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# Bow Valley Parkway: The Road Forward

Nov 30, 2011

# OUR GOALS

- Ensure that the BVP continues as world class resource for people to learn about and experience the park, and as a safe and secure environment for wildlife.
- Enhance the year-round delivery of PCA's full mandate in the BVP area.
- Achieve the BVP vision and the PMP objectives through an action plan, that builds on the best of the BVP and retains its special character.



# THE ADVISORY GROUP

- 19 people, representing 15 organizations / individuals.
- Tasked with developing consensus-based advice to the Superintendents on:
  - a ‘future best’ vision for the BVP area;
  - relevant challenges and opportunities; and
  - actions or programs to achieve the future best, which fully respect legislative and policy obligations, integrate the three components of the mandate, and are supported by science;as the basis for a proposed amendment to the Banff National Park Management Plan.



# PARKS CANADA'S COMMITMENT

- Support a flexible, future-oriented collaborative process;
- Support a central role for stakeholders in developing the process;
- Maintain a 'clean slate' with no pre-conceived decisions;
- Propose **consensus** recommendations as a PMP amendment if consistent with law, policy and supported by science;
- Account for consensus recommendations not taken forward; and
- Make decisions on a final plan where consensus was not possible.



# VISION

The **future** of the Bow Valley Parkway **exemplifies** the integrated goals of Banff National Park, where the best practices for natural and cultural resource protection are the foundation for your sound visitor education, enjoyment, and inspiration. It is a regionally significant place of montane and alpine ecosystems that supports a full complement of native species, where **science-based stewardship enhances, maintains, and restores** wildlife populations, plant communities, natural processes, and thus ecological integrity; and where conservation of cultural and archaeological resources recognizes the park as an exceptional educational setting where **meaningful** interpretive experiences with nature are possible. It provides a **positive, inspirational, and accessible** national park visitor experience where visitors of all ages and abilities and comfort levels can enjoy a **diversity** of recreational opportunities and facilities, which are **designed** to optimally **coexist** with the surrounding wilderness. The future Bow Valley Parkway is a testament to Banff National Park's **successful stewardship** and management. It is both an example of **maintaining and restoring** ecological integrity and an accessible outdoor classroom. It **facilitates the discovery** of the park's natural and human history, and **invites exploration** of more of the park's natural and cultural **values**. The Parkway incorporates the kind of **quality facilities and services** provided by Parks Canada and private operators which enhance this unique national park visitor experience.

The future best (consensus) vision of the Advisory Group



# SOME IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

- Education & Awareness Gaps
- Infrastructure – Related
- Traffic & Traffic-Related
- Participation of Other Parties
- (Action Plan) Implementation Uncertainty
- Data



# SOME IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES

- Education and Learning
- Infrastructure / Transportation / Access
- Public Communication, Promotion and Marketing
- Product and Service Additions
- Resource Protection
- Management Effectiveness Monitoring specific to BVP



# ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Considerations:
  - PCA mandate;
  - 2010 Park Management Plan & PCA priorities;
  - Importance and special character of BVP area;
  - Stakeholder Advisory Group;
  - Specialist advice;
  - Research (social and natural science);
  - Monitoring (traffic volumes, wildlife use, etc.); and
  - Best practices in other protected areas.
- Need for a phased approach





# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

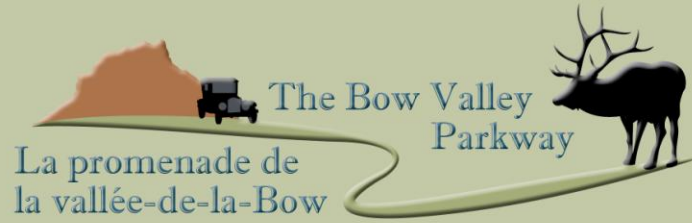
## Short Term ( 1-2 years)

### Sign program

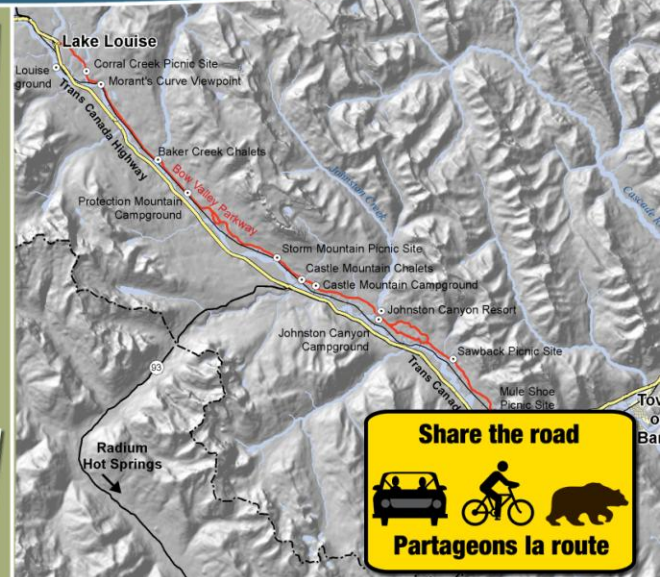
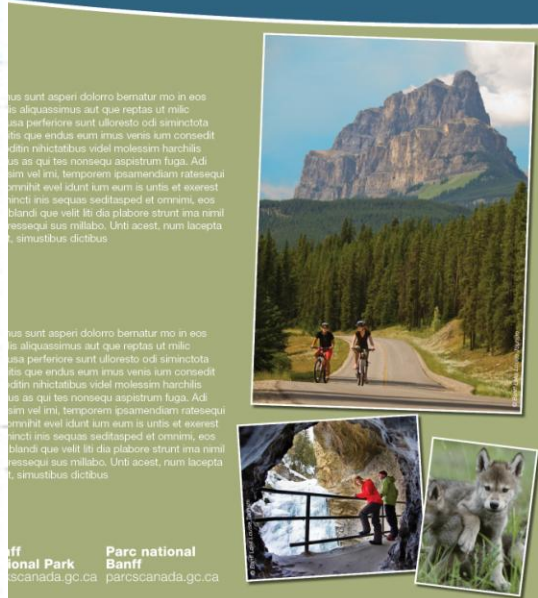
Includes:

- sense of arrival, orientation & opportunities
- importance of place
- links to other nearby opportunities
- speed and wildlife warnings





# Welcome! Bienvenue!



Bringing you Canada's natural and historic treasures

# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Short Term (1-2 years)

- Traffic calming / slowing measures at selected locations
- Portable (radar) speed indicators and other measures



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Short Term (1-2 years)

- Short-term proactive area closures as required



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Short Term (1-2 years)

Improved communication, interpretation and training programs

- Urban and new Canadians, youth, and 3<sup>rd</sup> party providers and guests; PMP types of engagement
- Signature experiences:
  - Interpretation (e.g. Increased roving and Bear Guardian interpretation, Xplorer Club addition, pilot interpretation program at Johnston Canyon Campground)
  - Possible wildlife camera links to VIC
  - Strategic events
  - Incorporating BVP messages into 3<sup>rd</sup> party training





# The Bow Valley Parkway



The Bow Valley Parkway is the original road connecting Banff to Lake Louise and was built in the early 1900s. As you drive with your family along this historic route, watch for these sights and check the boxes of the ones you spot.



Keep your eyes open for wildlife along the Bow Valley Parkway. Circle the ones you see!

Did you know ... James Hector led the Palliser expedition through the Bow Valley in 1858 to see what the West had to offer?



A mountain named by the Palliser Expedition



A waterfall in Johnston Canyon

Did you know ... the Bow Valley Parkway was originally very narrow as cars at that time were much smaller than they are today?

Did you know ... fire has always been an important part of the landscape?



A prescribed fire site

Banff

Lake Louise

Morant's Curve at outlet creek:



An old gas pump at Castle Mountain Chalets

Ice cream stand at Johnston Canyon Bungalows



A narrow section of road

A cluster of trees that splits the road



An elk statue at Baker Creek Chalets

An osprey nest on top of a bridge



The meadow where Silver City was

Located 1 km east of Castle Mountain Hostel, Silver City was a booming mining town in 1883, which was larger than Calgary at that time!

Did you know ... early employers used Pilot Mountain as a reference point between Banff and Lake Louise?

Pilot Mountain



## LEGEND

- IA Bow Valley Parkway
- TCH Trans-Canada Highway
- CPR Canadian Pacific Railway
- 93 Highway 93S



Hey kids! Have some fun while you and your family are driving along the Bow Valley Parkway.



**Crossword Puzzle:**

The answers to these clues can be found on the information panels located at the Castle Cliffs pull-off and the Hillsdale Meadow pull-off. Have fun reading the panels and solving the clues!

**Down (Castle Cliffs pull-off)**

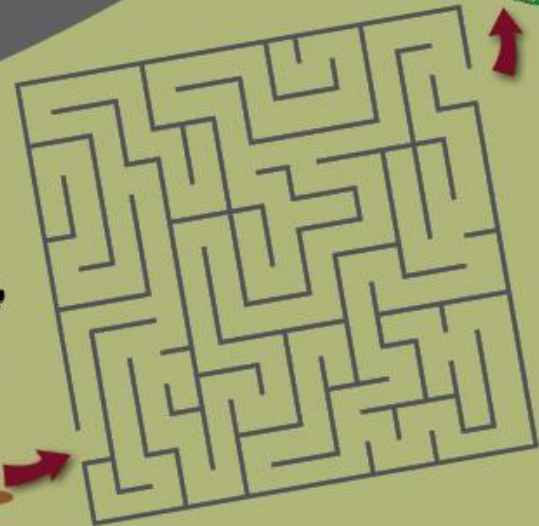
- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ became the way to enjoy the park.
- 2. Private sleeping cabins in a rustic setting.
- 4. The original road up the Bow \_\_\_\_\_ was built during the early 1900s.
- 5. One of the Boom Towns of the Bow Valley.
- 8. The tracks of the first continental \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11. Small family groups traveled and \_\_\_\_\_ in this valley.

**Across (Hillsdale Meadow pull-off)**

- 1. Castle is one of these.
- 3. Banff artists Peter and Catharine \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6. Early map maker James \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7. Mountains are an inspiration for \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9. Arthur P. Coleman made the \_\_\_\_\_ of Castle Mountain.
- 10. Image of this animal.

**Maze:**

Help the mom wolf find her way back to the den where her pups are waiting for her to return!



You'll want to take your time  
so you don't miss a thing!



Real. Inspiring.

You'll want to take your time  
so you don't miss a thing!



Real. Inspiring.

# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Short Term ( 1-2 years)

### Enhanced outreach

- Targets virtual or potential visitors, regional audiences, residents.
- Includes:
  - Enhanced web information
  - School / educational programming
  - Media relations



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

Short Term (1-2 years)

Environmental stewardship initiatives and opportunities  
(E.g. Recycling program in Johnston Canyon, Castle and Protection campgrounds; volunteer opportunities)



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

Short Term (1-2 years)

East Bow Valley Parkway Mandatory Seasonal Evening Travel Restriction



# MANDATORY SEASONAL EVENING TRAVEL RESTRICTION

- March 1–June 25, 8pm to 8am
- Implementation in 2013
- Exact location TBD but similar to present area
- Advance signage and drop gate system
- Framed and communicated as a travel restriction, not closure
- Superintendent's Order under *Canada National Parks Act*



# MANDATORY SEASONAL TRAVEL RESTRICTION

- Protecting park wildlife is the foundation of great visitor experiences and a sustainable future for Banff National Park.
- Necessary to reduce displacement and other impacts on wildlife during critical times and seasons.
- Part of a bigger PCA effort / substantial investment to improve habitat security in critical area (middle Bow Valley)
  - Cascade Corridor Restoration
  - Wolf denning closures and speed restrictions
  - Trans-Canada Highway Twinning Mitigations
  - CP Rail Partnership
  - Decommissioning Hillsdale shortcut trail and pull-off
  - Fire restoration (Sawback, Moose Meadows)
  - Cascade Pit restoration



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Short & Medium Term (1-2 years)

Partnership initiative with CP Rail to reduce grizzly bear mortality on the tracks

- Habitat modification (e.g. Vegetation management, thinning)
- Bear behavioural response to trains



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Medium-Term (3-5 years)

Continue use of prescribed fire to improve habitat

- Including Sawback re-burn, Baker Creek burn



# ACTION PLAN ELEMENTS

## Medium-Term (3-5 years)

### Infrastructure Changes

- Decommission facilities and restore habitat in area of old Castle group camp and/or reconfigure or reduce Johnston Campground to mitigate wildlife movement pinch point, as feasible.



# MONITORING & EVALUATION

- Short-term (1-2 years)
  - To focus on: pre-testing educational / orientation messages, evaluating public response to signage; response to / participation in new programs, and changes in human use of the parkway
- Medium – Long term
  - To focus on: evaluating learning, on-going response to / participation in programs, changes in wildlife use of the area / habitat effectiveness



# NEXT STEPS

- Finalize the action plan (spring 2012)
  - Contract traffic engineering expertise regarding signage and gates
  - Confirm program and promotion details
  - Confirm budget and schedule
  - Explore partnership possibilities



# CONCLUSION



Once implemented, the action plan will ensure that the ecologically and culturally rich Bow Valley Parkway area is a productive environment for wildlife, and a world-class setting for people to learn about and experience the park.

