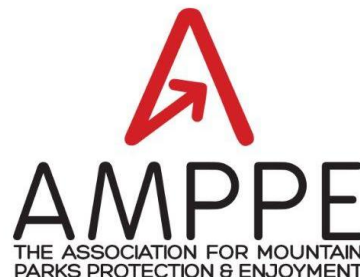


THE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAIN PARK PROTECTION AND ENJOYMENT



About AMPPE

Created in 1994, AMPPE (Association of Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment) is a member-driven organization that advocates for accessibility and positive visitor experiences in Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks. AMPPE membership includes business owners and recreationists across industry sectors and professions. With established members hailing from the main mountain community hubs of Jasper, Banff, and Canmore, AMPPE is well suited to speak to the diverse needs of its members, and of the region. These three Alberta communities host about 13% of Alberta's visitors, and the Rocky Mountain National Parks account for 60% of the visitors to all of Canada's 48 national parks, marine conservation areas, and historic sites. AMPPE strives to act as a collective, place-based voice for the sustainability of the mountain parks and supports fair and balanced, science-based decision-making and provides locally driven perspectives to decision-makers.

Our Mission

To preserve Canada's National Parks and the mandate of ensuring that Parks are: , *"dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education, and enjoyment, to be maintained and made use of, and left unimpaired, for the enjoyment of future generations"*.

Who We Are



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**ADVOCATES FOR WORLD-CLASS VISITOR
EXPERIENCE IN CANADA'S MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARKS**



Re-Investing in Canada's National Park Infrastructure

Investing in public infrastructure and transportation will ensure public safety, enhance quality and reliability in visitor offices, reduce GHG emissions, and improve accessibility while connecting Canadians with nature and history. The two key areas of investment should primarily focus on mass public transit and active modes of transportation, which also aim at lowering carbon intensity. Active modes of transportation include hiking and cross-country skiing trails, bike paths, multi-use trails, etc. By focusing on the dual benefits at play, Parks Canada also ensures the safety and accessibility of park users while protecting the natural assets of National Parks.

Recommendations

- Allow Parks Canada to access funding through the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan*.
- Fund and implement a sustainable transportation strategy that includes mass transit and active modes of transportation, incorporating the recommendations of the *August 2022 Expert Panel on Moving People Sustainably in the Banff Bow Valley*.
- Increase the number of Parks Canada shuttles during busy times by providing additional busses.
- Support the creation of a marketable "Canadian Rockies Cycling Route" through a dedicated operational and maintenance funding stream.
- Create a dedicated and reasonable funding allocation to build and maintain Parks Canada Visitor Centres in both Jasper and Banff



Invest in Canada's Icefields Parkway

The Icefields Parkway, considered one of the world's most scenic drives, is a 230-kilometre stretch of highway that winds between Lake Louise in Banff National Park and Jasper National Park. Travellers come from all over the world to experience the numerous hiking, mountaineering, backcountry ski, and ice and rock-climbing opportunities accessed from along the Parkway. As the only direct route connecting two of Canada's flagship National Parks, year-round access to the Icefields Parkway is an essential road for local businesses, recreationalists, mountain guides and locals.

Unfortunately, due to frequent and lengthy road closures during the winter months combined with lack of alternative modes of transit through the Parkway continues to negatively impact the visitor experience in the Rockies and will ultimately damage Alberta's standing as a winter destination of choice. We estimate, for example, that the Town of Jasper loses over \$500,000 in economic activity each day the Icefields Parkway is closed.

Recommendations

- Through Parks Canada, increase the operational and maintenance budget of Canada's Mountain Parks with a specific line item for the Icefield Parkway.
- Reestablish the Icefield Parkway Advisory Group to update the 2009 plan that was tabled in Parliament but never fully executed.
- Provide greater surety of winter road maintenance, specifically, find potential improvements and establish reasonable metrics to reduce the days the road is closed each winter.
- Identify and recommend amenities to meet current and future visitor expectations.



Encourage Parks Canada to Adopt the Principles of the Tourism Growth Strategy

While Parks Canada's priority is ecological integrity, Parks play a key role in Canada's tourism industry. The Rocky Mountain National Parks attract millions of outdoor enthusiasts, including hikers, cyclists, climbers, paddlers, and adventure-seekers annually seeking a connection to nature. Nature-based experiences are shown to have significant outcomes for the planet as positive associations with nature results in increased knowledge of and concern for environmental action. Investing in tourism assets in Canada's national parks means investing in nature itself.

The Government of Canada recently released its *Tourism Growth Strategy*, which aims to double the tourism industry's contribution to Canada's GDP by 2033. The priorities for the new Strategy have identified five strategic priorities:

- Invest in tourism assets.
- Embrace recreation and the great outdoors.
- Partner to grow indigenous tourism.
- Attract international events.
- Improve federal coordination.

Recommendations

- Encourage Parks Canada to adopt the principles of the Government of Canada's Tourism Growth Strategy and continue delivering on commitments outlined in the Parks Management plans.
- Recognize the role that Parks Canada plays in Canada's tourism industry.
- The Government of Canada establish a Ministerial Tourism Growth Council to align with international best practices such as those of the United States and France to help implement the Federal Tourism Growth Strategy and ensure a whole-of-government approach to tourism growth and the visitor economy.



Improve Transparency and Accountability

Parks Canada needs a consistent, publicly available, and simplified report that tracks the state of the Parks against the priorities Canadians care most deeply about. Measuring outcomes tied to the park's current infrastructure state would provide the motivation to stay on track in a transparent manner. Additionally, by including stakeholders in the tracking process, Parks Canada can improve and streamline services to cut costs and reduce conflict between user groups.

The Parks Canada Agency and some national parks, including Banff National Park in 2018, have periodically created a 'State of the Parks' report. The state of the park reports did contain some metrics on visitor experience, but the reports were heavily weighted towards ecological integrity measures.

Recommendations

- Collaborate with stakeholders to create public-facing metrics aimed at enhancing transparency and evaluating the performance of programs and developmental initiatives (permitting and licensing processes and timelines). These metrics should be compiled and reported back to Parliament annually ensuring accountability and informed decision-making.
- Include metrics related to visitor experience that goes beyond counting the number of visitors and cars. Develop metrics for kilometres of active travel paths built, availability of transit seats, and public monitoring of asset repairs and maintenance.

