

BANFF NATIONAL PARK

RECORD OF 2006 ANNUAL PLANNING FORUM

October 27th & 28th, 2006
Lake Louise

blueskye
T H I N K I N G [INC.]

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Table of Contents

<u>Day One</u>	4
<u>1.0 Welcome and Introductions</u>	4
<u>2.0 Superintendent’s Opening Remarks</u>	4
<u>2.1 Terry Perkins</u>	4
<u>2.2 Jillian Roulet</u>	5
<u>3.0 Round Table Participants’ Perspectives</u>	7
<u>3.1 Robin Nickel, National Park Users</u>	7
<u>3.2 Tracey Henderson, Local & Regional Environmental Groups</u>	8
<u>3.3 Ray Andrews, Provincial Government of Alberta</u>	9
<u>3.4 Julie Canning, Banff/Lake Louise Tourism Bureau (BLLTB)</u>	11
<u>3.5 Megan Squires, Banff Heritage Corporation</u>	11
<u>3.6 Ben Marriott, Lake Louise Community Council</u>	12
<u>3.7 Ernest Waterchief, Siksika Nation</u>	14
<u>3.8 Dave Poulton, National Conservation Organizations</u>	15
<u>3.9 Crosbie Cotton, National Park Ski Area Association</u>	15
<u>3.10 Andre Gareau, Town of Canmore</u>	16
<u>3.11 Bernard March, Advisory Development Board (ADB)</u>	17
<u>3.12 Richard Chesham, Small Business Association of Banff</u>	18
<u>3.13 Dan Bell, Aquatics Advisory Group</u>	19
<u>3.14 Wanda Bogdane, Assoc of Mountain Parks for Protection & Enjoyment</u>	20
<u>3.15 Leslie deBie, Friends of Banff</u>	22
<u>3.16 Darren Reeder, Banff/Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association</u>	23
<u>3.17 John Stutz, Town of Banff</u>	23
<u>3.18 Loren Winnick, Provincial Government of Alberta</u>	25
<u>3.19 John Snow Jr., First Nations: Stoney</u>	25
<u>3.20 Dave Verhulst, Guiding Organizations</u>	26
<u>3.21 Cheryl Borecky, Youth Organizations</u>	28
<u>3.22 Robyn Dinnadge, Banff Heritage Tourism Corporation</u>	29
<u>3.23 Response to Round Table Remarks – Jillian Roulet</u>	30
<u>3.24 Response to Round Table Remarks – Terry Perkins</u>	31

<u>4.0</u>	<u>Presentations</u>	32
4.1	<u>Icefields Parkway Project</u>	32
4.2	<u>2008 Management Plan Review</u>	32
4.3	<u>Questions on the Presentations</u>	34
<u>5.0</u>	<u>Superintendents' Open Forum/Fireside Chat</u>	39
 <u>Day Two</u>		45
<u>6.0</u>	<u>Small Group Workshop: Management Plan Review 2008</u>	45
6.1	<u>Visitor Experience Issues</u>	45
6.1.1	<u>Group One</u>	45
6.1.2	<u>Group Two</u>	46
6.1.3	<u>Group Three</u>	46
6.2	<u>Resource Protection Issues</u>	47
6.2.1	<u>Group One</u>	47
6.2.2	<u>Group Two</u>	48
6.2.3	<u>Group Three</u>	48
6.3	<u>Public Awareness and Understanding (Education) Issues</u>	49
6.3.1	<u>Group One</u>	49
6.3.2	<u>Group Two</u>	50
6.3.3	<u>Group Three</u>	50
6.4	<u>Contributions of roundtable sectors to issue resolution</u>	51
6.4.1	<u>Group One</u>	51
6.4.2	<u>Group Two</u>	51
6.4.3	<u>Group Three</u>	51
6.5	<u>Engagement of sectors in management plan review</u>	52
6.5.1	<u>Group One</u>	52
6.5.2	<u>Group Two</u>	52
6.5.3	<u>Group Three</u>	53
<u>7.0</u>	<u>Feedback on the Session:</u>	53
7.1	<u>What worked?</u>	53
7.2	<u>What could be improved?</u>	54
<u>8.0</u>	<u>Closing Comments from Superintendents</u>	54
8.1	<u>Jillian Roulet</u>	54
8.2	<u>Terry Perkins</u>	54

Roundtable Participants

Robin Nickel
Tracey Henderson
Ray Andrews
Julie Canning
Megan Squires
Ben Marriott
Ernest Waterchief
Dave Poulton
Crosbie Cotton
Andre Gareau
Bernard March
Terry Perkins, Superintendent

Richard Chesham
Dan Bell
Wanda Bogdane
Leslie deBie
Darren Reeder
John Stutz
Loren Winnick
John Snow Jr.
Dave Verhulst
Cheryl Borecky
Robyn Dinnadge
Jillian Roulet, Superintendent

Day One

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

The 9th Annual Banff National Park Planning Forum was called to order at 9:08 am by Don McLeod. Don thanked everyone for coming, and noted that it was good to see the large number of public attendees.

Terry Perkins, Lake Louise-Yoho Field Unit Superintendent, welcomed everyone to the forum.

2.0 Superintendents' Opening Remarks

2.1 Terry Perkins

In response to questions regarding why there are two superintendents for Banff National Park, Terry explained that Banff National Park has the highest visitation and number of overnight accommodation facilities of any of the national parks. In essence Banff and Lake Louise are two distinct centers within the park that are each as large on their own as Canada's other National Parks. Each center has its own set of significant hotels, activities, and significant environmental issues, which justifies the presence of two superintendents. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work hand in hand with Jillian.

Terry thanked the Lake Louise Ski Lodge for the use of the facility.

Terry welcomed three new members to the Round Table:

- John Snow Jr. First Nations: Stoney
- Dave Verhulst Guiding Organizations
- Cheryl Borecky Youth Organizations

Terry thanked everyone for coming to Lake Louise. Based on recommendations in the 2005 forum to allow for additional focus on the areas North and West of Castle Junction, holding the forum in Lake Louise was a good idea.

He noted the following objectives of the Banff Planning Forum:

- to discuss progress in implementing the Banff Park Management Plan
- to provide a broad perspective on the Management Planning Process
- to offer public and interest groups the opportunity for an open discussion about emerging initiatives that will affect the future management of Banff National Park

He acknowledged the modification of the forum format and workshops this year. There will be less time spent on presentation of information and increased opportunity for dialogue. There will be opportunity for Round Table members and public to participate in a Superintendent's "open mike" question and answer session. The goal of the Icefields Parkway presentation is to flag the potential for a management plan amendment. No direction has been set for this project.

Terry recognized 2006 as a busy, challenging period for Banff National Park. A summary of work has been captured in the Year in Review document, along with fact sheets on a number of ongoing initiatives. Significant progress has been made on:

- The Lake Louise Area Strategy
- Twinning of the Trans Canada Highway
- Recapitalization of Park and National Historic Site assets resulting from the increased entrance fees

He also highlighted upcoming initiatives for the Lake Louise Field Unit, acknowledging that with assistance from everyone involved, there is great confidence for continued progress on all of these initiatives:

- Significant construction on washrooms for upper Lake Louise and Bow Lake
- Finalizing the TCH fence alignment plan for the vicinity of Lake Louise, with additional consulting happening after the highway is paved, and final decisions to be announced in Spring 2007
- Addressing the pressure for additional recreation opportunities
- Completing trail improvements in Larch Valley and Eiffel Lakes (Paradise Valley is already complete)
- Advancing ski area long range plans

Terry closed his remarks by calling for an open and professional discussion and inviting all participants to find an opportunity to see the test fence near the Station Restaurant (aimed at keeping wildlife out of the Hamlet) and another fence experiment West of the highway 93 interchange (testing fencing below the surface to eliminate aprons and stronger top wire to prevent damage from blow down).

2.2 Jillian Roulet

Jillian began by welcoming everyone to the forum. The following remarks summarize her perspective on the achievements of the Banff field unit over the past year as well as the upcoming challenges for next year. (A more detailed overview relative to implementation of the management plan is available in the Year In Review document.)

- The level of park visitation appears to be similar to last year, and while we have not analyzed the numbers fully for the year, we know we are having more peaks of visitation on the weekends, which suggest a higher proportion of visitors are local or regional. We are looking at ways to handle the line-ups at the gates more effectively.
- Our campground use is up modestly from last year due in part to good weather and no construction at Tunnel Mountain and CRS.
- We have made a number of improvements to visitor facilities through investment of fees.
 - Minnewanka washroom – open in spring – solar panels – prototype for other areas
 - Paving on various roads – Norquay, Sunshine, Bow Valley Pkwy
 - Flag stone walkways at Admin grounds and Cascade Gardens – will continue that project next year
- The planning program for Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff (LATB) is almost completed. Thank you to all stakeholders and staff involved. Recommendations from the Advisory group have been taken to public and there is considerable public support. Some minor changes will be made and a proposed amendment to the management plan will be provided to the Minister for her consideration.
- We have already proceeded with a feasibility study of a proposed commuter trail between Canmore and Banff, which was a priority of the LATB Advisory Group. The Province provided us with some money to support the study which looked at the feasibility of locating a trail within the corridor between the wildlife fences. This appears to be feasible and a consultant is now developing some pricing scenarios for us.
- We have also have been working with an integrated problem-solving group to address some issues related to managing for grizzly bears. The IPS process being used helps integrate people's values, perceptions and beliefs with more scientifically based information in decision making. This group is now referred to as the grizzly bear dialogue group. We have been looking at:
 - a management approach to the Allenby pass area, as there have been a number of encounters between humans and bears in the past and we need a new approach to managing people in that area.
 - a grizzly bear mortality target to ensure long term population sustainability for grizzly bears
 - other potential targets related to habitat that could or should be included in a plan amendment
- With respect to national historic sites, we are completing a major planning and public consultation program to write management plans for the 15 national historic sites in the mountain parks. These are required by legislation, by the end of 2006. We had a final round of public consultation meetings earlier this week
- The Ecolntegrity Education project which was presented at the planning forum last year by Ann Morrow, has been advancing. We piloted a number of programs this year and have developed some partnerships. We had more interpretive staff roving this summer, and last winter we tried some approaches to roving in the winter
- As part of the Ecolntegrity Education project we are looking at a potential volunteer program, a topic that has been raised at the last few planning forums. People want the opportunity for meaningful involvement in their national parks through volunteering so we are looking at the types of volunteer programs and projects that could be offered in order to complement what Parks Canada does.
- There were a number of volunteer initiatives over the past year and want to thank those who were involved:

- The mountain bike community worked on trails in the Stewart Canyon area and Hoodoos
 - AMPPE did a clean-up of the Sulphur mountain area
 - Starbucks organized a clean up at Lake Minnewanka
- Over the past year we have continued to work with Forestry Canada, the provinces and other national parks in reducing the spread of mountain pine beetle. We have two more years of funding for this program.
- We have been involved with the Town of Banff on a number of initiatives including their community plan review and the Mayor's mini-summit to advance improvements to mass transit in the Bow Valley.
- From a staff perspective there are some significant changes to our management team:
 - Pam Veinotte who has been the manager of Communications and lead for Tourism for a number of years is moving to New Brunswick to be superintendent of Fundy National Park. We will ensure that we have staff to fulfill the role Pam played relative to tourism in the mountain area.
 - Sheila Luey has accepted the position vacated by Pam and will move from Lake Louise to Banff next January.
- Nationally, there have been some changes within Parks Canada. A new Directorate has been formed in our National Office to put a stronger focus on visitor experience and to better integrate the delivery of our mandate for resource protection, visitor experience and engagement of Canadians.

Jillian closed by thanking everyone for participating in this forum, "I know it is an imposition on your time and I very much appreciate your commitment to national parks and national historic sites. I am looking forward to our discussions today and tomorrow."

3.0 Round Table Participants' Perspectives

Each roundtable member provided a brief (five minute) presentation in response to the question:

"What has your sector/organization accomplished in 2005/2006 toward achieving the vision and objectives of the Banff National Park Management Plan."

Following is a summary of their comments:

3.1 Robin Nickel, National Park Users

Robin noted that one of the functions of the Calgary Area Outdoor Council (CAOC) is to facilitate communications between various sectors of the "outdoors community". This drives CAOC's strong interest in keeping the outdoors community, particularly the outdoor recreation and environmental care sectors, informed about important Parks Canada initiatives. Towards that end the CAOC has been pleased that during this past year a number of Parks Canada personnel have submitted their public service messages for posting in their monthly newsletter and have also arranged to give public presentations at the CAOC premises. Robin concluded by extending an ongoing invitation to Parks Canada to continue working with CAOC in this regard.

3.2 Tracey Henderson, Local & Regional Environmental Groups

Tracey began by expressing gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the planning forum on behalf of the organizations she represents. These include the Bow Valley Naturalists, UTSB Research, the Grizzly Bear Alliance, the Defenders of Wildlife Canada, and the Bow River Keepers.

She then stated that in a very general sense the conservation sector is the voice for the park and the champion for the park. This voice is required because the economic success of the industries and businesses operating in the park is predicated upon continued growth, while the park itself is finite in size and in ability to deal with increasing human pressures and development. While the Management Plan and the National Parks Act give the direction and mandate to make the right decisions for the right reasons, the conservation sector keeps Parks Canada accountable to the mandate. Quoting from the management plan, “the maintenance of ecological integrity through the protection of natural resources shall be the first priority when considering park zoning and visitor use in a management plan,” Tracey stated that this is the lens through which all decisions and developments within the Park are evaluated.

On a more specific level Tracey noted her sector’s participation in the many regulatory processes and forums with the following comments:

- the *IPS process* has been particularly satisfying and has led to some pro-active management decisions dealing with seasonal trail closures and access restrictions. Decisions that have historically been quite divisive. It may not be the speediest process but it really is a productive way to tackle just these kinds of issues.
- The *Trans Canada Highway plan* was a similarly successful multi-stakeholder process that allowed us to integrate transportation, safety and wildlife needs. We encourage all stakeholders to continue to work together to get the funding needed for the rest of the project. There is still a need to continue focusing effort on decreasing highway railway wildlife mortality throughout Banff, Kootenay and Yoho.
- We look forward to working with PC to explore ways we can help with the implementation of aspects of the *Ecointegrity project*. Many of our organizational mandates focus on actively cultivating an understanding and appreciation for the wonderful natural assets of this park.

Tracey noted a number of items of concern to her sector:

- *A shift or perceived shift in interpretation of Parks Canada’s mandate under the NPA.* While the mandate is multi-faceted, combining a need to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the park and to provide memorable visitor experiences, it should reflect the first priority of Ecological Integrity.
- *The decision to host the skins game this past summer* given the commitment to quality visitor experience. Education and visitor experience are extremely important both unto themselves and as important contributors to ecological integrity. Quality visitor experiences “provide a world-class visitor experience where ecological values are fundamental to that experience.”(Alan Latourelle, CEO of Parks Canada).
- The hope that the release of *the new Ski Area Guidelines*, while bringing more certainty to ski hill operators, will better reflect your mandate and will ensure that the operation of the ski hills will provide quality visitor experience befitting a National Park while in no way compromising Ecological Integrity.
- The request that Parks Canada *stop approving new projects and renewing temporary leases for ski hills until they come up with their long range plans.*

Approving projects without the context provided by long range plans is irresponsible and counter to the objectives and goals of the management plan.

- Parks Canada should consider following up on *the Environmental Assessment (EA) processes and how they are used in the Park*. There are a multitude of mitigations committed to in EAs, and while the mitigations are the tools and insurance to prevent negative impacts of any given development on ecological integrity, there seems to be little to no agency capacity to follow up on mitigations. Evaluating the implementation status, effectiveness and the cumulative effects are recommended.

Tracey closed by looking forward to active participation in the upcoming management review and ongoing consultative processes, and to continuing to act as champions for the park and vocal supporters of all decisions that are in line with the mandate of the NPA and MP.

3.3 Ray Andrews, Provincial Government of Alberta (Alberta Community Development; Parks & Protected Areas)

Ray began by expressing gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the 2006 Annual Planning Forum. He acknowledged:

- the ongoing emphasis of developing strategies and implementing positive actions to ensure the ecological integrity of the ecosystem.
- the opportunity to not only review Parks Canada's progress towards implementation of it's management plan goals, but also to reflect on, how as a provincial agency, they are managing lands adjacent to Banff National Park in larger Central Rockies Ecosystem.

The following is Ray's summary of the contributions of the sector towards achieving the vision and objectives of the Banff National Park Management Plan.

With respect to Ecosystem Management:

- Alberta PPA is pleased to tell the forum that in 2005/06 we expanded on last year's fire regime analysis work by completing a landscape fire disturbance model and environmental screening which will be the first step towards a major landscape restoration project we hope to get underway with in the next couple of years in Spray Valley Provincial Park. The importance of this to Parks Canada is in the areas of some of our shared boundaries and watersheds such as the south end of Spray Lakes and the Canmore Nordic Centre where we hope to cooperate on prescribed burns and regional fire breaks identified in Banff's fire management plan. We look forward to finalizing and implementing these cooperative actions this upcoming year.
- The two new wildlife crossing structures in the Bow Valley at Dead Mans flats and across the Rundle Forebay are beginning to make a significant contribution to regional wildlife connectivity and have been successfully used a number of species including bears, cougars and moose.
- Provincial staff will be continuing wildlife corridor monitoring and research in 2006 through the lower Bow Valley. Priority areas will include the lands east of Canmore ; the Benchlands area including work as far west as Carrot creek and monitoring around the Rundle Forebay; Canmore Nordic Centre and the Kananaskis Valley.
- Last year I reported on the development and implementation of Alberta's Bear Smart communities program. I am pleased to report that in the Bow Valley watershed east of the Banff gate to Seebe, the Alberta government has been working with local

jurisdictions, NGOs, private citizens and business to implement a community based program to reduce wildlife-human conflicts. The program is referenced as Bow Valley WildSmart.

- We support the proactive measures of temporary closure of trails and valleys to human use so wildlife can be undisturbed during key and critical periods. This action is similar to the management action of Kananaskis Country.

Related to transportation,

- We would again like to acknowledge the work that the Federal government is doing towards twinning of Highway 1 and would encourage the Federal government to continue to budget for and complete the twinning work.
- In doing this we would also like to express our support for staying on course with the inclusion of state of the art wildlife crossing structures and other environmental mitigations on all sections of the twinning.
- BCEAG's Regional Transportation Study and all partners working together for common solutions.

In the area of Human Use Management,

- We have continued to participate in the development of the Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff human use strategy and support the recommendations of the committee.
 - We would encourage Parks Canada to move forward with the trail /commuter connector adjacent to the Trans-Canada highway between the Town of Canmore and Banff Townsite.
- The Bow Valley WildSmart initiative is an example of our regional sector working together in educating our common visitors and residences to safe practices while recreating and /or living with wildlife. Reducing the risks and contributing to sustainable human use. I suggest that this is a good example of managing expectations.

With respect to the progress on Management Plans,

- The Ghost Access Management Plan and the Peter Lougheed and Spray Valley Provincial Park Management Plan have been approved and released earlier this year. Both of the plans, which had input from Parks Canada staff, apply to lands that are adjacent to Banff National Park. In developing the plans provincial staff was sensitive to the management objectives of adjacent lands and represent another opportunity to achieve goals both inside the national park and on provincial lands.

Other cooperative efforts between the Provincial, Federal, and local municipal governments on programs and initiatives, continue to be successful and beneficial to all three jurisdictions. These include:

- Wildfire Risk assessments/Fire Smart
- Mountain pine beetle
- BCEAG
- CREILG
- Invasive species management
- Management Planning

3.4 Julie Canning, Banff/Lake Louise Tourism Bureau (BLLTB)

Julie began by giving an overview of what the work of BLLTB involves:

- They currently have sales and marketing on every continent except Africa
- They are the revenue engine for the park
- There are many demands on time at this time of year traveling to trade shows and doing public relations work on behalf of the park
- They also have presence in the Banff, Lake Louise and Field information centers
 - these serve as touch points with consumers, and also as locations for sales and marketing programs
- BLLTB has \$10M to its credit in advocacy partnerships which would equal an advertising budget of \$1.4M
 - An additional levy being added November 1st will enhance the budget to 5.5M by 2010.
 - \$200K will go to special event programs to work toward destination-wide solutions.
- What BLLTB has done in past and continues to do is market responsibly
 - not promoting the park as a place to pet grizzly bears
 - branding embraces the mission of the parks as well as promoting and raising the core values of the park

On behalf of the sector, Julie expressed, “we are proud of this place, and want to teach and share the magic of this place and promote our community and what we have here. We also want Parks to live up to the same standards expected of others operating in the national parks.”

3.5 Megan Squires, Banff Heritage Corporation

Megan began by thanking Parks Canada for the invitation to take part in the 2006 Banff National Park Annual Planning Forum and shared the following remarks:

- I have prepared my presentation today on the basis of the mandate of the Banff Heritage Corporation, and specifically the three tenants of the mandate which focus on protection; preservation; and promotion.
- Similarly, I have framed my review of our activities over the past year in the context of the key themes of the Management Plan for Banff National Park including cultural resource protection, conservation, education, and visitor experience.

With respect to protection and preservation the Banff Heritage Corporation continues to work on a number of initiatives related to cultural resources. The highlights of our efforts this year include:

- Designating the Crosby Home as a Municipal Historic Resource. This designation brings our total number of designations to 8, which for a municipality of the size of Banff, is a significant achievement.
- We continue to work to improve access to the designation program for property owners. Our long-term goal is to continue to expand our inventory of designated resources. It is through designation that we can ensure the protection and preservation of heritage buildings in our community.
- We are currently working with the Province of Alberta as part of the Municipal Heritage Partnership Program to utilize the Canadian Register of Historic Places and to apply the Standards and Guidelines document to our development review and

designation processes. The Municipal Heritage Partnership Program is part of a Canada-wide conservation endeavour called the Historic Places Initiative.

- We recently completed our role in the development and review of the Draft National Historic Sites of the Mountain Parks Management Plans. We were happy to be involved in the planning process and are supportive of the final document that is now on its way to Ottawa for final approval.
- We continue to work with the Planning and Development department on review of applications for development. We have also played a role in the review of the Town of Banff Community Plan.

With respect to promotion, the Banff Heritage Corporation continues to work on a number of education and visitor experience initiatives. The highlights of our efforts to date include:

- Completing work on two interpretive panels that tell the story of the Bow River in the early 1900s. The panels are part of a larger Town project completed this year, which saw the design and installation of 11 interpretive panels along the Bow River pathway from the Canoe Dock to Bow Falls.
- Collectively the interpretive panels address a range of historical, cultural, and natural history topics. They provide a valuable and informative visitor experience within the townsite.
- Earlier this year we partnered with the Friends of Banff National Park to produce an audio walking tour. This is just one example of a heritage tourism product to be developed out of the Banff Historical Walking Tour Brochure.
- At the moment we are working on a redesign and update of the walking tour brochure. The newly named 'Walking Through Banff's History' brochure is due out early in 2007.
- In August we hosted the third annual Doors Open event, which was put on in partnership with Banff Culture Walk. The two events came together to provide a weekend of culture and history for residents and visitors. Overall it was a very successful weekend and plans are already underway for next year's event.
- For the second year, we are presenting awards for excellence in Built Heritage at the Heritage Tourism Awards, which are coming up in November.

3.6 Ben Marriott, Lake Louise Community Council

Ben noted that the LLCC is pleased to once again participate in the annual Planning Forum and even more so because it is held in Lake Louise for the first time ever. He encouraged the other participants to take the opportunity to look around the community, in order to appreciate the exceptional uniqueness and beauty and as well note both the successes and shortcomings of how the community and Parks Canada are presenting this icon to the world.

Ben then shared the following perspective on behalf of the LLCC:

As a non-municipal council with no budget and no staff, we can do very little except advise, participate in study groups and encourage Parks to share the direction we would like to see this community take. While we are delighted about the many improvements and successes of the last year, as a Council we would feel less than honest about claiming too much credit for any of them. A number of the Parks Canada initiatives connected to the Lake Louise Area Strategy that were in limbo have now been worked on or completed and all are welcome improvements to the greater Lake Louise area:

- Changes to the trail system in Paradise Valley and the backcountry camping site there to move people away from areas of better bear habitat to reduce the risk of bear/human incidents and disturbance
- The continuation of the upgrading of the promenade viewing areas and interpretive signage at the lake itself
- Commencement of initiatives to capture and separate hydrocarbons present in run off water in the government parking lot directly adjacent to Louise Creek
- The restoration and site hardening of the rest sites for hikers at the Plain of Six Glaciers Teahouse and Lake Agnes Teahouse
- The continued study of the feasibility of a wildlife fence surrounding the Hamlet of Lake Louise
- Design and planning for new directional signage for motorists
- Design of a new and enhanced welcoming sign for visitors
- Skoki trail user survey in preparation for a possible bus shuttle to Temple Lodge
- Commencement of another transportation study to look at the feasibility of a public transportation system to Lake Louise and Moraine Lake and other possible options to reduce vehicle clutter during the busy summer months

The LLCC is currently involved in a number of projects:

- Working closely with Parks Canada on its 5-year review of our Community Plan to see how the plan is working and to gather information and concerns about shortfalls that may exist. This State of the Community Report is an accurate and complete picture of the Hamlet and is in its final drafting stage.
- FireSmart plans continue to move forward this fall and early winter as Parks Canada puts forest fire protection planning in place around the Hamlet.
- Parks continued to move forward with its study of the test section of wildlife fencing to monitor the effectiveness of the railway wildlife “bear boards”. The LLCC has had a number of updates on program. The monitoring is planned to continue through the winter and possibly into next summer depending on the progress of the highway construction.
- The progress of the work for the twinning of the TCH has moved along very well this past year and the recent welcome announcement of additional funding for the twinning was received with a note of disappointment when we learned how little extra twinning this increased funding was actually going to buy us. We hope that costs for construction and materials will soon stabilize or decrease, and this, combined with yet more money from the federal government, will mean that we can see this project completed sooner rather than later.
- 2006 saw a long term goal of Parks Canada’s realized when our struggling and diminished trailer court finally came to a less than happy conclusion for its residents. All trailers were removed by July and the former residents have either left the community or found accommodation elsewhere. This has been a controversial and emotional objective for Parks for many, many years. All that remains now is for the area to be rehabilitated and plans are well underway for that.
- Our efforts to improve our recycling program got a boost this year as we have moved forward with the implementation of a plan that will see recycling trailers moved to a few key areas of the community to encourage and facilitate the recycling of various materials that until now have mostly ended up in landfills.
- As more funding has been released to Parks Canada for infrastructure improvement we are pleased to see the replacement of the existing washroom facilities in the day use parking area in at the lake. The project tender has been awarded and site excavation has taken place. We also welcome the replacement of other washroom facilities such as Bow Lake and Emerald Lake.

- The Lake Louise Council and AMPPE have lobbied for some time to have a regular breakfast meeting between our Superintendent and business owners – similar to the one that has been running in Banff for some time. This September saw the introduction of this bi-monthly breakfast meeting. We feel this will provide an excellent forum for direct, open and informal communication between the Superintendent and the business community.
- The electric fence that was installed around our tenting campground some five years ago continues to be an effective tool for keeping bears and people separated and allowing all summer use of the camping area – this has been a great success story for park visitors and wildlife.

Ben also expressed issues of major concern on behalf of the LLCC:

- The ability of Lake Louise Mountain Resort to remain in a viable economic position. When the long-range plans for the ski areas are finally made public by Parks Canada, we strongly hope that there is a balance between development and environmental health that will allow the ski areas to stay competitive.
- While visitor experience is now one of the three pillars of park policy we would like to see more communication about how this should be interpreted with respect management planning.
- We feel Parks has slipped a bit in the area of communicating their messages. We encourage Parks to keep good communications with stakeholders as a priority.
- We still face significant challenges in Lake Louise for adequate and appropriate housing for our residents. We need Parks to help lead the way to improve this situation.
- The recruitment and retention of suitable and adequate employees also continues to be a major concern for us. While this is a Canada-wide problem, the lack of housing options and community facilities make our challenge even more difficult than many other similarly affected areas.
- We feel that road repaving is falling behind the level of service we should be providing in a world famous tourist destination. While there was quite a bit of re-surfacing done this past summer and fall, many secondary roads in Lake Louise still need some new asphalt. The Moraine Lake road is in terrible condition and urgently needs a major upgrade regardless of the new transportation study outcome.
- There was a lot of talk at last year's planning forum about Parks moving towards accepting and facilitating more volunteer participation to help with such things as interpretative and maintenance programs. We have heard little about how these plans are progressing and encourage Parks Canada to continue to envisage the use of volunteer assistance where it is suitable and effective.

3.7 Ernest Waterchief, Siksika Nation

Ernest began by thanking Parks Canada for their ongoing cooperation with land claims. He continued his remarks as follows, "the land claim lying between Banff and Lake Louise is ongoing regarding the 26 _ miles timber limit. There were three timber limits the government gave the Blackfoot tribes; the Sheep Mountain to the Blood Tribe, the Porcupine Hills to the Pagan, and this one for the Siksika. Such things were signed in good faith, but have led to us giving up needed resources. What we have lost, we now struggle to get back. This claim was filed in 1960. While we have made some progress in the last few years, we feel that federal negotiators are unreliable and there is a lack of continuity in the process and in the management, as people change jobs. We have

spent a lot of money on negotiating claims and would like to see this settled. We are frequently involved in the Parks Canada areas, so it is good that we are here. Thank you everyone for your time.”

3.8 Dave Poulton, National Conservation Organizations

Dave mentioned that while he gave opportunity for partners (Sierra Club, WWF, CPAS) to provide feedback prior to the Forum, he sees it as a positive sign that they did not provide issues to bring to the table with Parks Canada.

The conservation organizations are involved in the following initiatives related to the Banff Management Plan:

- The Green Budget Coalition, highlighting the need for federal support and funding for ecological integrity initiatives
- Consultation around policy development and implementation; work with national local environmental community to build public appreciation and support for Canada’s system of national parks.
- Partnering with Parks Canada where there is a new level of support for educational programs that reinforce environmental messages like how to responsibly use parks and appreciate their values.
- The Grizzly Bear Dialogue Group (GBDG) has shown progress and great spirit in collaborating with stakeholders. This is due to excellent facilitation, involvement of credible scientists, and park managers and stakeholders working with open minds.
- Trans Canada Highway (TCH) progress is good to see. We continue to be part of lobby for further funds. We recognize the opportunity to network that will hopefully extend to other transportation issues, like the CPR issue.
- Encouraging collaboration between the four parks, it is great to see the mountain park block work as a whole, and have a close relationship with its provincial neighbours.
- Good to see progress on volunteer program.
- Lack of progress on ski area long term planning is disappointing. It remains a key issue at Forums. Now that the ground work has been done it will be optimal for things to move more quickly.
- The issues related to the decision making process involved for the Telus Skins Game have left a fear that it may set a precedent for attracting visitors to the park without attention being given to park values. That fear is being relieved by the formation of a Parks Canada Activity Assessment Group. This group will consider new guidelines to assess opportunities for special events and recreational activities and ensure they are integrated with park mission and values.

3.9 Crosbie Cotton, National Park Ski Area Association

Crosbie began by thanking Parks Canada and commenting on the positive progress on initiatives like the Grizzly Bear Dialogue and Trans Canada Highway.

Crosbie provided the following remarks on behalf of the sector:

It is ten years ago this month that the Bow Valley Study (BVS) put together its recommendations that are foundational to the Banff Management Plan. Since the majority of the BVS projections have failed to materialize, it would be wise to look at the Management Plan to see where these projections render past decisions invalid. We need to renew the plan, using valid science and research to base decisions on. We need to research why growth in park visitation has not increased at the same rate as local (community, provincial, national) growth.

With respect to alignment of the ski hills with the priorities of the management plan, Crosbie reported the following:

- Lake Louise Ski Area has won 2 Heritage Tourism Awards for environmental programs
- Sunshine has this week been honoured for its sustainable tourism initiative and received a national award (out of 365 resorts) for its water conservation program. Water usage has decreased by 29% per skier per visit.
- Sunshine and Lake Louise will partner this year to host the celebrity ski event in support of Water Keepers Alliance. This event will raise money for water conservation and healthy water initiatives and about \$1M of this year's dollars will stay in Canada.
- Norquay has passionate new owners. The vision is for Norquay to remain an economically sustainable ski area while at the same time developing an educational program with potential to function year round.
- Regarding heritage tourism and training, ski areas have stepped up like never before. 1200 staff members (out of 1900) go through educational programming every year.

On behalf of the sector, Crosbie expressed the following significant concerns:

- Ski areas are increasingly becoming regional resorts, where they used to enjoy destination resort status. 12% decrease in visitors and 40% decrease in destination traffic has an impact.
- Looming are 10 charters potentially being cancelled this winter with a potential impact of \$2.2M.
- This looming decline will have a negative impact on all local businesses.
- There is a tremendous need to seek independent advice on this challenge as initial analysis shows we are not competitive. Where other ski areas like Valemount and Kicking Horse are investing and making improvements, we cannot.

Crosbie closed by expressing appreciation for the regional transportation study and the Mayor's mini-summit. He encouraged Parks Canada to move ahead with LATB suggestions like the gondola to Norquay and to continue to their commitment to quality science and to the new visitor experience secretariat. He thanked everyone for their partnership in the ongoing attempts to make the ski areas more viable.

3.10 Andre Gareau, Town of Canmore

Andre began by thanking Parks Canada for the invitation to this planning forum. He prefaced speaking about Canmore's progress toward achieving the vision and objectives of Banff National Park's management plan with the statement that the management plan is largely about ensuring park sustainability, and about communicating these sustainability objectives.

Canmore continues to work with a variety of regional groups to attain the community, economic, and environmental sustainability goals that all of the organizations share.

Andre summarized the Town's contributions and perspective with respect to the following sustainability initiatives:

- Working with the Bow Corridor Ecosystem Advisory Group (BCEAG) and with the municipalities of Bighorn and Banff on many common projects, such as a regional waste management commission.
- Reducing the load on the environment by supplying water and sewage treatment (via pipelines) to the hamlet of Harvie Heights, right on the eastern entrance of the Park. That way, smaller communities don't have to build their own treatment plants, and there is less chance of contaminating the Bow River.
- Completing a commuter trail for hikers, cyclists, and others between the west end of the town of Canmore and the village of Harvie Heights. We are hopeful that this trail will soon be extended westward to the town of Banff. On that last topic, we look forward to reviewing and commenting on a feasibility study which will soon be presented to the affected town councils.
- Instituting a Wildsmart initiative, largely to communicate with residents and visitors about their opportunities and responsibilities in living responsibly with wildlife.
- Progressing, in cooperation with the Province (which has the responsibility for wildlife protection) in delineating and protecting wildlife corridors, on the north and south sides of the Bow Valley. Situated as we are on major wildlife corridors between Banff and provincial protected areas, Canmore residents have long been aware of the crucial importance of planning for wildlife movement, on a regional and even on a continental scale. We have been recognized as pioneers in many aspects of this work, including our use of conservation easements, which give an added layer of permanent protection, on top of zoning protection.
- Implementing green building initiatives (leading by example with our Silver LEED award winning Canmore Civic Centre), and our Natural Step Initiative -- where we are a ground-breaking pilot project selected and sponsored by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
- Establishing sustainability screens for major projects, to ensure that new developments are socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable in the long haul.
- Tackling the major challenge of social sustainability with perpetually-affordable housing measures; four projects are now being built and will be operational in the coming year, and other projects are being planned.

In closing Andre noted that many Canmore residents work in the National Park as well as in Canmore, and since they reside in Canmore they are contributing to residential sustainability for Banff park employees! He suggested that more recognition should be forthcoming to Canmore residents for their role in sustaining the Park with a free annual pass as an example of a fine gesture in that regard. He looked forward to a continuing partnership with Banff National Park.

3.11 Bernard March, Advisory Development Board (ADB)

Bernard explained that the Advisory Development Board was created by Parks Canada in 1996 as a volunteer board that reviews developments publicly, to ensure that they are

appropriate and meet the requirements of the National Parks Act, as well as relevant regulations and planning.

In 2005, the Board reviewed four redevelopment proposals to a value of \$1.2M. The projects brought to the Board in 2005 were well prepared and presented. Credit for the good work goes to the Parks development staff for the thorough documentation and delivery in a reasonable timeframe. These proposals included:

- 1 for Juniper Lodge on the edge of the Banff Townsite
- 2 associated with the Resort of the Canadian Rockies
- 1 in Field, British Columbia

In 2006, the Board has not yet been requested to review any development or redevelopment proposals. The ADB was created during the development boom of the nineties when developments in the parks were substantial. The challenge for the Board will be to maintain focus in the absence of developments and the decrease in redevelopment applications.

The Board has been active in reviewing its Terms of Reference, which has been useful in identifying some areas for discussion with Parks Canada. They are pleased to report that after a two year review process, the Terms of Reference have been ratified.

3.12 Richard Chesham, Small Business Association of Banff

Richard began by saying that he is proud of the positive initiatives that have moved forward this year. The small business association is very glad to see Parks Canada moving towards educational and experiential programs. While they are not a funded organization like the BLLTB, their members contribute to the millions of dollars that go into funding other organizations. They are also members of many other organizations and committees. As advocacy group, they are happy to see the way things are moving forward, with investment in infrastructure such as outhouses and washrooms.

On behalf of the sector, Richard highlighted the following opportunities for Parks leadership:

- The regional market: With the regional market growing faster than the destination visitor market, it is important for Parks Canada to reach out to this market with their key messages. The park is a huge classroom and can be viewed as such. These are the people with time and money to spend in the park, and they are open to Park messages. They have the potential to bring forward park funding as a priority at the political level.
- International/offshore visitors: In future we will continue to see more and more people coming to work in this area from offshore. We have a golden opportunity to educate people on park values and reasons why protected places are so important. In fact it's probably an obligation, given that we are a world heritage site, to have these people carry these important messages back to their home countries.
- Campgrounds: I'd like to emphasize the importance of campgrounds, and the marketing of campgrounds, and of trying to maximize the potential there.

3.13 Dan Bell, Aquatics Advisory Group

Dan began by explaining that the Aquatics Advisory Group (AAG) is a collective group of stakeholders with a vested interest in the aquatics of Banff national park. They are comprised of several government bodies, NGO's and public business stakeholders such as fly fishers, other anglers, rafting guys and fishing guys. Aquatics are the foundation of any healthy ecosystem, and water is a basic building block of life.

Dan expressed the following concern on behalf of the sector:

“Asked to identify some of our top visitor experience issues, my concern is that in the past five years, I have found myself having to explain what is wrong with the river, far more often than what is right. The Banff Bow Valley study identified the Upper Bow River as the most impacted part of the Banff Bow Valley ecosystem, and unfortunately this has not and doesn't seem to be changing.”

Highlighting what the sector accomplished this year, or endeavored to accomplish, Dan provided the following summary:

- a pro trout inventory and DNA work that was funded by the species at risk and DFO. It continued at a variety of locations throughout Banff national park as a joint collaborative project with the DFO, the province of Alberta, and the UBC.
- Yellowstone to Yukon has initiated a project with Parks Canada, the province of Alberta and CDC. With respect to both the recovery efforts and aquatic health on the Upper Bow River system, it is to be a summary of existing information, research needs and gaps, and additional interested groups will be asked to participate in review once the preliminary info is collected. I want to emphasize that the initiation of this study and literature review is a Yellowstone to Yukon initiative, funded with their resources. We commend them on this effort.
- The work to remove non-native brook trout from the Devon Lakes has continued. The monitoring indicates that the brook trout population in the lake has been reduced significantly since the program was initiated in 2002. Despite my best efforts, I have not been able to find any similar projects that have accomplished this goal anywhere in North America. Control of non-native brook trout populations is one thing, but removal of them is quite another, particularly when using botanical methods vs. chemical technology. The chemical technology in our view is not an acceptable method. The goal of the removal of these brook trout from the Devon Lakes has not been accomplished.
- The ten year project that was initiated to determine effects of fire on aquatic ecosystems, especially amphibian abundance, distribution, travel patterns, and habitat values continues. We commend Parks Canada on their long term commitment and we look forward to a comprehensive evaluation of this project.
- A recovery strategy and action plan for endangered Banff Springs snails will soon be posted for public review. Critical habitat protection will be achieved through communication and education as well as direct protection measures and enforcement.

Dan raised the following additional concerns on behalf of the sector:

- Projects like the Banff Springs snails and even the Devon lakes project are certainly commendable, but need to be addressed in light of the need to improve the Upper Bow River aquatics ecosystem as a whole. If Parks Canada championed the Upper Bow River system with the same commitment and support as these projects, we would be looking at the health of the Upper Bow River ecosystem in an entirely

different light, and unfortunately this river system continues to be the most impacted sector of the Banff Bow Valley ecosystem.

- After speaking with the majority of the aquatic advisory members there is a general consensus that the committee isn't functioning in an advisory capacity, but rather we are being advised by Parks Canada. The Committee is decreed by some of the members as ineffective, and there is a strong interest to be real participants in the process. If Parks Canada is serious about engaging the public, why isn't the public participating in the process of projects such as Devon Lakes and the cutthroat trout inventory? We would like to see an independent science committee put in place to review these strategies.

In closing Dan noted the successful comeback of the Yellowstone National Park grizzly population. In recent years there have been lots of studies that have shown that spawning cutthroat trout are one of the foremost important food sources for these Grizzlies, comprising 90% of the Grizzlies' diet during the spawning season. The conclusion is that this trout is a vital food source for lactating females with cubs. At one time, the Upper Bow River sustained a very strong population of westslope cutthroat and bull trout. Due to various factors, this has declined to the point that downstream from the falls we have no reproducing cutthroat, and upstream from the falls the population has been diluted or exterminated due to introduction of non-natives. Having said that, once again it needs to be understood that there will never be a healthy Banff Bow Valley river valley until there is a healthy Upper Bow River, vital to both the ecological and economical health of Banff Bow Valley park.

3.14 Wanda Bogdane, Association of Mountain Parks for Protection & Enjoyment

Wanda began by thanking Parks Canada for inviting AMPPE and fellow round table participants to the forum and for listening to their thoughts. She explained that the Association for Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment (AMPPE) is a member-based organization that promotes and supports sustainable tourism alongside healthy communities, economies and the environment in Canada's Mountain Parks.

AMPPE is a stakeholder dedicated to helping Parks Canada deliver on its mandate and develop consistent and balanced decisions. On behalf of AMPPE, Wanda's remarks reflected their contributions as follows:

- Implemented the second annual AMPPE run outdoor clean up in Banff National Park
- Helped drive interest for this past spring's outreach for the Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff to the community
- Provided a balanced perspective in discussions on grizzly bears with a commitment to supporting recommendations based on objective and credible science. We ensured that these recommendations have teeth and substance to help our decision making over the long term
- Worked with the new Visitor Experience and External Relations Directorate to help support the development of this critical and long overdue unit
- Advocated the Federal Government for additional revenue for the Trans-Canada Highway Twinning
- Continued our role on more stakeholder groups than I could count

- Participated in a geocaching workshop in Gatineau Quebec, assisting in the creation of a well-thought out recommendation to the Minister's Office on how to manage this budding new activity. We support Parks' openness to more non-traditional activities for the future of our parks.
- Partnered directly with Parks Canada to create a biodegradable backcountry garbage bag for outdoor enthusiasts across the mountain parks so they could learn more about and have a tool for 'leave no trace' practices
- Communicated Parks Canada's values during work with the tourism industry as we progressed the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism forward into 2007

Wanda also summarized AMPPE's key areas of focus for 2007:

- Learning
 - Teaching Canadians and visitors alike about the wonders of nature through experiencing the national parks.
 - Teaching sustainable decision making through objective well founded research for a sustainable environment, economy and community. A National Park is Canada's most dynamic classroom – for example, teaching hands on, applied science to youth, based on objective findings.
 - Providing opportunities for Canada's new citizens to connect with parks. We need to foster national political will that support the parks system, so they personally understand why these treasures matter and why they should put weight behind political policy that protects and celebrates them.
 - I recently heard Martha Honey with the International Ecotourism Society explain the benefit of inspiring environmental stewardship in visitors who otherwise would not have a chance to understand the value of protection through enjoyment.
 - Holding fresh events and activities for people to “get park values”, using learning opportunities as a great gateway.
- Partnerships
 - It is refreshing to see efforts with local municipalities and councils aligning more often. We hope this continues, especially between the Town of Banff's new Visitor Experience Coordinator and Parks Canada's Visitor Experience Directorate
 - To bring in stakeholders and ensure that accountability and meaningful input is strategically applied to on the ground projects during interregional projects
 - Internally within Parks itself – there is a need to resurrect a strong communications team. We are concerned with the current gap from Jasper to Banff and encourage quick recruitment of a skilled staff to keep stakeholders and Parks staff connected
- Health
 - Providing support to assets, infrastructure and events in response to the health nose dive affecting Canadians and Albertans
 - This will get people off the couch and dually provide training grounds for amateur and high performance athletes as we walk down the road toward to the 2010 Olympics

- We want to assist the Province of Alberta in achieving their wish of increasing the number of healthy Albertans, and we hope that Canada's national parks will be on board as supporters of this vision
- Equal Weighting
 - I would like to finish by noting the importance of equal weighting of the components of Parks Canada's mandate within the coming 2008 Management Planning process.
 - We have a never seen opportunity for the coming plan by way of the Visitor Experience Directorate. And we may not have information from the social science studies taking place now in time to feed this into the Plan itself, but we are hopeful that the work of the unit will add an injection of balance never before seen into a tool that affects every facet of our parks.

3.15 Leslie deBie, Friends of Banff

Leslie began by sharing that education and awareness about national park values, ethics, natural and cultural heritage and services are provided both within and beyond the boundaries of the park. Introduction to this knowledge is a fundamental part of each visitor's experiences. This year the Friends of Banff National Park created several new programs that worked to educate and raise the awareness of the visitor about national park values as well as the natural and cultural heritage of the park. The following remarks summarize their perspective on these contributions:

- The new Lake Minnewanka Bike Roving project started in the summer of 2006. The Lake Minnewanka area has one of the most frequently used wildlife corridors in Banff National Park, with an abundance of activity involving grizzly and black bears as well as wolves and cougars. Our primary objective with this project was to inform people about issues of ecological integrity with regards to Banff National Park. This involved speaking about wildlife movement around this area in order to promote safety for both visitors and wildlife and explain the important culture and history of the area. This project was done completely by interpreters on bicycles. Each day during the summer season two of the Living With Wildlife crew rode from downtown Banff to the Lake Minnewanka area pulling a bike carrier loaded with educational props. Altogether, the interpreters spoke with several thousand persons and rode approximately 1000 kilometers each on their bicycles. Stops along the way included Cascade Ponds, Upper Bankhead, Lake Minnewanka picnic area, Two Jack picnic area and then on to Johnson Lake. Riding bicycles helped the interpreters increase their awareness of the habitat being used by the wildlife in the area. It also avoided the use of fossil fuels, promoting an "environmentally friendly" lifestyle, and setting a great example of how to explore the area in an environmentally friendly way. The interpreters were able to connect more easily with the visitors and provide them with an opportunity to learn about the park from a passionate and informed interpreter.
- A daily presentation about wildlife and other parks related issues was initiated this summer. This was an informal talk that occurred in the Banff Avenue Park during the busy time of the day. Our interpreters were able to speak with the many visitors to the town of Banff that might not otherwise have had the opportunity to learn directly from someone about the natural and cultural heritage of Banff National Park. Through the use of our edu-kits and wildlife props we were able to engage thousands of visitors in conversation about the ecological integrity of BNP

- Also this summer, Park Radio was able to upgrade its old transmitter to a new and more powerful transmitter, enabling our signal to be more consistent throughout the Bow Valley. Park Radio continues to create informative programming that is directly linked to the natural and cultural heritage of Banff National Park.

3.16 Darren Reeder, Banff/Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association

Darren explained that BLLHMA represents 43 hotels and 5000 individuals in the valley. Darren provided the following summary of the sector's successes:

- We are vitally connected to the parks' management strategy and we are proud of our successes here
- We are rated as a green, eco-friendly high density area
- We have an impact on and through our employees. They are the ambassadors to our guests. Our behaviour as employers, as models to our staff is very important.
- We support the Heritage Tourism Strategy (Banff's Best) plans to develop a book as both a training tool and visitor gift.
- We also are on board lobbying for further funds to continue TCH twinning.

Darren also provided a summary of the sector's concerns:

- On capacity: no further capacity for build-out in Banff amounts to a formula for stagnation. The municipality then is forced to increase taxes, fees, and business operators are then left at a competitive disadvantage.
- With increasing numbers of visitors, we can't ignore the growing need for both private and public infrastructure, including asset renewal
- We face growing labour shortages, and need to focus on the worker experience, with the opportunity to market a work/lifestyle package that appeals to those looking for employment
- We need to focus more attention on the Parks mandate of the three pillars, learn it, practice it, and model it for our staff and visitors to take away with them.

3.17 John Stutz, Town of Banff

John began by thanking Parks Canada for the opportunity to provide an update on the Town's accomplishments and progress in implementing the Banff National Park Management Plan's vision and objectives. He provided the Town's perspective on five areas where they are making significant progress:

- Community Plan: We began the Banff Community Plan review in Nov. 2005 and we're pleased to report we're now reviewing the initial draft. An important aspect of the Community Plan review is commercial build out and land use analysis. The Town has now reached build out, having allocated all of the commercial space allowed under the 1998 amendment to the National Parks Act. We're working closely with Parks Canada on a Commercial Build Out Analysis in order to address what this means to our community and how we will be able deliver future services for both residents and visitors. As part of the analysis we will look carefully at land use and examine our zoning to determine how to guide future development for the highest and best use. Since Banff is mandated by the Parks Act to be a service centre for visitors, we need to be certain that we can provide visitors and residents with all of the basic and essential services they require. The Town has a public hearing

scheduled for mid-November to hear input on delivering essential services over the long term.

- **Banff.refreshing:** Work with business and the community has been initiated in order to determine how best to begin the Banff.refreshing project in 2007. The aim of this project is to replace the 100 year old infrastructure on the 100 and 200 blocks of Banff Avenue and improve pedestrian space, enhancing our downtown to appropriately reflect our natural environment and to position Banff as a town within a National Park and a World Heritage Site.

In order to fully deliver on the objectives of the Park's Management Plan, the Town needs stable infrastructure. The Town's infrastructure was inherited from Parks Canada 16 years ago and some of it is over 100 years old. The cost to manage and enhance this infrastructure is high, presenting us with great fiscal challenges, such as:

- the \$12M Banff.refreshing project
- \$190K investment to replace the railing along Bow Falls
- **Environmental Stewardship & Reporting:** We're presently working on a Banff Community Indicators Report to be released early in 2007 and completing a State of the Town Report to be released before year's end. Both reports reflect the Town's continued support for 3NEI and recognition of the interconnectedness of everything we do in municipal decision-making. Other year's successes include:
 - The launch of the "Size Matters" campaign as a means to deliver key ecosystem management messages to visitors. This occurred during the TELUS Skins game. We applaud Parks Canada for their work on the TELUS Skins game, which became an important showcase to profile environmental messages and to demonstrate first hand, how tourism and park protection can be balanced.
 - The introduction of a series of interpretive panels along the Bow River trails, providing important ecological and heritage tourism information for both visitors and locals and showcasing the Town's commitment to support Parks in their educational pillar.
- **Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff (LATB):** We congratulate the LATB Committee and Parks Canada on the release of the LATB report. The public consultation process proved the public's overwhelming support of the LATB recommendations. These recommendations work to maximize the visitor experience in high use areas while minimizing use in more environmentally sensitive areas. This further supports the 3NEI concept. To support LATB, the Town produced a new trail guide and map this year and we will actively fund implementation of Town related components of LATB through our 2007 budget process. This includes 2 of the top 10 priorities for implementation:
 - funding of the Loop Trail and its connectivity to trails outside the town
 - further work on enhanced directional signage
- **Transportation:** In support of the Regional Mobility Partnership, we've just attended a stakeholders meeting where we identified the Banff/Canmore commuter trail as a priority for the partnership. The trail is now in the conceptual design phase. The Mayor's Mini-Summit Transportation Working Group was struck to address ski bus transportation issues. We agreed that public transit alternatives need to go beyond the ski hills, finding ways to transport folks to high use and historic sites (trailheads,

Lake Minnewanka, Norquay). In order to do this we will have to partner with those who manage these attractions.

John acknowledged three significant needs in the Town's ongoing work with Parks Canada:

- We need to continue to work with Parks to make Banff a model environmental community.
- We need to enhance the visitor experience together. The Town of Banff has invested heavily in a visitor experience position and a plan in this area. Banff Lake Louise Tourism is investing in this area. We invite Parks to also invest in a local visitor experience function that would look at the Park through the eyes of the visitor.
- We need to work together to provide a higher awareness around the importance of Banff's sense of place, and welcome further investment in this by Parks Canada.

John closed by reiterating the Town of Banff's support for the three ski hills in Banff National Park. He expressed, "the vibrancy, competitiveness and financial sustainability of the ski hills are of paramount importance to the people of Banff and the loss of any of them would be devastating. Banff National Park ski hills strive to celebrate skiing as part of our heritage and culture while balancing environmental and financial sustainability. We encourage Parks to work with each of the ski hills to ensure their long-term viability."

3.18 Loren Winnick, Provincial Government of Alberta (Alberta Economic Development; Tourism Branch)

Loren outlined his sector's perspective on the following areas of involvement:

- The Banff/Canmore Trail initiative has received a grant to kick-off the project so the feasibility study can begin. The Memorandum of Understanding is ready to be signed and an initial framework for the concept has been developed.
- The Icefields Parkway remains a very important initiative with significant investment from the province on a number of levels.
- The Trans Canada Highway twinning project is meeting with success and we are encouraged that it is continuing.
- We are interested in the progress on a joint operations committee involving Parks Canada and the province with a website available to update constituents on the work that is being done.
- We are continuing to emphasize that park entrance fees should be reinvested in the parks.
- We are suggesting the creation of signs to indicate the funding sources of various infrastructure improvements.
- We are investigating the concern that filming policies and fee structure in the national parks are devaluing Alberta as a setting for the filming industry.
- We extend an open invitation to all round table members to participate in the upcoming Travel Alberta Conference.

3.19 John Snow Jr., First Nations: Stoney

John began by expressing gratitude for the invitation to participate in the forum. He noted, "since we could have impact on concerns raised around this table, we do need to be consulted and it is good we are here. It is also good to see Siksika here, there are

perhaps other First Nations groups that should be included and consulted, like the Samson Band as they own a mall here or other bands that share park boundaries. The Stoney Tribe are right-holders on these lands, rather than stakeholders. We are coming from a different vein, a different background. We know this land, we know the fish and the wildlife. I think First Nations groups need to be consulted when dealing with park issues. We need to be part of the discussion and we've been ignored for many years."

John expressed the following perspective on behalf of First Nations:

When we participate, we bring a new level to discussions. We have some successes to contribute. For example, Banff Indian Days helped put Banff on the world map. We would like to talk about reopening this kind of participation. We also support communities such as Canmore on both a personal and political level. We know we can benefit from working together in some significant ways:

- My father has finished a book about these mountains that are sacred places that is being used in school studies.
- When we participate in traditional knowledge studies, we can help land users avoid burial, harvest, and other sacred sites which have formerly been overrun. We are taking them back, and are educating people. We don't want to foster conflict, but are trying to partner and work with people.
- There is high unemployment on our reserves – this is a workforce that can be tapped. We are working on this process with Parks Canada and we had a pipe ceremony yesterday.

John concluded by noting, "we have things to bring to the table. A prophecy from one of our elders, Jake Rabbit states, 'the younger brother has made laws and regulations without consulting the older brother'. There needs to be consultation and accommodation with First Nations people. As the prophecy also foretold, 'people will come to the First Nations to know how to survive on this planet,' we have a deep knowledge, and we will share this knowledge, if we're invited, and if we're involved."

3.20 Dave Verhulst, Guiding Organizations

Dave began by expressing that he was happy to be included in the round table and that he believes the addition of his voice and his sector to the forum is important.

He then made the following remarks on behalf of the sector:

I am the executive director of the Mountain Parks Heritage Interpretation Association; more commonly referred to as "MPHIA." We're a non-profit organisation whose mission is to establish and maintain high standards in heritage interpretation in the mountain national parks. We have a volunteer board of 11 individuals representing guides, local tour operators and Parks Canada. Together, we develop training courses for guides.

Everything that MPHIA has done this year has worked towards achieving at least some aspect of the vision and objectives of the Management Plan and also towards achieving the stated visions of Banff Heritage Tourism and BLLT. Our work plays a vital role in making it possible for Parks and Tourism to "make good" on their promises and commitments to the visitor.

Dave outlined the many ways guides bring value to the parks:

- inspiring visitors to care about the place they are visiting and informing them of the unique roles and responsibilities we all have in a national park, ensuring the area stays beautiful and natural for future generations.
- ensuring that when those magical wildlife moments happen, the visitor remains a safe distance from the animal.
- using wildlife moments to draw the visitors sense of awe, wonder and excitement deeper by sharing stories that connect the visitor to the animal or the surrounding ecosystem.
- pointing out tracks and signs in a way that the visitor feels the presence of the creature whose footsteps crossed their trail and can go home feeling that although they didn't see the bear or wolf with their own eyes, they still felt a connection with the wildness of Banff.
- there is no singular group that has more impact on the visitor experience than guides. Every aspect of our job as guides – from keeping people safe to inspiring them to care about our incredible natural and cultural heritage – is focused on enhancing the visitor experience. As guides, we also play a pivotal role in educating people. The education we provide also helps Parks achieve their mandate for protection.

Dave shared the guiding organizations' perspective on training and development: History and experience has shown us that to do our job well, training, evaluation, accreditation and regulation are imperative. An effective guide can make meaning from facts and help the visitor bond with this place and its heritage. Significant changes to training have been made since 2004, when MPHIA had only one training course and accreditation – the “Professional Interpreter.” Training now occurs at different levels:

- The “Basic”: 4 hr course developed for mountain guides, angling guides, river rafting guides, horse guides and other guides.
- The Standard/Apprentice: 16 hr program that is the minimum requirement for boat guides and the introductory training for interpretive hiking guides.
- The Group Management: 8 hr course that covers risk management, hazard assessment and group management skills for interpretive hiking guides. We are proud to have accredited ACMG guides teaching this course for us.

The stats for the last year have been impressive.

Professional Interpreter Course participants	25
BASIC Course participants	113
Standard/Apprentice Course participants	220
Group Management participants	108
Grand total participants	466

There were 39 programs taught in total this year.
The total number of accredited PI's in good standing is 163.

In addition to our own courses MPHIA also presents the Banff's Best program on behalf of the Banff Heritage Tourism Corporation. In the last year, we delivered 70 Banff's Best courses to 1700 individuals on behalf of the Heritage Tourism Corporation. So in total, we've trained 2166 front line staff, all of whom impact the experience of thousands of visitors to Banff National Park.

Dave shared other significant successes:

- Completion of the MPHIA Handbook for Interpreters in August 2006. Designed to support both the Standard and Professional Interpreter courses, it has 250 pages full of usable interpretive narratives.
- Development of online Basic courses for Banff/Kootenay/Yoho and Jasper National Parks. Courses are available 24 hrs/day, 7 days/week.
- Creation of Basic courses for both Revelstoke/Glacier and Waterton Lakes National Parks.

Dave noted the following challenges guiding organizations are facing:

- Finding quality staff who are trained to deliver interpretive programs is a challenge for our business partners. Solutions will require creativity and partnerships. In just about every country in the world, there are organisations like ours that are dedicated to training guides. The training requirements we have here are by no means the highest. If we want to compete in the “experience economy” we need increased commitment to high level training courses.
- We need an industry and community that recognises interpretive tour guiding as an honourable profession.
- We need wages reflective of the expertise of professional guides

3.21 Cheryl Borecky, Youth Organizations

Cheryl began by thanking Parks Canada for the invitation to the Forum. She introduced herself as the new, fresh and green Executive Director for BanffLIFE, “though I have been in and out of the Valley for over 9 years within the youth and young adult sectors, I am still absorbing and familiarizing myself with where our strengths and challenges reside and how this all connects together. I am genuinely here today as an important voice of a sector that represents 50% of Banff’s population, though even more importantly I am here to listen and find out about the challenges and successes of the parties represented here and how we can work closer in the future to tackle these issues together. “

BanffLIFE, formerly the Banff Service Industry Network, is a charity organization who seeks to enhance life in Banff for young adults, the businesses they work for and the unique environment in which we live. In line with the BMP, Cheryl summarized the following accomplishments in 2005 in relation to the areas of education, awareness, partnerships and communication:

- The Living Room is a hub for many programs. Located at 345 Banff Ave, the Living Room is a drop-in space for 18-35 year olds with free or low cost activities, as well as community and healthy lifestyle information and referrals. There are approximately 3,000 program participants per year.
- The Staff Orientation Program: “Life in Banff” is a workshop for every new employee that focuses on positive activities and local community supports like health, volunteering, crisis info, safety and others. It is used by over 35 big businesses, including Fairmont Banff Springs & Chateau Lake Louise, Caribou Properties, Sunshine Village, Lake Louise Inn and small businesses. The monthly drop-in session is attended by 2,500 staff per year.
- Banfflife.com is an online Job board that includes resources that help prepare people for working and residing in Banff. It gets about 144,000 hits per year.
- One Hot Summer & Cool Winter are huge annual staff info fests now being delivered

by BanffLIFE. These fests feature entertainment, food, prizes, and over 50 info booths attended by 2,500 staff each year (both locals and newcomers).

Cheryl concluded, “we continue to focus on the importance of worker experience and the need for appropriate infrastructure to create opportunity for activities ensuring positive worker experience. At BanffLIFE we attempt to convey messages from sectors such as Parks and create initiatives to target the challenges faced by young adults and businesses in Banff. We strongly believe creating vital partnerships is the cornerstone to our success as a sustainable organization and a community as a whole.”

3.22 Robyn Dinnadge, Banff Heritage Tourism Corporation

Robyn began by thanking Parks Canada for the opportunity to be involved in this valuable process again. On behalf of the BHTC, Robyn gave the following remarks:

It is great to hear how many other round table members are reporting on their successful heritage tourism initiatives. Without the commitment that the Town of Banff and Parks Canada show to heritage tourism, we wouldn't be able to report on the successes that we've had this year. Parks Canada has been a supporting partner of Banff Heritage Tourism since 2002 and they have identified heritage tourism as an important component of their Banff National Park Management Plan which contains a section dedicated to the implementation of heritage tourism principles. Banff Heritage Tourism was created in part to help achieve those objectives.

One of the most important things that the Banff Heritage Tourism Corporation did this year was to work with the community to redefine heritage tourism. Our goal was to make the concept of heritage tourism more inclusive, accessible and easier for businesses to incorporate. Also, we wanted to help the business community understand that the type of tourism that we all provide in Banff National Park is heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is not just history, culture, art and 'old stuff'. It includes the legacy that we've been left, and the legacy that we're leaving to future generations. And it's that legacy that we want to connect our visitors to.

All tourism in Banff means “exceptional experiences”. The visitor's expectations are exceeded and they take home an enriched understanding of the Park. Tourism in Banff supports integrity of place. Visitors connect with, and are inspired by, the landscape, heritage, ecology, architecture, products and services, gaining a respect for the values of the national park and World Heritage Site. It promotes stewardship and it informs - Visitors gain an understanding of the importance of Banff National Park, and they learn something about its values, and sustainability. Tourism in Banff benefits residents and businesses and strives for quality. Businesses are successful by celebrating local culture and tradition, providing exceptional service, and sharing our rich heritage; leading to our sustainability.

In addition, Banff Heritage Tourism inspires and supports businesses and organizations to create experiences, products and services that celebrate our nature and culture, which contributes to the economic health of the community. Earlier this year, we partnered with Banff Lake Louise Hotel Motel Association to create the exhibit of An Historical Celebration of Lodging, Park Radio to create an audio (MP3) tour of the “Walking Through Banff's History”, MPHIA to enhance their Interpreter's Manual. In the

coming year, we have formed partnerships with Discover Banff Tours, the Friends of Banff, the Whyte Museum and the Town of Banff to create new products that will be available to visitors in 2007.

The high quality of services provided to visitors – whether it is professional interpretation or a conversation with a local employee - contribute to an enriched visitor experience - creating life-long supporters and users of the national park. By providing the FREE Banff's Best heritage orientation program to local staff, we give new employees a sense of place, and helping them become ambassadors for the destination. In the past 12 months nearly 1900 people experienced the program and since 2003 have delivered the program to 4000 staff, from more than 250 local businesses.

One of the roles that we are best known for is to recognize, support and promote businesses and organizations that have shown leadership in creating authentic experiences for visitors. During the past six years we have recognized 47 local businesses with Heritage Tourism Awards for their commitment and investment in heritage tourism (more than 150 nominations received). We have just closed the nominations for the 7th annual HTA, and will be honoring this year's nominees and winners in a few weeks on Nov 17.

At this time last year, we were just wrapping up the year's events that were part of the Banff Lake Louise Alberta Centennial celebrations. When the numbers were all tabulated, we proudly announced that this successful initiative, in which we played the leadership role, created more than 100 promotional heritage tourism activities and events by more than 40 local organizations.

We're proud of these achievements that we've accomplished with limited resources. We are looking forward to working with Parks Canada on the next management plan, and encourage them to continue their support of Heritage Tourism initiatives.

3.23 Response to Round Table Remarks – Jillian Roulet

Jillian expressed how much she really enjoys this part of the Forum, as it is great to hear from all the different sectors, and to hear how enthusiastic people are about BNP and their work here. It's very positive. Jillian responded to issues and concerns made during the presentations with the following remarks:

Regarding the National Activity Assessment Advisory Group as mentioned by Dave Poulton and others, this should be added to the agenda for the next Forum, so we can take a closer look at it.

Regarding the various collaborative processes that have been taking place, specifically Grizzly Bear Dialogue Group, Lands Adjacent to the Town of Banff and Trans Canada Highway Twinning, I'm really pleased to hear the positive feedback.

Regarding the Aquatics Advisory Council concerns raised by Dan and the Advisory Development Board concerns raised by Bernie, we will look into these further and report back.

Regarding the issue of the Bow Valley Study and the related projections raised by Crosbie, when we received the 6% annual growth in visitation projection from the study, we did not accept it as we felt it was incorrect. So it was not assumed to be relevant in the original planning process.

Regarding the ski area guidelines, the original guidelines were approved by the Minister in 2000. Over the past few months we have been working with a group of stakeholders to improve the guidelines and bring resolution to issues raised over the past five years. The group's report has been completed and forwarded to the Minister. All changes to the guidelines require approval from the Minister. The date to release the guidelines to ski area operators was postponed since last minute arrangements meant some key people could not make it. A new date will be set with the Minister to release the new guidelines, we are hoping this will happen in the next few weeks.

Regarding learning opportunities raised by Richard and Wanda, our focus for the eco-integrity project is on regional residents (Calgary, Canmore, Banff). Some surveys have been done to get at what the level of knowledge is and how people would like to be involved. They are interested, and want to be involved and aware. However, they see themselves less as visitors and more as with a sense of ownership. When they come to the parks they come to recreate (ski, hike) and this is not where they want to get educational programming. They want to do that on their own time. So how can we adjust? As part of the eco-integrity initiative, we have taken steps to try do that. We have partnered with Banff Centre on their website to find out what they want. One idea is to use a CD that will go with annual passes. For reaching new Canadians, who view and use parks differently, one thing we are piloting are crank cases at picnic sites, with recorded messages on various topics and in different languages. New ideas are always welcomed, there is a lot that can be done. Sheila will be spearheading this initiative.

Regarding encouraging us to reinvest fees in our infrastructure, raised by Loren, we are doing that, and we do have signs entitled ' your fees at work' to let people know what and where we're doing work. We will follow up on your concerns regarding filming industry.

John and Ernest, we're glad you've attended today. We've had some positive dialogue and we know there is lots of opportunity for us to work together in future.

3.24 Response to Round Table Remarks – Terry Perkins

Terry responded to issues and concerns made during the presentations with the following remarks:

Regarding the traditional knowledge concerns raised by John, Parks is working hard to incorporate this kind of knowledge, both culturally and scientifically. In the mountain parks we recognize that our barriers mean nothing to historians, wildlife, fish, and in all honesty can be rather abstract to visitors too. Part of my management portfolio as superintendent is the Resource Conservation portfolio, involving science and we are very interested in investing in there.

Regarding following up on the mitigations outlined by Environmental Assessment Studies and along the science theme, Parks Canada has introduced better monitoring

capacity. Due to the green coalition we have new resources to invest and redevelop the science program. We're taking a regional ecosystem perspective in doing this. As our ecosystem monitoring coordinator, Sal Rasheed is helping us coordinate this approach, using our 6-8 indicators. We are taking a high level approach to looking at the greater ecosystem. This means we are looking at big picture impacts instead of individual, local impacts.

Wearing my Lake Louise hat, I want to ensure what we learn and discuss during the forum can be shared with other areas and other parks like Kootenay and Yoho. I also see great opportunities for associations and organization that are extremely active in Banff but not in Lake Louise, i.e. youth.

Regarding asset reinvestment, I'm all ears. We have new fees revenue and new funds to reinvest. Because we are so behind at this stage, we have to prioritize catching up with health and safety issues like water, sewage, dams, roads, and bridges, many of which are not as obvious to the visitor. We are developing a set of principles to guide our investment and help us make strategic decisions for our spending.

Terry closed by thanking Ben for covering the details of all the Lake Louise projects.

4.0 Presentations

4.1 Icefields Parkway Project

Presentation by Terry Perkins, Lake Louise Field Unit Superintendent
(See presentation slides in attached report)

4.2 2008 Management Plan Review

Presentation by Jillian Roulet, Banff Field Unit Superintendent
(See presentation slides in attached report)

There are a number of key documents, which provide the framework for how the Parks Canada Agency operates and how national parks are managed. The Canada National Parks Act indicates that a management plan must be prepared for each park and must contain:

- A long term ecological vision
- A set of ecological integrity objectives and indicators
- Provisions for:
 - resource protection and restoration
 - zoning
 - visitor use
 - public awareness
 - performance evaluation

It also indicates that the Minister must table the plan in each "House of Parliament" and that the management plan is recognized in legislation as a foundation document. The act indicates that the Minister must review the management plan for each park every 5 years and any amendments to the plan have to be tabled in each House of Parliament.

Another important document is the **Guiding Principles and Operational Policies for Parks Canada**. It was developed with considerable public input across Canada and everything that occurs in a national park or national historic site must be consistent with this policy document. The policy document provides national direction for more detailed policies for individual parks

The **Annual Corporate Plan** which is the Agency's "contract" with the Government provides corporate direction including:

- identifying what the priorities are for the Parks Canada Agency for a 5 year period and is revised annually
- outlines the results and performance expectations for that 5 year period and how money will be spent

Role of the Management Plan

The park management plan translates the national legislation and policy for each individual park and is the "contract" with the government for each park. It provides the long term collective national vision, the "road map to our destination". The plan integrates the delivery of the three pillars of the mandate – resource protection, visitor experiences, public education and incorporates Canadians' perspectives about the park through public consultation. At the same time it guides the annual business plan for the park which outlines the parks annual priorities and expenditures.

Strategic context

Banff National Park is part of a larger World Heritage Site which means there are some international responsibilities. The park has been designated by the international community as having "outstanding universal values that should be preserved for all humanity" and the management plan must recognize the responsibility to carefully manage this common world heritage.

Management Plan Review Process

The Banff MP was approved in 1997 and reviewed in 2002/03, with a resulting amendment added in 2004 (GB strategy, HUMS, monitoring). Typically a MP has a time horizon of about 15 years, which can be extended with each review. We have reviewed the MP to gauge progress in achieving goals and objectives; a thorough accounting will be provided in the SOPR. The vision is broad and long range and should give strategic direction for some time. It is still valid though some aspects may need updating.

We are now starting next review cycle. The following principles will guide the review:

- Bring all seven mountain park MPs into the same time frame (there are 7 mountain national parks in this area of Canada reporting to the Executive director of mountain parks)
- A strategy for working within the regional ecosystem and the services that will be offered to visitors
- In terms of services to visitors we want to focus on program and service based opportunities as well as on built facilities
- be results oriented, with clear links to monitoring and reporting
- each park will continue to have its own MP as required by legislation; this will allow recognition of different conditions and circumstances in each park; especially important for Waterton and Mt. Revelstoke/Glacier

- the profile of the WHS designation will be increased for the 4 contiguous parks and for Waterton

In the 1997 Banff NP management plan, the primary focus was on the Bow Valley. In 2004, following an extensive consultation process, a human use management amendment was made to the management plan as part of the 5 year review. Following completion of the LATB process an amendment will be made to the plan to incorporate those recommendations.

We have had a tendency to focus our attention on the southeastern area of the park. We feel that in this plan review we have an opportunity to focus on the more northern areas of the park, particularly the Icefield parkway.

Main steps in the process are:

- SOPR:
 - Provides an analysis of the state of heritage resources, visitor experience and public education and their integration
 - Based on reporting against indicators and targets
 - Report on the effectiveness of management actions in achieving results
 - Serves as a tool for informed decision making
 - Communicate the state of mandate components
 - Helps decide what issues need to be addressed and the scope of the review.
- Scoping document
 - Internal document for discussion with CEO and DGs to confirm the scope of the review and what issues will be addressed, resources available for the planning program
- Next stage is the real core of the planning program –
 - Discussion of issues, development of options and solutions
 - Public involvement is a critical element of this stage
- Amendments approved by the Minister
 - Plan changes
- Time frame:
 - SOPR draft by March 31/07
 - Concept development and public plan review fall 2007 – fall 2008
 - Completion of review/amendment and submission - spring 2009
- Current status
 - Pulling together background data to assist in preparing SOPR
 - Consultation and engagement strategy to be developed this winter

4.3 Questions on the Presentations

Q: Would you mind repeating the timelines for the management plan review?

Jillian: The main involvement of the public and stakeholders will be in actually getting to

the management plan amendments so that will be the fall 2007 to fall 2008. Fall being a pretty general descriptor.

Terry: We're working on the state of the parks report currently, and we're hoping to have that by March 2007.

Q: First of all, Kudos for bringing together the different parks onto the same planning cycle. I think that's really important. Do you envision that there's going to be some regional level process to lay out a common framework for the six different management planners?

Jillian: We anticipate that it will make sense to have a regional process for something like visitor experience and for something that needs assistance, for instance caribou, they're bigger than one park. And we were thinking there would probably be an amendment that would go at the front of each management plan that would describe the big picture. We would need to figure out how Revelstoke and Glacier and Waterton that are more distant from the four contiguous parks fit into this regional process.

Q: I'd first like to thank Terry and Jillian for putting the Icefields Parkway on the agenda today. When referring to numbers of users – do you have an idea how many cyclists use it?

Terry: We're working on an upgraded social science program along with our new visitor experience focus, however we need more precision on data like that. I think what we have at this stage is anecdotal information. I'm sure that if we work with some of the tour group operators we could probably accumulate that and that's what we're hoping to do.

Q: So it's fair then to say that it is a priority on Parks agenda to get some future information for this and then appropriate that within the management plan?

Terry: Yes with both human use & visitor information we want to make decisions based on accurate science and research.

Jillian: It should be noted that priorities for the Icefields Parkway project have not yet been established.

Q: I have two questions. One is about the Icefields Parkway, are you taking all the components into consideration such as transportation, wildlife, emergency plan, alternative routes if there is some kind of tragedy that happens on that highway? Secondly, when you're talking about total overall management plan, are you considering the communities themselves and the needs of the residents, and the gap analysis?

Jillian: We have plans for each of the communities. The core communities are Lake Louise and Jasper, and those plans are currently undergoing a 5-year review, or are at least beginning this process. You were talking about a gap analysis, but I think we're thinking in the same vein, as part of the state of the park report, we will be identifying information that we don't have that we think we should be getting.

Comment: What I mean by gap analysis is that you go ask the community what they like. If we cannot meet the needs of the community, we will not be able to meet the needs of the visitors coming in.

Comment: We do have some cultural sites along the Icefields Parkway. Some of you will have some background when we had flooding Stoney traditional areas and gravesites were removed from what was a Stoney traditional area. We are comfortable with the process that we're setting up so we'll be addressing those issues as well. Just a comment on the Management plan review, we are participating as a Stoney tribe on several different government initiatives. One is a provincial review of the aboriginal policy in consultation, so we are reviewing a similar model. We are also involved with federal regulators, which encapsulates some of the management plan review as well. So we have some experience and involvement with this process.

Comment: This year Siksika opened a historical building on Siksika Nation, a \$1M project. Visitors from Germany, Holland, all over were at opening. Also, at the Calgary Stampede – some people are really drawn to First Nations, they want to see First Nations in their traditional wear and want to see this part of history. Not sure if tourism is down or just skiing - Head Smashed In gets so many visitors every year – 1000s of visitors to this remote place. Looking at this I think we have something to offer parks. I would like to see more dialogue with PC around how to attract people to these places and to bring them to a place like our new tourism centre on the reserve

Q: There are 400,000 vehicles a year on the Icefield parkway, 100,000 in each of July and August, what would be the winter traffic?

Terry: We can check into those numbers, in comparison it is almost insignificant. It remains a challenge to keep open in winter months. Perhaps 10-15,000 a month or something in that range, I would expect.

Q: What influence does the management plan have in making budget allocations?

Jillian: We have a pool of money that is our appropriations to operate from. And we have money coming in through fees. You have to operate within that envelope of dollars, but how you distribute those dollars is determined through the management plan. So you can't go and do something new that isn't defined in the park management plan. So it has a strong influence in terms of what your priorities are and where you invest your resources.

Terry: In addition to what we call the base budget Jillian referred to, there are funds appropriated for special purposes. Since budget 2005, we are receiving increasing funds for infrastructure issues -every year until 2010 - at which point we will be receiving 100 million dollars/ year, nationally, permanently. We'll use input from items like the management plan to be able to go to our colleagues across the agency that all have similar recommendations from their park stakeholder groups and we have to prioritize all these things. So we have to use the priorities of the agency based on the corporate plan to help us make the right decisions.

Follow up Q: Looking at the current management plan and counting initiatives and costs, it would seem that there is tremendously more spending on ecological initiatives, rather than on improved visitor services or education services. Will there be an increase in revenue for visitor and education services with the introduction of the new Visitor Secretariat?

Terry: We will have to focus on how an increase in revenue will be allocated because the Visitor Secretariat is going to have several criteria to follow.

Follow up Q: If we want to have improved visitor services in order to get back on a competitive track - we have to go through the MP?

A: Yes.

Q: There already is direction in the current plan with respect to the Icefields parkway, most of which came from a number of people in this room and some of the people at the table who participated in the development of a new strategy. I'm wondering how you see that current direction playing into your new look at the parkway and the management plan review process.

Jillian: I see building on it. The human use management strategy was a more detailed look based on the principles that were in the management plan. I think that in this management plan we can step back and look at the big picture in terms of what is our vision as a whole for the parkway. It would probably result in some modifications of the existing strategy that's in the management plan.

Q: One of the things I wanted to raise was to look at a more realistic approach to our planning cycle. Right now we have a lot of individual tactics, i.e. we'll close the trailer park in Lake Louise, or we'll do fire management. Often we struggle to try to connect individual actions or tactics and through the process they sometimes become disconnected. So if we have a strategy around the Icefields parkway, to be able to look at that and say "well how does allocation of resources for road maintenance connect to that overall strategy?" Sometimes our resource allocations, our thinking and our individual tactics don't feed into supporting the broader approach. I'd like to encourage us in this opportunity to review the management plan to look at how we take individual planning tactics and feed them into some broader thinking. Sometimes good activities have ended up with some pretty disastrous results because they were not part of a more integrative approach.

Jillian: Very well said, and I think what we're talking about is an integrated approach within our mandate. We don't see the EI separately from visitor experience. It all needs to be looked at together.

Terry: In fact, Parks Canada is promoting internally an integrated approach to all area plans.

Q: In regard to the Icefield Parkway project, we looked at it from the perspective of sustainability, the environment and visitor experience. Does the corporate plan look at economic sustainability? Is it a consideration?

Terry: Well it's a fair comment, but I think today's presentation is just to familiarize the entire audience with the significance of the parkway at this stage. Like I said at this start, we haven't made any decisions, we don't even have a game plan at this stage, we just think it's an area that requires attention and discussion while we're tabling a potential amendment to the park management plan. So as we get further into analysis and options and strategies, I'm sure that economics will become a significant factor.

Follow up Q: If things have to fit with the corporate plan to be put forward, then does the

corporate plan look at economic sustainability? Is that one of it's priorities?

Terry: Although sustainability or feasibility always comes into discussion on individual investment decisions or projects, it's also important to keep in mind that we're funded by taxpayer appropriations, and most of those appropriations are invested in protecting the natural and cultural resources, so return on investments concept is not applied when it comes to resource protection.

Q: Will you be looking at existing plans that you haven't moved forward with, with the opportunity to put in place contingency strategies or alternative ways or actions to get at the same problem? Will that come out of something like the state of the park report or the scoping document?

Jillian: Yes, it should come out in the state of the park report. We had this recommendation that maybe it's not relevant anymore; maybe it hasn't been advanced because there wasn't enough support behind it. But it should come up in the state of the park report.

Follow up Q: Will you get across to the public how they can get involved, and try to make the process more accessible to the public?

Jillian: Yes, there are a lot of documents, paper – we'll try to use graphics and visuals to make it easy to understand. You will have a chance to see this when the SOP reports come out shortly.

Q: It is important that you're going to define how you're going to measure, and what those measures are and how that would be applied in evaluating the outcomes?

Jillian: Yes, it's not just on the ecological side, but we're working on visitor experience as well. How do you measure it and how do you measure that it's an improvement, and what kind of visitor experience do you plan to offer, how do you make that decision of what you offer, how do you assess our success. This is also true on the education side. There is the knowledge that people come with and the knowledge they leave with, and does it make a difference to them in the end?

Follow up Q: So by that comment then I'm assuming that those things will be available?

Jillian: The visitor experience ones are being worked on nationally and some of the people here have been discussing what are the indicators and how you measure those.

Q: How do you calculate visitation? What is the trigger to count?

Pam Veinotte (from Parks Canada): There are ten counters in the mountain parks, and based on our 2003 visitors study, the formula takes out people who are driving through, and also takes out people who are going out and coming back in, and all the duplication. So the 3.1 million visitors is actually a very accurate count of our true visitors to Banff national park. And you remember some years ago we had a higher statistic before our 2003 survey and it was because it was being double counted in some cases. So various counters at various locations, all of the data comes in, and it goes through the formula, and that's how we get the 3.1 million.

Comment: It is important to remember that these visitor numbers do not represent the number of days each visitor stays in the parks.

Q: In the SOP report, what will be done about housing requirements? We have to be diligent to figure out how many beds, people, and staff are needed. We need this information. What will you do to look at that?

Jillian: Are you talking about Parks Canada housing, or housing in general?

Question: I'm talking about the whole thing, parks requirements of their staff, the hospital requirement and their staff, town of Banff, everybody. I think that we took a very easy road in the past to look at the easy outs of cheap housing in Canmore, and the economy of course has changed. That's not the biggest issue anymore, and I think that the next 10 years from 2008 to 2016 we have got a critical problem in the winter services in all the national parks in this province.

Jillian: I can't see addressing that as part of the MP review, that is as much part of community plan. You may be right that we don't have it right.

Terry: The existing community plan allows for rooms/ units for an additional 285 people to be built. To date, 169 units have been built for a total of 344 bedrooms.

If the number is deemed insufficient (285 bedrooms), that would/ could be debatable. Haven't heard so far that people are dissatisfied with the limit in Lake Louise, more dissatisfied in operators not able to deliver on housing.

Q: Further to Crosbie's comment on visitor experience (as 1 of 3 pillars). How important is VE in the MP in terms of budget allocation? For example, with the TCH twinning, the three main goals are all funded somewhat evenly.

Jillian: It is very significant, but until we know what an issue is, we can't say. We will have a new way of looking at visitors and what they do in the park. I think now with phased planning with money, there's much stronger potential.

Follow up Q: You talked about a 5 year plan that is updated yearly, so I'm trying to understand if it's an ongoing document that's always looking 5 years ahead that is updated yearly, or is it restructured every 5 years?

Terry: It's a continuously revised document with a 5-year look ahead with a heavier focus on targeting planned results that are measurable.

5.0 Superintendents' Open Forum/Fireside Chat

After the Presentations, all roundtable members and public attendees were invited to participate in a question and answer session with the two superintendents. The following is a summary of the questions, answers and comments from this section:

Q: Earlier today the Mayor of Banff mentioned interpretive panels at Banff Avenue. These panels are only in English. Have Parks considered translating them into French?

Pam Veinotte (from Parks Canada): This is already in process, as is translation for Surprise Corner, Bow Falls and Marsh Loop.

Comment: Being probably the only person in this room who went through the Icefields before the highway was there, having gone through there before they built the chalet, and seeing 400,000 cars per year now, I just want to compliment you and the forum for finally getting this much brain power together in order to look after it because it's such a special spot. Thank you.

Q: Can you tell us what percentage of fees collected at gates is directed to mountain park assets.

Terry: Every penny (of increased fees) collected at gate stays in mountain parks. None spent on administration in Calgary or Ottawa. Total expenditures on visitor services is 100%; revenue collected at gates = 82%. Fees from the east gate are shared at mountain park level because the east gate brings in the majority of visitors, but people enter the mountain parks, not just Banff.

Q: Is this Icefields Parkway a maintenance program or something to enhance tourism?

Terry: As the presentation indicated, no decision has been made yet where we are going, but we would like to see this put on the agenda. We are interested in entertaining all suggestions that integrate the three pillars. Looking for solutions to improve and integrate in order to use the Parkway as an example of the integrated mandate.

Comment: National Trail Association exists to promote a national trail across Canada. This is a natural path, with a focus on preservation of natural landscapes. Always have had a good relationship with Banff, asking you to look again at the idea. National Trail comes into Banff, ends at Cave & Basin. Goes out of Mountain Parks in Jasper into Mt Robson. Issue is the connection. The last management plan review we said there wouldn't be one specific trail to define this.

Q: Is the Icefields Parkway a 'bluesky' concept with unlimited funding attached?

Terry: Yes, and no, as we are open to all ideas and discussion, but at the same time we have to remember it has to remain framed within our legislation & policy.

Q: The population of Alberta has increased. There is huge weekend business, which has a massive infrastructure impact. What will PC do about this regional destination problem?

Jillian: We don't see us the park as just a regional destination. That regional visitation is on the increase is not upsetting to us. There are still new users in Calgary. I think Albertans are seeing Banff as 'their park' again. People used to come here and camp, then couldn't get campground sites anymore. Now with the new CRS they can once

again plan to come here. The BLLTB is looking at the mix and how we can market to destination and regional visitors.

Q: We used to have rust & repair list (rust out) prioritized infrastructure that would be addressed. This may be valuable for the BMP review process.

On the Parkway: This isn't an initiative solo for PC. BLLTB, Fairmont, Brewster are also involved. (and would work on Bow Valley Parkway also).

Terry: That is our strategy. In the last 2-3 years we have had an independent 3rd party come in to help identify priorities, to make decisions such as sewage treatment. In that area, in addition to trying to be environmental leaders, we have a board that reports to our Director General analyzing all capital priorities on a national scale. Funds come from four sources: 1) A-Base-from appropriations, 2) B-Base-from visitor fees, 3) from capital budget "budget 2005" new revenue, and 4) Revenues from townsites, which goes to providing services. We have a five-year capital plan for each of those fund envelopes. Then there are also special project funds, where we can sometimes have access to other agency and outside funds, such as for the TCH, MPB, the LLAS, or contaminated sites.

Question: The new Visitor experience committee wants to direct people to the Parks VRC, and get right information to enhance the experience, but the Banff VRC is not great, has smelly bathrooms, and is generally not great space. Can improvements be made?

Jillian: Yes, this is a problem and we want to work on this.

Q: We need washroom capacity to match demand based on buses; also a need for emergency turnarounds to be taken into consideration for IFP.

Jillian: It is a problem, and that's one of the reasons why we built the new washrooms so large. A lot of people look at it and they go "why's it so big", but it's because busloads of people, multiple busloads, are arriving at the same time. Terry's putting in new washrooms at Lake Louise, for the same reason, and at Bow Lake as well. And people are surprised at how big and expensive these things are, but when you're dealing with big groups of people that come all summer, there have to be that big.

Comment: That is where a gap-analysis may come in. There are different expectations today from visitors than there were 20 years ago. Need to take this into account. And the PC website is not user-friendly, and could use bigger fonts (aging demographics)

Q: I wonder if you can give us an update on the VRC. Is there a very distant timeline on the heritage information centre, which was planned for that block where the visitor centre sits right now? There is a plan championed by the Alpine people, which you probably heard of, to have an information and introduction centre for the Rocky Mountain parks, and the whole rocky mountain region in Canmore. I was wondering if there was any park input on that, because I gather there was as feasibility study being done.

Jillian: The last Parks Canada plan indicated an environmental education centre on Banff Avenue. We have bought up some properties in that area, one of them is within 2 blocks of Banff Avenue Park. We are still interested in an environmental education centre or something significant on Banff Avenue that has a strong educational

component in contributing to visitor experience. So we haven't lost sight of that. In order to deliver on that we will need a significant partnership or a number of partnerships to do something. We think Parks Canada should be very visible on Banff Avenue. This leads me to the facility in Canmore. There is a group pursuing the idea of a Mountain centre in Canmore. My understanding is that it's on the North side of the highway, so it's an introduction to the mountains as a whole. I think that's a positive thing. Parks Canada is being supportive in terms of suggesting that it sounds like a good idea" but it's not our project. We are being asked "would we close our information centre and move everybody there" and the answer is no, we wouldn't. It may be appropriate to have a few staff there to orient people to the national parks as a whole.

Follow up Q: The air quality around Banff is getting pretty bad especially Tunnel mountain area and the big camp grounds. Part of the reason I think is that there is unlimited wood available, once you buy a fire permit. I think in view of the park's commitment to ecological ideas, air quality is something that could be looked at.

Jillian: We started charging people for wood in campgrounds where they take a bundle, and it became complicated, so we switched providing a fire permit when you register at the campground. We've taken out the fire pits in a fair number of sites.

Q: Last year at the Jasper park planning forum, Ron said that there was a fairly extensive review of campgrounds going on, so I was wondering if that was strictly a Jasper process, or if it's up for the whole parks all together.

Jillian: It's for the whole parks. There has been a steady decline over the last number of years in use of the campgrounds. I believe numbers have stabilized somewhat, but we need to know why there was a decline. Is it that the campgrounds we have don't have the kind of services people want? Is it cost? Why are fewer people camping? And then the other part of it was to look at the level of service that had been provided at campgrounds and try to get greater consistency across the mountain parks.

Follow up Q: And when would that be coming out, do you know? Or has it already been finished?

Jillian: No, it hasn't been finished. It definitely will be over the next year.

Question: The reservation system for campgrounds was really progressive and it's excellent, but for groups it can be a very onerous and complicated system. It guarantees that we have campsites, which is great, but I think there's some work to be done in how the individual makes reservations and how groups make reservations.

Secondly, the newer day use picnic areas that have been built in the last 5 or 10 years no longer have shelters so they're only good when the weather is fair. Also, there's no picnicking in campgrounds, so in some ways, the visitor experience could be enhanced by the use of those shelters and those areas for day use.

Jillian: Group reservations are something that has been developed throughout Parks Canada for a number of years. Tunnel Mountain was put on this year, one of the last campgrounds to be put on the campground reservations system. It's actually run for us by an outside company. I'll bring that up with them.

Terry: My take on the shelters is if we're building newer day use areas we are using 1990's management mentality, which is don't build something if you can't maintain it after it's built. If you look at the older shelter areas in Banff national park there are many of them that are insufficiently maintained.

Question: At some of the key attractions in the Park, we're seeing extremely high use on weekends. Johnson canyon is one example of this. This summer I saw traffic parked on the roadside like I'd never seen before. I'm wondering if there are any plans to address this problem at Johnson canyon?

Jillian: No, not at the moment. Presently we don't have a plan to expand the parking lot at Johnson Canyon.

Follow up Q: How do we address this problem?

Jillian: The mayor's mini-summit which we talked about the idea that for certain facilities it would be nice to have some kind of mass transportation system, and how could we collectively do that? We have a regional mobility partnership between Parks Canada, Canmore, Banff, and the Province of Alberta. The intention is to start small and deliver and then see how this idea can develop over time.

Staff Response (Mike): We are exploring whether it is feasible to put in a real time counting system and perhaps to provide mobile messages which you would see on an overhead sign that says "it's 10am, we're already at X percentage capacity". It is on the agenda.

Q: I'd like to address the fire smart program. I don't see how burning in the height of the season creates any kind of visitor experience except a memo to complain when you get back home. I wonder if you have brought any more thought into this program and the impact it has on visitor experience?

Jillian: All of our facilities are sitting in the woods. It will burn eventually so it can either burn through something that's controlled or eventually it burns like what happened in Yellowstone or in Kootenay. We have agreed not to have fires in July and August, so we're not talking about the peak visitor season but moving into the shoulder season. It's hard to have a fire without smoke. The smoke that affected us this summer came from the smoke in the upper Washington States.

Terry: There is a really good campground interpretive program that explains the unique nature of why fire is required on the landscape in the Rocky Mountains because there's certain coniferous stands that will not re-grow unless fire is present. It also demonstrates that there's a whole cycle of nutrient regeneration and a whole set of ecological processes that occur subsequent to the fire.

Q: Is there an effort being put into the anticipated impacts of climate change, and how that might play out as far as wildlife movement, and vegetation changes?

Jillian: There are a few reports on climate change, there's a national one, and there's been some review of how vegetation might change and where the tree line might change. The tree line certainly impacts on glacier and water implications. We have not looked extensively at all the components at this time, however the discussion has begun.

Terry: Monitoring climate change is one of our key initiatives so we're investing significantly in the monitoring processes to be able to accomplish this. Our new chief social scientist that we recently hired, Brenda Jones, is the person that did a climate change analysis on the impact it might have on the ski areas, so she brings this expertise to us as well. One possibility that has been raised: is there potential for an educational focus on the Icefields parkway to be a national learning centre on climate change? Parks Canada wouldn't have to do it themselves, there are lots of private organizations that would probably be interested in partnering with us on some kind of a climate change centre on the Icefields parkway at some point. This is just a blue sky thought at this point but worth considering.

Q: Have you considered looking at a mid-week reduction in rates and using that as a vehicle to market and get folks through the gates at low period times. Secondly, In the US, National Parks went with their gold pass and they're basically giving it away at about 30 dollars a person to seniors and then selling it to 30 million people. Why wouldn't we be looking at it a bit more creatively by looking at similar initiatives for the over 65 group in Canada?

Terry: We already have an internal committee that's looking at changes to the fee structure for the next round of parliamentary consultations, so we can make note of your suggestions for consideration. We did look at that seriously the last time we modified our fee structure, and the indications from people that were consulted was that they wanted consistency in the fee structure. I'm guessing but I think the thinking around the decision was basically looking at demographics for the future. It's the over 55 crowd that have the tendency to have more disposable income rather than the under 25 year crowd, so I think there was a tendency there not to provide serious levels of discounts for seniors because demographics are changing and seniors have more disposable income than other Canadians. This is just my own interpretation.

Comment: The young adult population, and when I say that we target ages 18-35, comprises 50% of the Banff population. Being a representative of this sector in the past I really feel like I can say for them that we have been a missing link in this process. I feel like I need to emphasize the extreme importance of these young adults because they are the ambassadors for our community. They really need to feel a sense of pride in our community and value where they live. And in turn they will go out there and reflect that to others. I feel involving and engaging our young adult population should be in the forefront when you move forward with this process.

END OF DAY ONE

Day Two

6.0 Small Group Workshop: Management Plan Review 2008

The focus of this year's breakout sessions is to gather feedback in preparation for the next management plan review. There is a need to identify key issues (existing or new) to be discussed and addressed in order to achieve the vision. Groups were asked to discuss the following:

- Top issues with respect to:
 - Visitor experience
 - Resource protection
 - Public awareness and understanding (Education)
- Ways in which roundtable sectors might be able to contribute to resolving these issues
- How the sectors would like to be engaged in the management plan review

6.1 Visitor Experience Issues

6.1.1 Group One

Group One recognized the overall need to define what Visitor Experience means to Parks Canada as this is not as well addressed as Protection in the Park Management Plan. They also identified the following issues related to Visitor Experience (in descending order of priority):

- Develop new materials for communication, branding and collateral in order to more effectively let our guests know the experiences that exist. Alignment with BLLT is also recommended.
- Upgrade Icefields Parkway experience and potentially turn the parkway into a Ecological Integrity centre.
- Refresh the park, and diversify what we offer. Be open to new activities that fit park values.
- Develop a forum to obtain information via public participation and research reaching wider than in past and including Calgary.
- Consider the town site as well as going beyond to LATB. Determine what is proximate for visitors to experience; define a park experience 'in and around town'. Integrate the park more into the town.
- Address traffic congestion to improve visitor experience; integrate with groups already working on this. Intercept parking to encourage use of public transit close by (requires land use swap).
- Recognize aquatics is foundational to our ecosystem and like in Yellowstone, could be foundational to our economics too. Pay more attention to the Bow River (fishing catch and release). Create front country accessibility with back country atmosphere and use the Bow to enhance Visitor experience, including education and interaction with RWS.
- Improve the Back country experience as well (use is holding).
- Consider the emerging priority to accommodate the aging population; focus on front country experiences more suitable for them and improve facilities (i.e. WC's, short walk trails).

- Help tourism industry deliver on competing in the “experience economy”.
- Improve info centre.
- Provide more timely access to gate data.
- Promote better communication between the Parks Canada national office and the tourism sector.

Group One identified **Branding: letting people know what’s uniquely available here in the park** as the top issue under visitor experience. Their recommended actions are presented in the answer to the question posed in section 6.4.

6.1.2 Group Two

Group Two recognized the need to define a set of shared expectations with respect to Visitor Experience. They also identified the following issues related to Visitor Experience (in descending order of priority):

- Re-developing and maintaining existing infrastructure and developing new infrastructure.
- Engaging visitors with a park experience that they won’t get anywhere else.
- Creating accessible introductory experiences using a variety of tools
- Providing visitors with more complete and helpful information, including giving attention to pre-trip planning logistics for groups & individuals.
- Addressing the concept of events and what kind of events should take place within the park. Defining expectations for events, like they should be unique and help to develop a sense of place and they should relate to a dimension of the park like orientation or wildlife.
- Defining the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders with respect to improving visitor experiences and identifying the common drivers.
- Presenting new opportunities and activities.
- Determining who the desired visitor audience is, how many we want, where we want them to go. Including seasonality and visitor expectations in answering these questions. For example, some people come to the park to ski, they aren’t looking for any other park experience.
- Addressing park entry congestion, identifying the underlying reasons and causes, i.e. “weekenders”, determining an identification strategy.

6.1.3 Group Three

Group Three (public group) recognized the following three top priorities for visitor experience:

- **Develop the Icefields Parkway** from Banff to Jasper, integrate the Bow Valley. Use the parkway for educational opportunities and to give visitors a sense of arrival. Address speed limits, safety of bikers, and the development of a year round trail.
- **Prioritize the context of Ecological Integrity.** Emphasize that National Parks are different and special.
- **Manage expectations for park experiences** as compared to urban experiences. Manage growth and prepare for future.

They also identified these additional issues related to Visitor Experience (in descending order of priority):

- Improve Parks Canada fire management: Evaluate air quality, visual effects and health impacts. Consider how the park can manage the challenge of balancing peak visitor times with burning schedules.

- Improve basic orientation and information both at the gates and through trip planning materials available over the internet.
- Study visitor characteristics in order to define different types of visitors and their expectations.
- Connect visitor service with parks mandate and services available at different facilities.
- Provide mass transit with added education value.
- Keeping 3 pillars aligned.
- Consider visitor effects on wildlife mortality.
- Increase availability of self-propelled (non motorized) activities to link visitor experience with ecological integrity and education.
- Identify key messages for Lower Lake Louise
- Engage Calgary Gateway communities and build relationships
- Consider the role of facility operators in enhancing visitor experience and education.

6.2 Resource Protection Issues

6.2.1 Group One

Group One recognized the need to maintain support for Protection in the management plan as it is the foundation of why people visit the park. They also identified the following issues related to Protection (in descending order of priority):

- Implement more aggressive outreach to Albertans (i.e. Chambers of commerce and Rotary clubs) so they become stewards and believe they have ownership of the park.
- Since Media uses fact-based messages, proactively provide them with the resources to do that.
- Communicate park research and monitoring outcomes (i.e. fence and aquatics monitoring and partner with others on this issue (MPHIA, BVN, new TOB website).
- Use best science available to manage resources and use independent peer-reviewed science to direct decision making and monitoring.
- Recognize the interconnected nature of all three pillars. You won't be able to sell protection without education and experience.
- Protect park built assets and heritage resources.
- Increase transparency regarding questions on environmental screening and grant public access to Environmental Assessment Screening documents.
- Plan for people trail systems to parallel roadways.
- Make training opportunities (i.e. MPHIA online courses) available to Tourism Bureaus and other related organizations outside of parks.
- Implement truck pullouts on TCH for people protection and safety.
- Work with the mountain centre project to enhance integration with the park.

Group One identified **Alberta Outreach** as the top issue under protection. They recommended the following actions to address this issue:

- Implement a campaign: "We want every Canadian to visit a national park". The phrase '*visit Canada first*' should be a cornerstone of every park and site.
- Integrate protection with the other pillars so recreationalists and tourists become good stewards of our resources.
- Parks and environmental groups need to develop and distribute messages that are accurate and appropriate rather than emotional (tourism is already well-represented).
- Work with media (MPHIA, TOB, Hotel Ass. BLLT, AMPPE) to develop and distribute consistent messages.
- Work with organizations that represent Calgary and Edmonton park users, for example, work with Chambers of Commerce in Calgary and Edmonton.

- Disseminate information via ADB members as they are representative Canadians.
- Create a better working relationship with the Provincial Government so they can get the word out that the Rockies are the main attraction in Alberta.
- Increase awareness with Alberta politicians that Banff is a municipality, as there is a misconception that Banff is supported by Parks Canada. Banff is an Alberta Resort Municipality, part of the AUMA Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).
- Disseminate messages via organized groups that are involved with school programs.
- Work with environmental departments at Universities in Calgary and Edmonton.
- Outreach to potential workers with messages regarding respectable careers that are available here. Potential outreach methods include:
 - Guides to go to high schools
 - Parks Canada to partner with next Mayor's miniconference
 - Banff Life
 - Via major employers like Banff Centre, BSH, Caribou, Ski areas, ATEC
 - Target new Canadians through the CTC

6.2.2 Group Two

Group Two recognized that all stakeholders have important roles and responsibilities with respect to Protection and it is paramount that these are defined and that the groups work together on this priority. They also identified the following issues related to Resource Protection (in descending order of priority):

- Resolving the issue between CP and Parks Canada.
- Dealing with climate change issues, especially with respect to aquatics and MPB.
- Impacts of all activities on wildlife behavior, i.e. feeding and movement.
- Developing a productive fire regime.
- Applying science monitoring to long term progress. Practicing adaptive management.
- Completing the highway twinning responsibly with respect to protection. Addressing things like mortality and barriers.
- Implementing trail management and determining its impacts, especially on soil and plants.
- Defining a community footprint and examining how this relates to park resource protection.
- Coordinating protection measures with trans boundary and regional approaches.
- Ongoing monitoring – TCH effects (adaptive management).
- Addressing flow regimes with respect to Trans Alta dams.

6.2.3 Group Three

Group Three (public group) recognized the following three top priorities for visitor experience:

- **Improve Environmental Assessment process.** Increase transparency and follow up on recommendations. Determine who measures and monitors impact.
- **Understand thresholds for resources.** Consider the impact of changes to people, climate, landscapes and visitors and the accompanying effect on resources.
- **Prioritize good science** in decision making and maximize the use of education centres to communicate about good science and protection. Consider science as it relates to human use, i.e. how humans affect wildlife. Follow up on the feedback from science and hold open public dialogue. Ensure adequate resources are available for science and monitoring.

They also identified these additional issues related to Visitor Experience (in descending order of priority):

- Address water quality and fish habitat quality with respect to aquatic ecosystems, health and wetlands.
- Ensure adequate resources for monitoring.
- Pay attention to public perceptions of research. Use precaution where information is lacking.
- Consider the impact of the railway on wildlife.
- Implement vegetation management. Provide alternatives for habitat enhancement where it is not feasible to burn. Consider harvesting.
- clear objectives and contingency plans
- Engage communities in monitoring, protection and leadership. Coordinate with adjacent provinces.
- Structure visitor education. Design activities and stewardship.
- Consider the impact of the highway (Icefields Parkway).
- Highlight relationships with Aboriginal people.
- Create an appropriate activities framework.
- Determine enforcement capacity for issues like speed, compliance and education.
- Improve fire management.

6.3 Public Awareness and Understanding (Education) Issues

6.3.1 Group One

Group One recognized the need to make it easier for people to choose from available educational opportunities as foundational to this topic. They also identified the following issues related to Education (in descending order of priority):

- Create an Ecological Integrity and Climate Change Education Centre as part of the Icefields Parkway experience. Designate the whole highway for this purpose and use and improve on existing infrastructure. Formalize more partners along the parkway (i.e. Numtjah, Sunwapta)
- Develop a strong emphasis on training of staff (guides and others) who talk with visitors. Ensure HTS still has a strong focus.
- Promote Aboriginal stories and cultures via authentic partnerships.
- Work with businesses to better interpret their heritage.
- Improve public access to staff and information via the Visitor Centre. Improve signage so people know where the Visitor Centre is. Put the Visitor Centre at intercept parking.
- Keep educational materials and tools fresh and exciting. Develop and use A/V and interactive technologies like GPS for education. Change materials seasonally over time.
- Provide education through increased personal contact with Park Interpreters. Maintain and bump up current interpreter standards and accreditation (other countries like Scotland and Australia have much higher standards and field evaluations).
- Provide education through experience by turning every experience into a learning one.
- Outreach outside the park. Hold teasers, information nights and events in Calgary.
- Create a website that WORKS.
- Encourage private sector interpretation.
- Use tours from away as opportunities for learning and enhancing local educational content. Implement related incentives.
- Enhance capacity of locals to promote learning activities and Visitor Experience.
- Model environmental sustainability and teach about it in our developments.

Group One identified **Creation of an Icefields Parkway Environmental Education Centre** as the top issue under education. They recommended the following actions to address this issue:

- Build a business case for the project.
- Create a forum for public participation in planning it and providing perspective on visitor needs and interests. Develop an extensive consultation process to get ideas for this 140+ mile experience.
- Lobby the government for funding. Since it keeps people in Alberta, the Provincial Government could be a major player in this project.
- Involve government agencies, i.e. Environment Canada, Dept of Fisheries & Oceans, Provincial Government and Ag.
- Involve outlying accommodation members, those who belong to Hotel Association, AMPPE, BLLT.
- Recognize the area as the 'Golden quadrant' as tourism radiates in and out
- Cross market to West Edmonton Mall tourists. Stores in the mall could promote the Rockies and the Icefields Parkway as Edmonton's most beautiful attraction.

6.3.2 Group Two

Group Two recognized the need for unified messaging as strong foundation for improving education efforts in the Parks. They also identified the following issues related to Education (in descending order of priority):

- Developing coordinated use of the Internet amongst stakeholders. Determining the desired role for the internet and being intentional about design and content that reflects the role and the unified messages.
- Focusing interpretation on high use areas like panels.
- Enhancing the role of private sector, especially by developing partnerships.
- Inserting messages into school curriculum in order to reach youth
- Creating more opportunities for external and offsite learning.
- Developing a variety of communication tools and using an interpersonal approach through stories and anecdotes.
- Using areas of the park to 'package/profile' wildlife and land as a front country experience.
- Identifying opportunities to engage visitors educationally, who came for certain activities

6.3.3 Group Three

Group Three (public group) recognized the following three top priorities for visitor experience:

- **Improve Visitor Centres** and information available at the Centres. There should be centres located in the park and in the partner cities. Centres in the parks should be linked to a sense of arrival and also to the other pillars of Visitor Experience and Protection.
- **Prioritize Interpretive Programs.** Roving interpreters have the ability to go where the visitors go and focus on face to face contact with people.
- **Maximize use of Heritage Tourism and outreach opportunities** to youth. Heritage Tourism's Banff's best staff training should be a contract requirement. Regional and national outreach to youth should focus on healthy lifestyle choices within the parks.

They also identified these additional issues related to Education (in descending order of priority):

- Develop volunteer programs for trails and other sites. Consider drawing on seniors and other groups for assistance.
- Tell the basic national parks message at all venues “you are in a National Park.” Promote park successes as part of the message.
- Prioritize inclusiveness. Information should be available in many languages, and especially geared to new Canadians.
- Use schools and environmental education opportunities.
- Provide education on trails. Focus on sense of place, respect for environment, engaging all senses. Parks Canada staff can be available on trails.
- Integrate with guiding opportunities.
- Emphasize the public’s responsibility to lobby for increased budgets.
- Communicate research results.
- Develop partnerships with others, including other facilities in Calgary not just in parks, the arts community and culture.
- Further develop the EA process to provide transparency, integrity and accountability.
- Use new and emerging media.

6.4 Contributions of roundtable sectors to issue resolution

6.4.1 Group One

Group One focused their response to this question around what the sectors could contribute to resolving their top Visitor Experience Issue:

Branding: letting people know what’s uniquely available here in the park

Suggested contributions from the sectors included:

- Ensuring Banff Lake Louise Tourism differentiates between approved park activities and non-allowed activities such as ATV
- Ensuring staff know key park messages; all BLLT staff need to take Banff’s best
- Parks Canada needs to improve ‘Park Fax’ and email businesses with key messages
- Businesses need to get Park Fax information to frontline staff
- Ensuring the vision created by the Town of Banff Visitor Experience manager is strongly integrated with PC/BLLT
- AMPPE needs to communicate the messages to their membership
- Strategies and messages of all tourism organizations need to be aligned (CTC, TIAC)
- HTC should recognize and promote excellence
- Cultural and language expectations/services of emerging markets like China should be considered on relevant websites (PC, BLLT, TOB) and for ski areas and other travel sites. Parks Canada needs to link into this.
- Addressing quality control: since Parks Canada’s business license categories do not cover all activities, should all activities require a permit?

6.4.2 Group Two

Group Two focused their response to this question around the need for all partners to increase collaboration and recognize the interconnectedness of dealing with the issues. They felt it was up to them to encourage parks to explore resolving issues in an integrated fashion. The following diagrams depict some of the basic connections between issues that have been raised:

6.4.3 Group Three

Group Three listed the following potential contributions to resolving issues:

- Companies, i.e. Brewsters can be a conduit to link with visitors.
- The environmental community has a role to participate in environmental assessments and monitor the results.
- Educators in schools can emphasize these priorities.
- Everyone can advocate for funding for parks and related priorities.
- Task Groups can be created to address issues with a focus on results as a key motivator.

6.5 Engagement of sectors in management plan review

6.5.1 Group One

Group One considered methods for the sectors represented by each of the group members to be engaged in the next management plan review:

- **MPHIA:** Adding perspective to direction regarding visitor experience, education and protection. Since the guiding sector involves all three areas, they have a good overall view and are able to make good on the promises that are made in the plan, bringing them to reality.
- **BHTC:** Offers expertise on section 5.2 of the management plan. They can look at what's been accomplished, identify gaps, changes and areas to contribute.
- **Alberta Government:** Involvement in community development, MPB, and Firesmart on a consultative basis. Participating in opportunities to partner and bring tourism to a higher level, and encouraging linkages with municipalities of Banff, Canmore and Jasper. (Providing incremental funding for the highway would also be helpful!)
- **Aquatics Advisory Group:** Would like more opportunity to participate, rather than being a captive audience for presentation only.
- **Town Of Banff:** The town is very involved in the management plan already. In fact the community plan that is being developed will be integrated with the management plan and this may be done by the spring. The Parks Act defines the town's role to provide visitor services. The community plan will identify services and how they will be delivered aligned with the town's three pillars of sustainability, economic, social, and environmental as well as the Parks Canada pillars.
- **AMPPE:** Their 2007 direction is to invest a lot of energy in review of the Park Management Plan, highlighting LATB as priority. They would like Parks Canada to stay open with the review process.
- **Hotel Association:** Their focus is heads in beds, as well as maintaining and evolving facilities for visitors. They are willing to invest whatever energy is appropriate in the review.
- **ADB:** Would like the opportunity to participate with the superintendents in evaluating what is done as well as why and how it is done, according to Section 8.3 of the management plan which was created for transparency and fairness in development.
- **Small Bus Association:** They represent diverse attitudes, and while they are keen to ensure the plan review is a public process with transparency, they are not sure at this time what specific input they can commit to.

6.5.2 Group Two

Group Two considered the following ways to engage the sectors in the next management plan review:

- Create a web based approach for the plan review as it will have a broader reach.
- Give stakeholders multiple opportunities to see and comment on drafts.
- Ensure timelines are reasonable and spread out the energy and resource input.

- Begin with an overview to show areas of focus and highlight areas of change as documents evolve.
- Use some alternate approaches like world café or a more structured approach.
- Make the review more interactive with increased opportunities for dialogue and hearing other perspectives
- Provide “unfunded” sectors with resources to participate.

6.5.3 Group Three

Group Three highlighted the following ways to engage the sectors in the next management plan review:

- Communicate the game plan. Define and reflect parks’ competitive edge.
- Show leadership. Let sectors know what they can do to can show support.
- Provide us with a clear course of action.
- Increase specificity about implementing plans. Develop a work plan to track accomplishments and ensure fiscal accountability.
- Follow up with us. Ensure regular communication of status and updates. Use email and the website, the park fax one pager, electronic forums.
- Celebrate success more and communicate about challenges.
- Continue with dialogue that brings results. Consider a mid-year forum and/or periodic meetings.
- Sample people who are not coming to our meetings.
- Create focused task groups.
- Engage politicians who are involved in decisions.

Group Three closed their presentation by thanking all groups represented at the forum for all their hard work and commitment. Their final message was that as community members, they prefer the opportunity to fully participate rather than their presence being about public relations.

7.0 Feedback on the Session:

7.1 What worked?

- Increased time for break out sessions allowed more opportunity to get into the issues and formulate creative ideas. It was good to be able to ‘dig in deeper’.
- Being in Lake Louise was a good idea! The ski hill was a great location.
- The facilitator did a great job.
- The Question and answer period with superintendents was great.
- In general, having common experience between roundtable and members of public was a good step forward into facilitating as much input and open communication as possible.
- The public group had members of the business community that brought experience and business wisdom to discussion about the parks.
- The Year in Review report was really helpful.
- More direct participation from second/third row representatives was really useful, as these are good people who have good ideas to share.
- Participation from new representatives in the round table, especially first nations was good to see.
- The high level of engagement and respectful communication was much appreciated.

7.2 What could be improved?

- Including an appendix regarding wildlife trends year to year in the Year In Review report would be helpful.
- While small group reporting is important, more time devoted to hearing reports back from Parks Canada would be preferred. Notes from break out sessions could be handed in and summarized rather than reporting them in person.
- It was surprising that the icefields parkway project dominated the discussion even though it wasn't even on the table last year.
- Increased public consultation ahead of time would be appreciated.
- Getting preparation packages out earlier would have given more time for round table members to go back to their group or organization and get prepared prior to the forum.

8.0 Closing Comments from Superintendents

8.1 Jillian Roulet

- Thank you everyone for your contributions over past 2 days as part of this group. I appreciate your input and time and I find your thoughtful way of working together really helpful.
- Banff would never attempt to plan the icefields parkway project on Jasper's behalf. Jasper's team will be very much involved in this project.
- We recognize more time to prepare would be helpful, so we will attempt to get things out earlier next year.

8.2 Terry Perkins

- Thank you to the facilitators. Please join me in recognizing the hard work of all of those who worked behind the scenes.
- Thank you to everyone for coming to Lake Louise.
- Jillian and I welcome your additional comments or feedback anytime.

Don McLeod concluded by summarizing some common themes and highlights of the two days and thanking everyone for their time, their attention and their contributions.

Participants completed written evaluations of the forum. See a summary of these evaluations in the attached report.

END OF DAY TWO