can be used as a teaching tool for visitors.

Parks Canada should encourage commercial operators to introduce climate change narratives into their offers and reduce their environmental impacts (e.g. replace high fuel use vehicles with green alternatives).



Future Involvement in Management Planning

Online participants selected “taking an online survey” as the top way to be involved, followed by “receiving updates” and “reviewing a draft management plan.”

Parks Canada should consider creating working or advisory groups, and involving local stakeholders, to assist with management planning.

Parks Canada should be transparent about how public and stakeholder feedback influences the plan.





Yoho National Park

The Engagement Process

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The first phase of engagement and consultation for scoping the Yoho National Park management plan included a range of opportunities designed to gather input from Indigenous communities, youth, local stakeholders and other Canadians. Stakeholder workshops were held in Field and Golden, British Columbia. In addition, community information events were held at the Kicking Horse Mountain Resort and the Golden Farmer's Market. An online platform called *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* was created with the other mountain parks, enabling interested Canadians to be part of the discussion. One university campus club was engaged using an online presentation and conference call. Newspaper advertisements, postcards and social media posts were used to create awareness of the engagement program. The first phase of engagement and consultation ran from January 30 to May 10, 2019.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

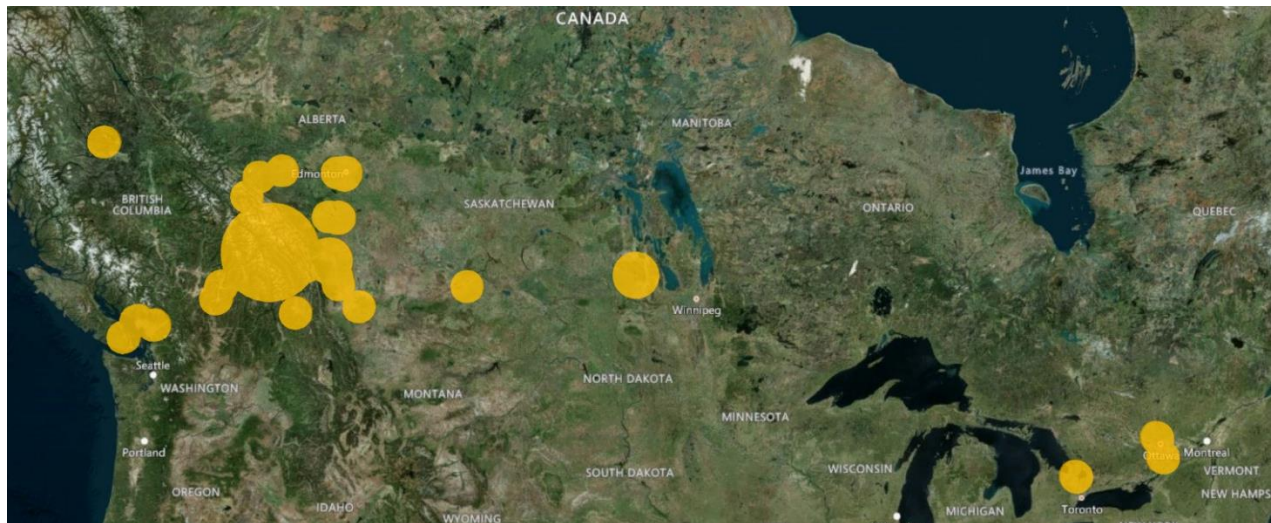
During the three-month engagement and consultation period, there were a total of 686 visits to the Yoho National Park online site. Of this total, 91 people filled out online surveys or posted ideas. An additional 325 people viewed website content and downloaded documents.

A total of 53 people attended in-person workshops. Stakeholders included municipal government, destination marketing organizations, environmental organizations, outdoor recreation interest groups, and local business operators. Parks Canada staff met



separately with representatives of several Indigenous communities and one interest group. Written submissions were received from four organizations.

MAP – Geographical distribution of website participants from Canada



What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Yoho National Park is located within the traditional territories of the Ktunaxa and Secwepemc First Nations. Discussions are ongoing with representatives of these Indigenous groups to ensure their perspectives are heard and included in the draft management plan.

Indigenous communities who have provided initial responses express a strong desire to feel at home in the park, and to contribute their knowledge and practices to the stewardship of the park.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The following section outlines some of the main themes that emerged during the engagement period, in the categories of park vision, key issues, and planning principles.

Park Vision

Workshop attendees and people who completed online surveys were asked to describe their vision of Yoho National Park at its future best. An analysis of the comments showed the most common theme identified by participants was a desire to see the park protected and its ecological integrity restored. The words *peaceful, intact, undeveloped,*



natural beauty, protected, and wild were frequently mentioned. Environmental stewardship, wilderness protection, and the restoration of healthy ecosystems and ecological processes where species at risk are restored and thriving, were all identified as important goals for the future. Protecting the reasons for the designation of the park as a World Heritage Site was also identified as an important goal. Many participants recognized that ecological protection is crucial to ensuring that the park remains a place for people to connect with nature and experience wilderness in uncrowded settings.

While the protection of healthy ecosystems was viewed as paramount, participants also expressed a strong desire to ensure that these natural landscapes remain accessible. Accessibility was discussed in a broad sense, encompassing elements of individual ability, demographics, socio-economic status, four-season opportunities, facility design, and availability of sustainable transportation options. This theme of accessibility was often discussed together with the need to carefully manage human use to ensure the health of park ecosystems and maintenance of built assets. The terms *balance* and *sustainable* were referenced repeatedly.

Many participants expressed the need to define appropriate human use levels as part of their vision for the park. These included consideration of visitor use quotas or other demand management tools in sensitive or congested areas, such as Emerald Lake and the Yoho Valley. A nuance of this theme was the idea that while the park should be accessible to everyone, it cannot be everything to everybody—there are appropriate activities and standards of behaviour rooted in stewardship of this natural landscape that visitors must respect. A related theme was the perceived lack of fairness of current systems used to allocate limited opportunities such as Lake O’Hara day use passes, or camping reservations throughout the park. Numerous participants suggested that there should be systems to ensure that Canadians have preferential access to these opportunities. Some felt that there should be variable pricing, where international visitors pay a higher fee to use the park.

Another common theme was education, and the opportunity that mountain parks provide for visitors to learn about nature. Many participants expressed a desire to see more educational programming to encourage positive behaviour from park visitors. There was also interest in increasing educational opportunities to highlight the unique natural features, Indigenous history, and cultural heritage of the park.

Key Issues

The first phase of engagement provided opportunities for Parks Canada to hear from interested Canadians about key issues that should be considered in the development of the next national park management plan. The main themes that emerged are discussed below.

Visitor Demand Management

Increasing visitation was identified as a concern by a large number of online respondents and workshop participants. When asked about barriers to connecting with



the park, 56% of online respondents cited overcrowding and accessibility challenges. More than a third of online respondents felt that increasing visitation is one of the most pressing issues affecting the ecological integrity of the park. Future efforts to address this challenge should consider the rapid rate of societal change that is occurring. Participants identified changing demographics, changing modes of travel, and evolving communication and other technologies as factors that may influence visitor patterns and behaviour in the coming decades.

Many participants were concerned about vehicle congestion on the Emerald Lake Road and the Yoho Valley Road (to Takakkaw Falls). It was suggested that restrictions on private vehicle use would be required to avoid exacerbating the crowding problem and shuttle services were identified as a possible solution. Participants were also concerned about safety on the Trans-Canada Highway due to increasing traffic volumes.

Increasing visitation was also a concern for the Town of Field as it may lead to increased demand for services, including local emergency services. Highway construction within and outside of the park may create access challenges for residents and visitors.

Suggested solutions to increasing visitor demand included spreading visitation over less busy seasons, introducing quotas or restricting visitation to specific high-use areas, implementing more reservation systems including lotteries, reducing private vehicle access to some locations, introducing shuttles and limiting development and expansion of commercial tour operations.

Resource Protection/Ecological Integrity

Many participants indicated that elements of the natural ecosystem are key features that make the park unique. When describing changes Parks Canada may encounter over the next ten years, participants cited declining native biodiversity, climate change, and increasing human pressure on natural ecosystems as key challenges. Protecting the ecological integrity of the park and restoring functioning habitat were frequently identified as areas requiring focused effort. A reduction in suitable habitat for wildlife and increased potential for human-wildlife conflict were cited as challenges related to increasing visitation. Participants identified managing increasing visitation as a key challenge related to the maintenance of ecological integrity.

External influences were also identified as challenges to be considered. Changing land use adjacent to the park, including increased logging and commercial tourism, was cited as an issue potentially affecting park wilderness. Increased backcountry use, especially backcountry day-use, was included as an issue affecting the mountain park's ecological integrity.



Visitor Facilities and Activities

The discussion of issues and park vision generated numerous comments about specific park facilities and activities. Several participants felt that facilities and trails need improvement and better maintenance. More than 20% of online respondents identified a lack of well-maintained facilities as a barrier to establishing a connection to the park. Others linked increasing visitation to a critical need for additional investment in well-designed infrastructure that supports visitation while mitigating environmental impacts.

Some participants expressed a desire for more visitor opportunities in the west end of the park. Suggestions included creating or re-establishing a regular camping offer on the west side and improving or re-establishing trails that are not well maintained. Some participants requested more mountain bike trails while others felt there should be no mountain biking permitted in the park.

Indigenous Reconciliation and Heritage

Many people recognized the importance of supporting Indigenous peoples in reconnecting with their traditional territories in the park. Participants shared a desire to have more Indigenous stories told within the park. Some participants recommended that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) should be a foundational element of park management.

Technological Changes and Impacts

Changing technology was identified as an issue that can provide both opportunities and challenges for Parks Canada. Types of changing technology identified include electric and self-driving cars, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones), E-bikes, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and various types of communications and electronic technologies. Social media was identified as both an important influence on visitor use patterns (“selfie culture”), and as a useful tool to connect with visitors. Parks Canada was encouraged to consider evolving technology when developing visitor activities and educational programming, and when encouraging appropriate park behaviour.

Climate Change

Understanding and adapting to the effects of climate change was identified as a key issue. Specific concerns included the increasing risk of wildfires resulting in more smoke, potential for flooding, changes in biodiversity and timing of animal migrations, effects on visitation patterns due to smoke and natural events and potential increases or changes in the types of insects and disease affecting park ecosystems.



Planning Principles

The scoping phase of engagement included discussions about the key principles that should inform the national park management plan and help guide future decision making. Key themes that emerged from these discussions are outlined below.

Transparency

Parks Canada should ensure that management decisions are open and accountable. Decisions should be based on open two-way communication with Indigenous communities, local residents, stakeholders, and other Canadians. Relevant information should be shared prior to any decisions.

Evidence-Based Decisions

Future management decisions should be rooted in scientific information and understanding. All relevant sources of information should be considered objectively. Continued application of this principle over time will support adaptive management.

Integrity and Leadership

Parks Canada should always demonstrate integrity and leadership in conservation when delivering its mandate. Park managers should adhere to the mandate, keep the end goal in mind, and “walk the talk” by taking action and implementing plans. There must be a recognition that sometimes Parks Canada will need to say “No” to meet the end goal.

Landscape-scale Management

Think big. Yoho National Park ecosystem management requires large-scale thinking that encompasses broad landscapes. The park should work with other parks, and across boundaries with neighbouring jurisdictions to tackle important ecological challenges and promote environmental stewardship. This requires long-term thinking and bold, creative action.

Ecological Sustainability

Future decision making should support the sustainability of Yoho National Park. Park managers must understand the consequences of their decisions, and whether or not their decision is reversible. When consequences are poorly understood due to incomplete information or lack of scientific certainty, then the precautionary principle should be used to ensure no loss of ecological integrity.





Kootenay National Park

The Engagement Process

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The first phase of engagement and consultation for scoping the Kootenay National park management plan included a range of opportunities designed to gather input from Indigenous communities, youth, local stakeholders and other Canadians. Stakeholder workshops were held in Radium, British Columbia. An online platform called *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* was created with the other mountain parks, enabling interested Canadians to be part of the discussion. One university campus club was engaged using an online presentation and conference call. Newspaper advertisements, postcards and social media posts were used to create awareness of the engagement program. The first phase of engagement and consultation ran from January 30 to May 10, 2019.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

During the three-month engagement period, there were a total of 507 visits to the Kootenay National Park online site. Of this total, 60 people filled out online surveys or posted ideas. An additional 233 people viewed website content and downloaded documents.

A total of 35 people attended two workshops. Stakeholders included the municipal government, destination marketing organizations, outdoor recreation groups, and local business operators. Parks Canada staff also met separately with representatives of several Indigenous communities. Written submissions were received from three organizations.



MAP – Geographical distribution of website participants from Canada



What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Kootenay National Park is located within the traditional territories of the Ktunaxa and Secwepemc First Nations. Discussions are ongoing with representatives of these Indigenous groups to ensure their perspectives are heard and included in the draft management plan.

Indigenous communities who have provided initial responses express a strong desire to feel at home in the park, and to contribute their knowledge and practices to the stewardship of the park.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The following section outlines some of the main themes that emerged during the engagement period, in the categories of park vision, key issues, and planning principles.

Park Vision

Workshop attendees and people who completed online surveys were asked to describe their vision of Kootenay National Park at its future best. An analysis of the comments showed that the most common theme identified by participants was a desire to see the park protected and its ecological integrity restored. The words *undeveloped*, *wild*, *intact*, *rugged*, *pristine*, and *wildlife* were frequently mentioned. For many respondents, this theme included low levels of commercial use and infrastructure, where people can experience unspoiled wilderness. Fire as an ecological process was recognized as an important part of that vision for its role in restoring healthy forest ecosystems.



While the protection of healthy ecosystems was viewed as paramount, participants also expressed a strong desire to ensure that these natural landscapes remain accessible. Providing more or improved opportunities for people to experience and enjoy the park was a common suggestion, although others indicated that the relative lack of developed infrastructure and crowds was central to their vision of the park at its best. Those recommending greater accessibility used the term broadly, describing elements of individual ability, demographics, socio-economic status, and technological connectivity. Many respondents felt that there are more opportunities to engage travelers on Highway 93 South by providing improved or additional places to access the park safely. High quality and accessible roadside day-use areas that incorporate learning opportunities are key to this vision.

Another theme was education and the opportunity that mountain parks provide for visitors to learn about nature and culture. Some of the educational themes that were mentioned include Indigenous history, cultural heritage, fire ecology, wildlife, and climate change.

Key Issues

The first phase of engagement provided opportunities for Parks Canada to hear from interested Canadians about key issues that should be considered in the development of the next national park management plan. The main themes that emerged are discussed below.

Resource Protection/Ecological Integrity

Participants indicated that elements of the natural ecosystem are key features that make the park unique. When describing changes or challenges over the next ten years, 59% of online survey respondents cited ecological protection and habitat restoration as priorities. This was also a common theme expressed by workshop participants. The role of fire on the landscape was the dominant ecological concern. Respondents mentioned the historical lack of fire and the need for more prescribed fires to restore ecosystems and prevent large-scale wildfires. Others suggested that with a warming climate, more wildfires are inevitable. Other specific areas of concern related to ecological integrity include aquatic ecosystem restoration, invasive species, increasing visitation and demand for additional facilities, potential for increased wildlife disturbance and human-wildlife conflict.

Visitor Facilities and Activities

The state and availability of park facilities was an important issue for many participants. When asked about barriers to connecting to the park, 45% of online respondents cited lack of facilities or activities, or the poor and outdated nature of facilities. In particular, people referenced a need for more low elevation hiking trails, more backcountry trails,



better trail maintenance, more accessible facilities, more camping opportunities including river use sites, and more roadside pullouts/day-use areas. Others felt that there is already enough, or too much infrastructure, and too many people in places such as Stanley Glacier, resulting in a lack of opportunity to connect with nature.

Traffic on Highway 93 South is viewed as an issue for some. In particular, summer traffic volumes and excessive driving speeds are a concern. Commercial truck traffic was identified as a barrier to enjoyment of an otherwise peaceful natural setting. Reducing the impact of ore trucks on the highway and visitor experience was also referenced.

Changing visitor demographics and patterns of use were also identified as important considerations. Participants referenced an increase in international tourists, spill-over visitation from the Bow Valley, an aging and more culturally diverse population, increasing winter use (ski touring, snowshoeing, Nordic skiing), changing transportation options, and evolving recreational and communications technologies as important considerations for park management over the coming decade.

Increasing Visitation/ Demand Management

Many participants value the relatively limited infrastructure and lower numbers of visitors in Kootenay National Park compared to neighbouring parks. Some respondents suggested the need to impose limits on development and visitor numbers in order to maintain this experience, while others emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of wildlife and park ecosystems over the demands of park visitors. Increasing human-use pressure originating from land adjacent to the park was also identified as an important threat. Motorized recreation, including helicopter-supported activities, mountain biking, and hunting were identified as concerns.

Indigenous Reconciliation and Heritage

Many people recognized the importance of supporting Indigenous peoples in reconnecting to their traditional territories in the park. Participants shared a desire to have more Indigenous stories told within the park. Some participants felt that there is a need to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into park management.

Technological Changes and Impacts

Changing technology was identified as an issue that can provide both opportunities and challenges for Parks Canada. Types of changing technology identified include electric and self-driving cars, E-bikes, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones), artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and various types of communications and electronic technologies. Social media was identified as both an important influence on visitor use patterns (“selfie culture”), and as a useful tool to connect with visitors travelling through the park on Highway 93 South. The lack of cell service on 93 South was identified as a



constraint. Parks Canada was encouraged to consider evolving technology when developing visitor activities and educational programming, and when encouraging appropriate park behaviour.

Climate Change

Understanding and adapting to the effects of climate change was identified as a key issue. Specific concerns included the increasing risk of wildfires and associated smoke which in turn could affect visitation; impacts on wildlife and park ecosystems; impacts on park assets; decreasing winter snowpack; and drought. Studying the effects of climate change in the park is seen as a way to develop adaptation strategies, and to support climate change education for park visitors.

Principles

The scoping phase of engagement included discussions about the key principles that should inform the national park management plan and help guide future decision making. Key themes that emerged from these discussions are outlined below.

Transparency

Parks Canada should ensure that management decisions are open and accountable. Decisions should be based on open two-way communication with Indigenous communities, local residents, stakeholders, and other Canadians. Relevant information should be shared prior to any decisions.

Evidence-Based Decisions

Future management decisions should be rooted in scientific information and understanding. All relevant sources of information should be considered objectively. Continued application of this principle over time will support adaptive management.

Integrity and Leadership

Parks Canada should always demonstrate integrity and leadership in conservation when delivering its mandate. Parks Canada should remain focused on the legislated mandate to maintain or restore ecological integrity. The Parks Canada *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (1994) continue to provide good direction and the advice of Parks Canada professional staff should be trusted. There should be a recognition that the park cannot satisfy all expectations and still adhere to its mandate.



Sustainability

Future decision making should support the sustainability of Kootenay National Park. This applies both to ecological and fiscal sustainability related to the maintenance of park assets. Increasing the amount of park infrastructure may not be sustainable in the long-term.





Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks

The Engagement Process

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

To gather initial feedback in the national park management planning process, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks reached out to Indigenous groups, local and regional communities and other interested Canadians. With each group, Parks Canada provided an overview of achievements since the 2010 management plan, presented the 2018 State of the Park Report, and shared vision elements, issues and opportunities identified through internal review, as starting points for discussions.

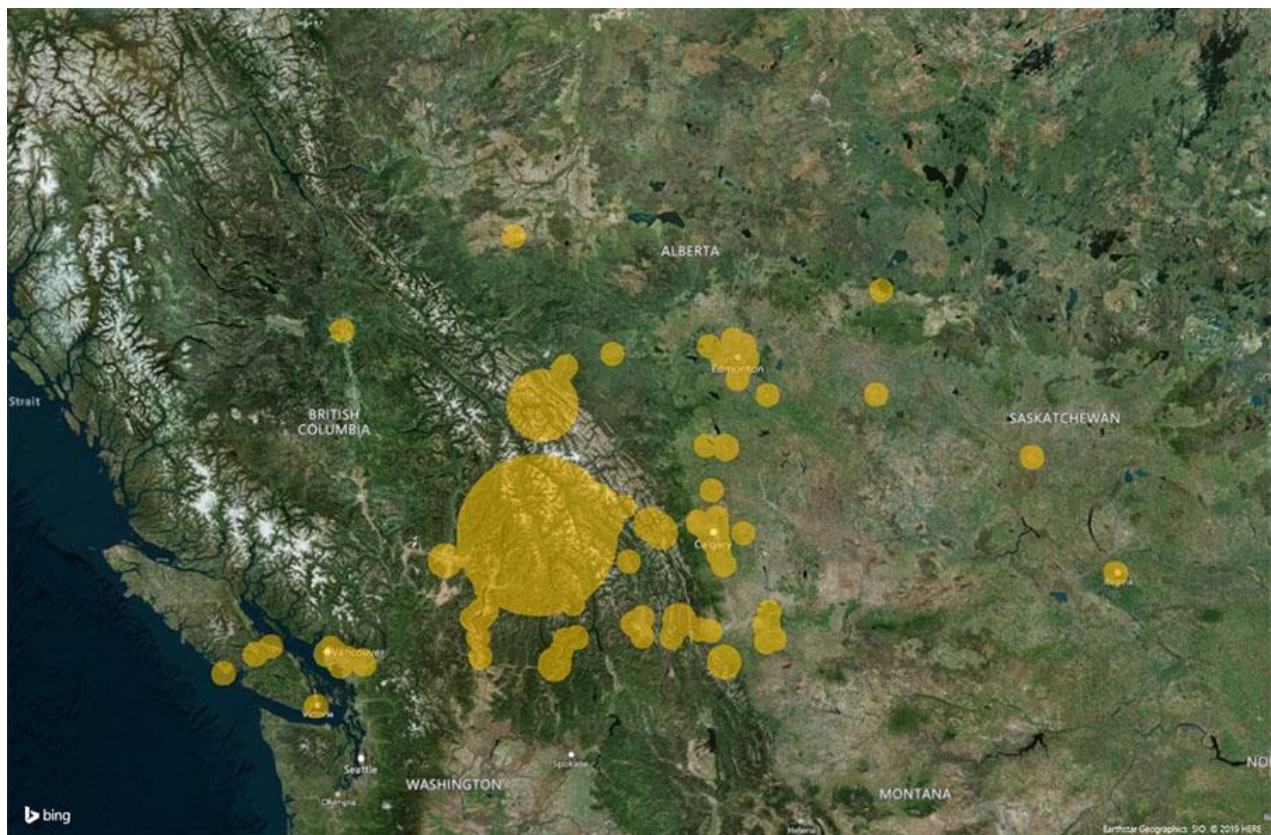
In Revelstoke, British Columbia, engagement activities included discussions with Indigenous groups, as well as a public open house, a stakeholder workshop, and outreach at the Revelstoke Mountain Resort and the Revelstoke Secondary School. In collaboration with Yoho and Kootenay national parks, Parks Canada hosted a stakeholder workshop in Golden, British Columbia, and set up a booth at the Golden Farmers Market. Other activities included outreach at Mountain Equipment Coop in Kelowna and the Vernon Farmers Market, as well as a webinar with Campus Club members at Vancouver Island University. In total, Parks Canada team members spoke directly with more than 520 people.

WHO WE HEARD FROM



To reach more Canadians in the region and across the country, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier partnered with the other mountain national parks (Banff, Yoho, Kootenay, Jasper and Waterton Lakes) to host the *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* webpages. This online tool allowed people to review background information and comment on considerations for the new management plans. For Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks, Parks Canada invited Canadians to visit the website through targeted Facebook ads. Between January 30 and May 16, 2019, the website received over 4,000 visits, more than 400 people registered on the site, and the Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks received 226 online submissions. Ninety-five per cent of participants were from Western Canada, split almost evenly between British Columbia and Alberta.

MAP – *Geographical distribution of website participants from Western Canada*



What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks are located within the traditional territories of the Secwepemc, Ktunaxa and Syilx First Nations. Discussions are ongoing with representatives of these Indigenous groups to ensure their perspectives are heard and included in the draft management plan.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Both in person and online, Canadians shared a wide variety of ideas, issues and opportunities, ranging from broad landscape-level conservation to specific operational input. From this input, some clear themes emerged that will guide development of a draft management plan.

Vision

Both online and in the various workshops, Parks Canada asked Canadians about their vision for Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks in 15 to 20 years. The top responses online were:

- The natural wonders of the Columbia Mountains are valued and understood;
- Ecological integrity within the parks is the priority and decision-making is guided by conservation science;
- Shared protection and conservation goals for the Columbia Mountains' ecosystems, landscapes and biodiversity are achieved in collaboration with governments and partners;
- Visitors are inspired to be environmental stewards;
- Research in the parks contributes to an understanding of the impacts of climate change within and beyond park boundaries and guides collaboration with governments and partners; and
- These vision statements were echoed throughout the public engagement process as being important for the future of the parks.

Visitation

Across all themes, we heard concerns related to increasing visitor numbers. Parks Canada should:

- Ensure that the needs of visitors are met, including adapting to new and changing markets (increasing international tourism, visitor profiles, aging demographics), and diversifying experiences (new signature experiences, more interpretive programs and virtual tourism opportunities);
- Manage visitor impacts on Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks and maintain the quality of experience by limiting access, managing visitor expectations, and diverting use spatially or seasonally;
- Connect visitors to these special places and inspire them to be park stewards; and
- Manage use and activities to ensure the safety of visitors and wildlife.



Accessibility

We heard that Parks Canada should improve access to Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks for all users regardless of age or ability. Understanding that not all areas of the park can meet the needs of everyone, we heard interest in diversifying how people can experience the parks. For example:

- Barrier-free or adaptive trails;
- Visitor facilities that can be accessed, used independently, and understood by a wide range of visitors (universal design);
- Restoring historic trail systems and/or creating new loop trails to disperse visitors and provide a variety of experiences; and
- Assessing opportunities with consideration for aging demographics and different cultures.

Assets and Infrastructure

We heard that Parks Canada should invest in the maintenance and improvement of existing assets. For new investments, many people want to see environmentally sustainable operations and infrastructure. Four key areas of interest were:

- Trail maintenance and design that takes into account increasing visitation;
- Basic amenities and more overnight opportunities in the Rogers Pass area;
- More backcountry campsites or cabins for multi-day backcountry trips; and
- Trans-Canada Highway safety improvements including bringing it up to four lanes through both Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks, and wildlife crossings.

Ecological Integrity

Echoing Parks Canada's mandate, we heard that ecological integrity should be the priority in Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks. Within this theme, Parks Canada heard the following key issues (supported by 75% or more of online participants):

- Reduce impacts of the transportation corridor on wildlife and ecosystem health by improving wildlife movement through the corridor in water and on land, and reducing the impact of spills and wildlife attractants along the highway and railway;
- Protect intact ecosystems. We heard some reluctance to limiting access to the parks, but many comments supported managing visitation to protect sensitive environments through seasonal or area closures, quotas and education;
- Consider visitor safety while protecting the parks through wildfire risk reduction, and assessing and mitigating visitor activities that could increase the risk of



human-wildlife conflict issues (dogs off leash, winter recreational activities and the new Mount Revelstoke campground); and

- Prioritize ecosystem restoration and protection with decision-making guided by on-going research and monitoring programs in the parks. This includes taking action to prevent new threats and manage existing concerns from invasive species, insects and disease, and contributing to the long-term recovery of species at risk;
- Be a leader in climate change research. In Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks, this includes ongoing monitoring of glaciers, wildfire activity, weather patterns and invasive species. Link these local changes to larger trends and patterns, and share this information widely.

Communications and Education

Parks Canada heard feedback on how we share the stories and information about Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks with park visitors and Canadians, in their homes and communities. Areas to improve include:

- Communication on appropriate behaviour in national parks. This information should be available during trip planning, in the parks and in different languages;
- Story telling related to Indigenous history and culture, mountaineering and railway history, and conservation, restoration and snow science work in the parks;
- Youth programs, both in and out of the park;
- Citizen science or volunteering opportunities;
- Regular communication with communities and stakeholders to help them understand how park management decisions are made; and
- Information needs to be easier to access and share, and provided in a variety of formats (focus on digital).

We heard two different perspectives on whether Parks Canada should promote the parks:

- Promote the “escape to nature” experience, conservation, and the connections between nature and health (both physical and mental); and
- Do not promote the parks in order to maintain quiet and wild experiences currently enjoyed in Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks.

Indigenous Relations

Parks Canada heard from many people that they are unaware of Indigenous cultures, histories and traditional territories in the area. Comments identified the need to involve Indigenous peoples in protecting and sharing the area’s natural and cultural heritage, and in decision-making for the parks.



Partners and Stakeholders

Collaboration with others is integral to achieve conservation goals, support local economies and tourism, and to foster the next generation of park stewards. We heard that Parks Canada should:

- Think beyond boundaries and restore connectivity to maintain the integrity of the Columbia Mountains ecosystem for wide-ranging species like grizzly bears and caribou;
- Strengthen relationships and work closely with Indigenous peoples, neighbouring land managers, local stakeholders and other governments to align goals that support wildlife diversity and healthy ecosystems across the Columbia Mountains;
- Work with partners and stakeholders to address common issues such as wildlife attractants or invasive species;
- Work with local communities on sustainable tourism opportunities, assess market demand and current opportunities, collaborate on regional promotions and product offers, and build on the history and sense of place of the region; and
- Many people, including regional high school and university students, think we should get more youth into Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks and inspire future park stewards. This includes in the parks and at-school learning, research opportunities for post-secondary students, and youth programs that connect the mental and physical health benefits of getting out in nature.

Other Areas of Interest

We heard specific interest in three key areas of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks:

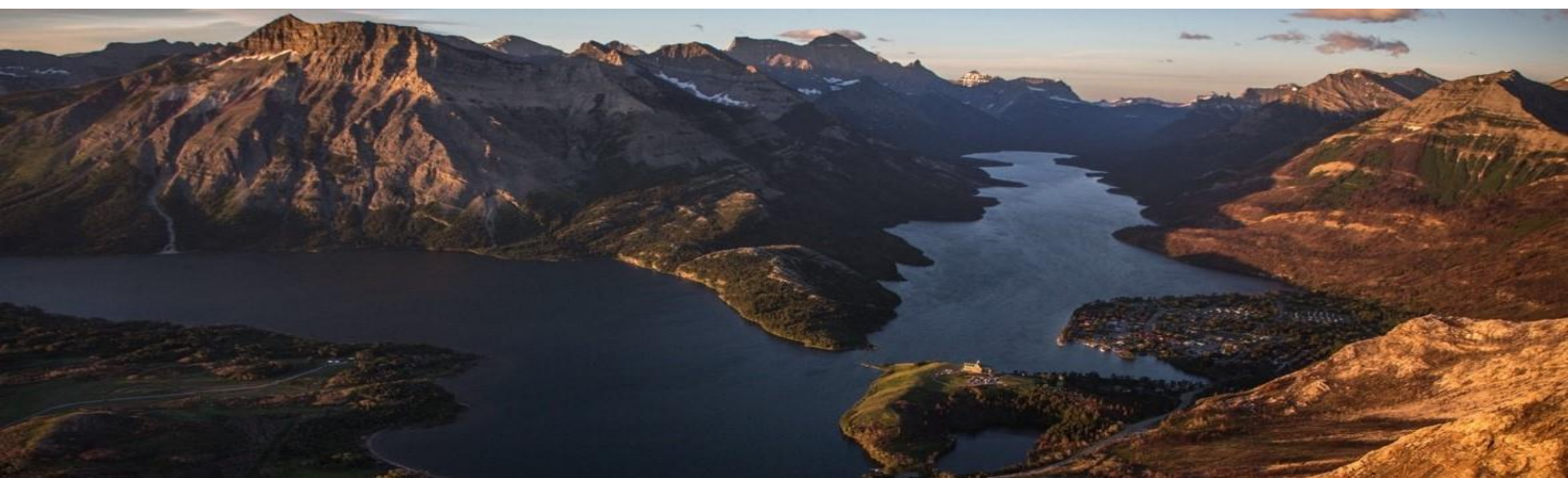
- In Rogers Pass, Parks Canada should provide additional amenities, and maintain or improve the Winter Permit System and access to the backcountry;
- At the summit of Mount Revelstoke, Parks Canada needs to address overcrowding including maintaining or redesigning trails to accommodate increased numbers or visitors; reducing parking pressures by managing access and/or providing a shuttle service; and addressing human-wildlife conflict concerns; and
- Parks Canada should invest in diverse opportunities in and around the Beaver Valley area of Glacier National Park such as family-friendly day use opportunities, mountain biking, and re-establishing multi-day backcountry opportunities (camping or cabins) in the Beaver Valley, Bald Hills and Copperstain areas.



Operations

Parks Canada also received many comments on current operations including opening/closing times, trail or facility conditions, and the Winter Permit System, to name a few. These comments are being compiled to share with operational staff in Mount Revelstoke and Glacier national parks.





Waterton Lakes National Park

The Engagement Process

Parks Canada is committed to providing engagement and consultation opportunities to Canadians throughout the management planning process. This includes meaningful opportunities for Indigenous peoples, stakeholders, youth and the public to contribute to the Waterton Lakes National Park 2020 Management Plan.

The first phase of engagement and consultation sought feedback on the long term vision of the park and priorities to address over the next decade. This phase took place through in-person engagement sessions and online feedback between April 10 and July 3, 2019. This feedback will be considered as a draft management plan is developed. The next phase of engagement and consultations will occur in winter 2020. At that time, there will be an opportunity to review and comment on the draft management plan.

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Waterton Lakes National Park reached out to Indigenous peoples, youth, local and regional communities, regional stakeholders and other interested Canadians through a range of engagement opportunities to gather initial feedback in the national park management planning process. We gave participants an overview of the 2019 State of the Park Assessment and shared potential issues and priorities as starting points for discussion.

Engagement activities included an open house, a stakeholder workshop, and a youth workshop in Waterton Lakes National Park, as well as outreach at local festivals and regional events. The goal was to highlight engagement opportunities and collect feedback from participants on key questions.



Parks Canada is committed to reconciliation and renewed relationships with Indigenous peoples, based on a recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership. Treaty 7 nations (Káínai, Piikáni, Siksiká, Stoney-Nakoda, Tsuut'ina) as well as Aamsskáápipikani (Blackfeet, Montana U.S.A), Ktuanaxa Nation and the Métis Nation of Alberta were invited to indicate their preferred approach to engagement in the management planning process, their vision for the long-term future of the park and their recommended priorities in the management plan. Discussions are ongoing with Indigenous Nations and community representatives to ensure their perspectives are heard and shape the development of the draft management plan. Comments below reflect what has been heard so far and may evolve as additional input is received in the coming months.

An online platform called *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* was created with the other mountain parks, enabling interested Canadians to be part of the discussion. Postcards, social media posts, emailed bulletins and a media pitch were used to raise awareness of the engagement opportunities.

This report summarizes what we heard online and in person.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

Face-to-face discussions

Over 150 people attended 12 engagement events or interacted with Parks Canada team members to provide input on the desired future of Waterton Lakes National Park.

Participants to the Stakeholder Workshop included regional and provincial governments, environmental and philanthropic organizations, outdoor recreation interest groups, local community representatives, destination marketing organizations and local business operators.

Parks Canada staff met separately with Indigenous government officials, members of Indigenous communities, and the U.S. Glacier National Park, management team. Kiosks to raise awareness on the management planning process and to collect input were set up at the Kainai Ecosystem Protection Association 2019 Summit, Lethbridge University Earth Day Symposium and Mountain Equipment Co-op in Calgary, Alberta.

Online comments

The Waterton Lakes National Park *Let's Talk Mountain Parks* website received 2,497 unique visits during the three-month engagement period. 745 people proceeded to view various sections of the website or downloaded background planning documents, such as the State of the Park Assessment report.

443 people completed online surveys. The demographic profiles were:

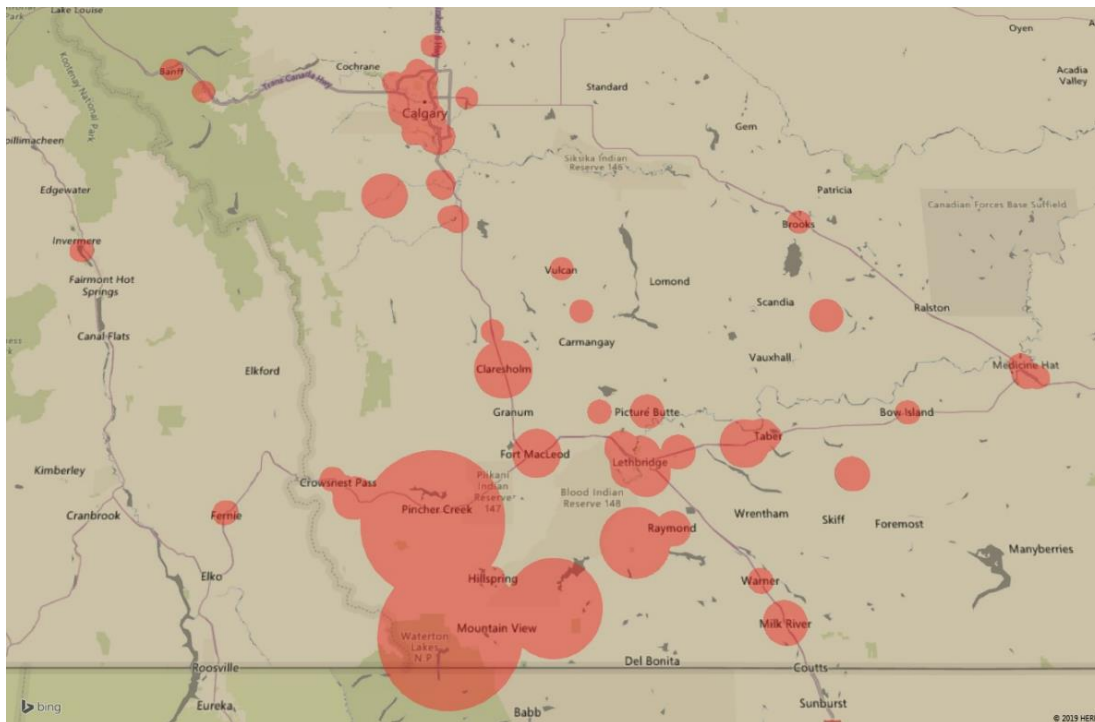
- 25% of respondents were 18-34 years old; 60% were 35-64 years old; 15% were over 64 years old.



- 64% had visited Waterton Lakes National Park more than 40 times; 24% between 10-40 times.
- 80% last visited the park after the September 2017 Kenow Wildfire.
- 90% of respondents were from Alberta.

As illustrated by the map below, the pink highlighted areas indicate that a large proportion of online respondents were from southern Alberta.

Map 1. Geographical Distribution of Website Participants from Southern Alberta



What We Heard

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Comments below reflect what has been heard so far from Indigenous Nations and community members, and may evolve as additional input is received in the coming months.

Vision Elements

We heard that protecting nature should be the highest priority for Waterton Lakes National Park, echoing a cornerstone of Parks Canada's mandate. Indigenous peoples expressed that increasing recognition and value of the Indigenous heritage, worldviews and knowledge of the area would contribute to achieving this goal. Other elements brought forward for the vision of the park included:



- Waterton Lakes National Park should be an area where nature and culture are alive and treasured, enabling experiences of connection to the land, spirituality and ceremony;
- Valuing and profiling Indigenous Knowledge and connection to the region, would strengthen appreciation and understanding of the area for all visitors; and
- Focus of visitation should be on experiencing, connecting to and learning about nature, including the place of humans in the web of life and our responsibility to take care of it.

Key Issues

A number of key themes to guide the development of the draft management plan emerged from Indigenous input:

Indigenous Presence

- The importance of the region for Indigenous peoples, both in past and present, should be better reflected and made more visible (e.g. through interpreted archaeological sites, additional signs and other visitor opportunities);
- The use of traditional Blackfoot place names, will enable everyone to better connect with, and honour, the longstanding Indigenous relationship with the land; and
- Employment opportunities and partnerships with Indigenous organizations should be facilitated by Parks Canada.

Protected Cultural Landscape

- Waterton Lakes National Park must enhance its role as a learning place about the interconnectedness of nature and culture through Blackfoot Knowledge and worldviews;
- The International Peace Park designation is an appropriate reflection of the region's past and present use as a zone of cooperation between various peoples based on the area's bountiful nature. Its special status as a focal point for Indigenous spirituality, gathering medicines, hunting and ceremonies should be celebrated and further pursued; and
- Visitors to Waterton Lakes National Park should be expected to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner similarly to 'codes of conduct' and protocols that are in place for sacred places and important events.

Access

- Accessibility to the park for Indigenous peoples, particularly to specific areas of spiritual and cultural importance, should be prioritized; and
- Indigenous visitors should feel welcomed and at home in the park.



Indigenous Knowledge

- Waterton Lakes National Park has a role to play in facilitating knowledge transfer across generations and supporting Indigenous peoples' reconnection to traditional territories and land-based knowledge; and
- Showcase the ingenuity of Indigenous Knowledge, especially human health and sustenance about the land in collaboration with knowledge keepers and partners.

Park Management

- Indigenous groups want to be involved in park management, including planning, delivering projects, and monitoring and evaluation through a permanent mechanism based on a solid relationships and meaningful two-way exchange; and
- Allow ample time to consult Indigenous governments and organizations and develop strong relationships based on trust.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

The following section outlines some of the main themes that emerged during the engagement period concerning the park vision and potential priorities for the next 10 years.

Vision Elements

Canadians were asked about their vision for Waterton Lakes National Park in 15 to 20 years. The most common responses were:

- The wilderness, unique natural beauty, intact ecosystems and biodiversity are protected.
- Development is limited to maintain the intimate, peaceful and rustic character of the park, including its townsite.
- The park is accessible to visitors of various profiles and needs. There are opportunities to enjoy and connect to the area through a diversity of low impact activities.
- Visits to the park provide opportunities for learning and discovery, and encourage respectful, positive behaviours. Doing so allows for enhanced appreciation for the park's ecological and cultural significance while promoting coexistence, both with wildlife and among cultures.
- The successful protection of ecosystems and management of visitation rely on close collaboration and open communications with partners and stakeholders, particularly at the regional scale.

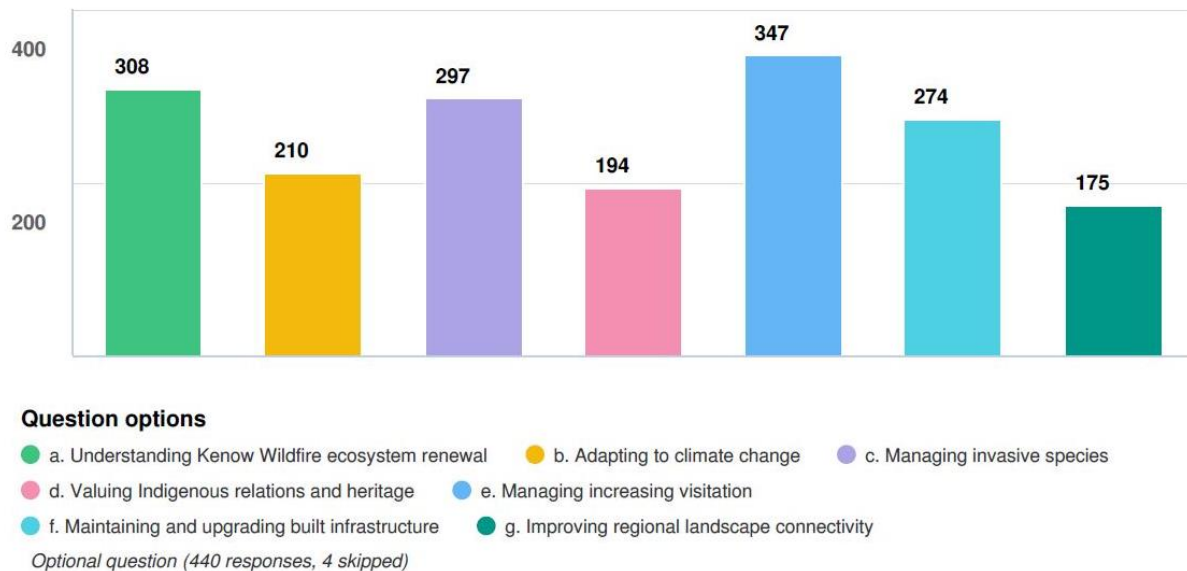
Key Themes and Recommended Priorities

The online survey asked participants which of the following potential priorities were most important to address in the next decade: understanding Kenow Wildfire ecosystem



renewal; adapting to climate change; managing invasive species; valuing Indigenous relations and heritage; managing increasing visitation; maintaining and upgrading built infrastructure; and improving regional landscape connectivity. As illustrated by the graph below, each of these potential priorities received significant support.

Graph 1. Compiled Online Responses on Critical Priorities to Address in Next Management Plan. Respondents could choose as many responses as they viewed appropriate.



Comments received suggested that it is important to address issues more broadly. The following key themes emerged: healthy ecosystems/ecological integrity; visitation management; accessibility, facilities and infrastructure; Indigenous relations and heritage; visitor stewardship and education; communications, knowledge sharing and public engagement; and regional connectivity and relationships.

Healthy Ecosystems/Ecological Integrity

Canadians told Parks Canada that the wilderness, intact and diverse ecosystems, abundant wildlife, clean air and majestic landscapes are at the core of their deep appreciation for Waterton Lakes National Park. We heard that ecosystem management should involve:

- Compatible and consistent management goals, policies, initiatives, monitoring, assessments and funding opportunities with neighbouring protected areas to form a landscape-level conservation approach;
- Proactive measures and targeted public communications that minimize visitors' ecological footprints and disturbance to wildlife (e.g. availability and awareness of inspection/cleaning stations to prevent aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, backcountry food storage areas, maintenance of effective wildlife corridors, etc.);
- The many impacts of the Kenow Wildfire are monitored and communicated to a variety of audiences, while supporting visitors to personally connect to the area and discover these changes on their own; and



- Understanding, monitoring and responding to the impacts of climate change, including reducing the park’s carbon footprint, implementing adaptation and resiliency solutions and communicating climate change projection models and plans.

Visitation Management

A majority of respondents value the unique character, minimal commercialization and lower visitation numbers in Waterton Lakes National Park when compared to other mountain parks. We heard:

- The priorities for visitation should be to intimately experience nature and connect to this special place. It should align with the overall priority of protecting ecosystems;
- Impose limits on infrastructure development and on visitation numbers during high season to ensure quality experiences for visitors by maintaining the park’s quaint and calm character;
- Preserve the sense of place and “small town feel” of the townsite by favouring small and local businesses, ensuring green spaces, and strategically planning for traffic, especially considering the location of the new Visitor Centre;
- Set and communicate clear expectations for visitors prior to their visit (‘park protocol’), and elevate learning opportunities for positive stewardship behaviour;
- Support visitor planning based on interests, with enhanced focus on the shoulder and winter seasons; and
- Manage visitation as a region, working with partners and neighbours, especially other protected areas, to offer complementary services and visitor offer.

Accessibility, Facilities and Infrastructure

We heard numerous comments on reopening access to areas of the park which were closed due to the Kenow Wildfire. While some people wish to see the park’s visitor experience restored to what it was prior to the wildfire, others encouraged the park to use the opportunity to envision changes such as:

- Reduce dependency of cars, particularly in the townsite and on parkways;
- Keep some areas closed to allow for post-fire ecological recovery, limit infrastructure to avoid ecological impact and maintain the small feel of the park; and
- Increase and modernize infrastructure such as campsites, parking and day-use areas.

Other keys areas to improve include:

- Facilitate access by providing more shared transportation and shuttle options, both to and within the park;
- Favour assets and operations in the park that are low maintenance, are climate resilient and have low ecological and aesthetic footprints (e.g. introducing a composting program);



- Encourage and respect mixed-use of low impact activities and trail options (e.g. hiking, biking, horseback riding and skiing) to respond to a variety of visitor profiles, changing demographics (e.g. urban visitors, aging population and young families) and ability levels;
- Keep backcountry infrastructure and services minimal (e.g. no electricity), targeting avid and self-sufficient outdoors enthusiasts. Build on existing potential to enhance mountain biking and cross-country skiing experiences; and
- Limit commercial developments, ensure affordable options for basic visitor needs (accommodation, food, picnic areas, etc.).

Indigenous Relations and Heritage

Participants highlighted the importance of increasing awareness and appreciation of Indigenous heritage in the park by:

- Facilitating the sharing of Indigenous stories through Indigenous voices;
- Restoring traditional Blackfoot place names and language, and including them on signs and maps;
- Increasing collaboration opportunities with Indigenous peoples to protect ecological and cultural resources; and
- Ensuring meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in park management and consider the use of Indigenous Knowledge in decision making.

Visitor Stewardship and Education

Participants encouraged instilling visitors with understanding and appreciation of the exceptional natural and cultural history of the area so they adopt respectful behaviours and lessen impact on the park's ecology and local cultures. Within this theme, key recommendations include:

- Share stories about Waterton's natural and cultural history, in a variety of interactive approaches and with partners to amplify key messages;
- Create opportunities to raise awareness on the value of protected areas.
- Support youth programming to inspire future park stewards and foster the mental and physical health benefits of spending time in nature. This includes opportunities such as Canyon Youth Camp, partnerships with schools and post-secondary institutions;
- Enhance public presence of Parks Canada staff and interactions with park visitors to explain and encourage appropriate behaviour and attitudes through conversations;
- Enforce fines for inappropriate behaviour, such as approaching wildlife too closely and littering; and
- Provide opportunities to understand and witness Kenow Wildfire ecological renewal firsthand.



Communications, Knowledge Sharing and Public Engagement

Parks Canada heard recommendations relating to communication, transparency and engagement opportunities for matters of public interest, including:

- Manage visitor expectations by clearly communicating available activities and ensuring information is easily accessible online and in the park;
- Regular, meaningful consultation and two-way knowledge-sharing opportunities with park users, stakeholders and local communities (including youth);
- Research aligns with park priorities and influences on decision-making and findings are shared with the public, particularly concerning Kenow Wildfire renewal;
- Improve public trust through transparency on Parks Canada decision-making, plans and conveying how public feedback influences decisions; and
- Maximize citizen science and volunteer opportunities to support park priorities, including post-wildfire related activities.

Regional Connectivity and Relationships

Across all themes, Parks Canada heard that enhanced cross-boundary collaboration and relationship building with stakeholders and neighbours is an important component to preserving ecological integrity, offering quality visitor experiences and fostering the next generation of park stewards. As part of a greater ecological and cultural landscape, we heard that we should:

- Work closely with neighbouring protected areas, land managers, Indigenous groups and local and regional stakeholders to align goals, plan cooperatively, develop joint initiatives and collaborate on research and monitoring;
- Think beyond park boundaries to support ecosystem health in the Crown of the Continent region, restore threatened aquatic species and protect regional habitat and wildlife corridors for wide-ranging species like grizzly bears and elk;
- Seek guidance from Glacier National Park, U.S.A., and act as an International Peace Park model by learning from each other (e.g. response following wildfires, providing outstanding visitor experiences, etc.);
- Collaborate with local and regional businesses and tourism organizations to amplify common public messaging, build on the history and sense of place of the region, share product offers and promote responsible behaviour, such as reducing wildlife attractants and spread of invasive species and respecting sensitive habitats; and
- Favour collaboration with neighbouring local and regional governments to plan and deliver operations by sharing services, infrastructure, emergency preparedness, climate change resiliency, and ecological restoration.



OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

Parks Canada received many comments on current operations including opening/closing of facilities, trails, and location of the new Visitor Center, among others. These comments fall outside the scope of long-range management planning, however, these operational comments are being compiled to share with Parks Canada staff in Waterton Lakes National Park.

