

THE ASSOCIATION OF MOUNTAIN PARK PROTECTION AND ENJOYMENT



About AMPPE

The Association of Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment (AMPPE), formed in 1994, is a member-driven advocacy association. We promote increasing tourism experiences, enhanced accessibility, and local decision-making within Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks. At our core, we want to create a more positive visitor experience in these Parks.

We represent:

- 5,000+ employees (through our members)
- 80+ members, including hotels, restaurants, tour operators, bus companies, outdoor experience operators (i.e., mountaineering, climbing, hiking, biking and winter guides), retail stores, craft breweries and distilleries
- Organizations supporting summer activities such as hiking, mountain biking, road cycling, walking, rock climbing, trail running, horse riding, kayaking and canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding
- Organizations supporting winter activities such as XC skiing, alpine ski, ski touring, snowboarding, fat biking and e-fat biking, hiking, ice climbing, snowshoeing, mountaineering, ice skating

AMPPE's base is located around the mountain communities of Banff, Jasper, and Canmore. Having various members across industries and geography amplifies AMPPE's voice and impact across the government and enables AMPPE to be an authority on a wide array of topics. With 40+ years of experience, AMPPE's many contributions to the beautiful and prosperous mountain communities solidifies its role to ensure the rocky mountain national parks are sustained and accessible for generations. A strong proponent of science-based decision-making, AMPPE consistently refers to its core mandate of fair and balanced policies, approaches, and multi-partisan engagement across the federal, provincial, municipal, and Indigenous communal leadership spaces. With a goal of uplifting local voices, AMPPE is eager to continue enhancing life for those who work, live, and play in Canada's national mountain parks.

Key background:

- Banff, Jasper, and Canmore host about 13% of Alberta's visitors
- 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.

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”.*

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

Who We Are



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Our Priorities

- 1. Coordinated Government Support to Help Rebuild Jasper National Park**
- 2. Re-Investing in Canada's National Park Infrastructure**
- 3. Improve Transparency and Accountability**
- 4. Mandate Parks Canada to adopt and implement the Government's *Tourism Growth Strategy***
- 5. Invest in Canada's Icefields Parkway**



Coordinated Government Support to Help Rebuild Jasper National Park

Jasper urgently needs a cross-government approach to rebuilding a world-famous landmark. Federal, provincial, and municipal players must come together to address the pressing challenges ahead. Jasper's visitor economy plays a crucial role in Alberta's tourism sector, contributing to the province's record-breaking \$12.7 billion in visitor spending in 2023. However, the estimated daily cumulative revenue losses in Jasper and Jasper National Park are as high as \$4.5 million per day during the peak summer months. Jasper businesses and operators are facing mounting losses as their revenue depends primarily on peak summer months to carry their operations through the slower time of the year. Many businesses are facing impending debt impacts and significant staffing challenges. To support the recovery process, Jasper tourism businesses are urgently seeking clear and timely details from all levels of government on what a streamlined, timebound, and coordinated business support program might look like.

Recommendations

- The Government of Canada provides a funding program designed to support and help businesses in Jasper rebuild. Potential solutions that would assist businesses in managing ongoing costs include payment deferrals on items such as: lease payments, WCB premiums, utility payments, corporate taxes, etc.
- The Government of Canada, in coordination with the province of Alberta and the Town of Jasper, implement a holistic and forward-thinking approach that integrates conversation, community needs, and resilience.
- The Government of Canada invest in post-fire restoration and infrastructure in Jasper's National Park.



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. All while connecting Canadians and visitors with nature and history. Mass public transit and active transit are two areas where the government can easily make a difference and support the regional economies and the people who reside in and near the parks. Doing so also reduces the carbon emissions required and lessens the wear-and-tear on infrastructure. 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 buses.
- Support the creation of a marketable "Canadian Rockies Cycling Route" through a dedicated operational and maintenance funding stream.
- As an immediate and meaningful first step, the federal government should for fairness, transfer the collected federally fixed fuel tax within the Parks, back to the Parks themselves (i.e., if collected in any of the national mountain parks, the funds would be remitted directly back to those Parks to invest in their infrastructure). This would create a reliable, sustainable, and predictable source of funding.



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 reports did contain some metrics on visitor experience, but they 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.



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



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, frequent and lengthy road closures during the winter months, combined with a lack of alternative modes of transit through the Parkway, continue to negatively impact the visitor experience in the Rockies and will ultimately damage Alberta's standing as a winter destination of choice. Estimates show that the Town of Jasper loses \$500,000+/day in economic activity when the Icefields Parkway is closed.

Jasper needs to enhance winter visitation more than ever. Maintaining this road consistently will provide certainty to Jasper during this time of need.

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.