

Phase 3 Stakeholder Consultation Summary

Draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan



SOUTH



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Overview

Alberta's Land-use Framework (LUF), released in December 2008, sets out a new approach to managing our province's land and natural resources to achieve Alberta's long-term economic, environmental and social goals. The LUF establishes seven new land-use regions and calls for the development of a regional plan for each. The *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA) supports the LUF and establishes the legal basis for the development of regional plans. Regional plans reconcile provincial policies and set explicit regional outcomes and objectives.

Regional planning is part of the Government of Alberta's Integrated Resource Management System (IRMS). The IRMS supports responsible development of the province's resources and realization of its desired outcomes. The system is founded on setting and managing to clear policies and cumulative outcomes (through regional plans), providing assurance and a monitoring and measurement system to measure the achievement of outcomes. The system is dynamic and adaptive as necessary to reflect new information and also collaborative – achieving desired outcomes requires working with stakeholders and partners. The approach considers the relationship between all of the activities, natural events and challenges facing a region, along with setting the stage for robust growth, vibrant communities and a healthy environment over the next 50 years.

Regional plans are developed in consultation with Albertans. The Alberta government's Land Use Secretariat (LUS) oversees the development of each regional plan and is responsible for reporting and monitoring the success of the plans. LUS provides policy analysis, research and administrative support to the regional plan development process and leads the Government of Alberta's regional plans consultations. The secretariat works with a larger regional planning team, representing Government of Alberta ministries and agencies, to develop regional plans for Cabinet approval. The draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) was developed over two phases of consultation starting in the Fall 2009 with aboriginal people, a wide variety of stakeholders, municipalities, government and the advice of the South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council.

From the October 10, 2013 release of the draft SSRP through to February 28, 2014, the Government Alberta collected feedback and input through multiple stakeholder and open house sessions in 21 cities, towns and farming communities throughout the region, in the adjoining Red Deer Region, and in Edmonton. The consultation process also included an online workbook, (available in hard copy) an invitation to submit written submissions and several special interest group meetings. The input and feedback collected during Phase 3 of public consultation will be reviewed and considered prior to the approval of the SSRP.



Consultations

The SSRP is being developed with the input and feedback of Albertans through the following three-phase consultation process:

Phase 1: Input on the issues in the region;

Phase 2: Feedback on the advice from the SSRP

Phase 3: Feedback on the draft SSRP.

SSRP Phase 1 consultation public and stakeholder input sessions were conducted in 16 locations across the region between November 30 and December 10, 2009. The purpose of the input sessions was to:

- Provide the public and stakeholders with information about the South Saskatchewan regional planning process; and
- Gather input on topics in the SSRP terms of reference.

In March 2011, the South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council (RAC) advice to government and Phase 2 workbook were released. In addition to completed workbooks, written submissions were accepted up to December 21, 2012.

SSRP Phase 2 consultations were carried out between November 6 and December 6, 2012 and had two key objectives:

- Review the Regional Advisory Council's (RAC) advice to government with representatives of key stakeholder groups throughout 17 communities in the region and in Edmonton, Red Deer and Drumheller to ensure all groups had the opportunity to take part within convenient proximity to a session(s);
- Seek input and feedback on RAC's advice according to the following questions for the five key topic areas:
 1. Vision/strategic land-use principles;
 2. Healthy economy;
 3. Healthy ecosystems and environment;
 4. Healthy communities; and
 5. Land-use direction/management intent.

In October 2013, the draft SSRP and Phase 3 workbook were released. In addition to completed workbooks, written submissions were accepted up to February 28, 2014.



For Phase 3 of the SSRP consultation process, public and stakeholder input sessions were conducted in 21 locations across the region between November 5 and November 28, 2013. The purpose of the consultation sessions was to:

- Provide an overview of the key components of the draft SSRP including the proposed conservation areas, provincial recreation areas and public land use zones;
- Invite feedback on the draft plan through six discussion topics:
 1. Regional vision and outcomes;
 2. Economic growth;
 3. Biodiversity and conservation;
 4. Integrated management of public land and stewardship of private land;
 5. Advancing air and water quality and enhancing watershed management; and
 6. Strengthening communities, enhancing recreation and cultural opportunities and inclusion of aboriginal peoples.
- Provide information about the approval process and release of the final plan.



Consultation Methodology and Locations

Stakeholder sessions were conducted in each location over a five-hour time period, 9:30 am – 2:30 p.m. In each community venue, a series of panels providing background information about the LUF, ALSA and a high level summary of the draft SSRP were displayed. Government of Alberta employees were in attendance at all sessions. The LUS representative provided participants with an overview of the regional planning process and the draft SSRP with regular breaks throughout the session so that the consultant could lead group discussions according to the following set of guiding questions:

- Where do you support the draft SSRP information and why?
- Where do you have concerns and why?
- What is missing?

Open house sessions for the general public were held between 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the same location and room as each stakeholder session and were advertised as Community Conversations. A separate report entitled Phase 3 Public Consultation Summary – Draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan is available from the LUS in hard copy and on the LUS website, www.landuse.ab.ca

As well, all Albertans were encouraged to review the Draft SSRP and provide their feedback by completing either the digital or hardcopy versions of the Discussion Guide – Draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Workbook, A Workbook to Share Your Views with the Government of Alberta. In total, 1,529 full or partially completed workbooks were received, the majority of which were submitted electronically. A separate report entitled Phase 3 Workbook Summary – Draft South Saskatchewan Regional Plan is available from the LUS in hard copy and on the LUS website.

In total, 1,571 people participated in the 21 Community Conversations (Stakeholder and Public Sessions). Many of the participants were affiliated with a stakeholder group(s) including: municipal, industrial, environmental organizations, non-government organizations, irrigation districts, agricultural organizations, economic development authorities and landowners.



Participant numbers and corresponding dates for each of the 42 Community Sessions are included below:

Date	Location	Stakeholder Participants	Public Participants	Total Participants
Tuesday, November 5	Crowsnest Pass	49	62	111
	Taber	27	29	56
Wednesday, November 6	Claresholm	19	29	48
	Milk River	22	10	32
Thursday, November 7	Canmore	23	54	77
	Strathmore	13	11	24
Tuesday, November 12	Edmonton	25	35	60
Wednesday, November 13	Calgary	86	62	148
Thursday, November 14	Lethbridge	71	285	356
Tuesday, November 19	Cardston	27	29	56
	Foremost	16	2	18
Wednesday, November 20	Airdrie	19	17	36
	Fort Macleod	18	26	44
Thursday, November 21	Drumheller	5	2	7
	Vulcan	8	8	16
Tuesday, November 26	Medicine Hat	32	29	61
	Pincher Creek	51	42	93
Wednesday, November 27	Brooks	20	6	26
	Okotoks	55	58	113
November 28, 2013	Cochrane	63	44	107
	Red Deer	70	12	82
Totals		719	852	1571



Sixteen additional stakeholder meetings were held with LUS and other Government of Alberta staff in attendance from October 17, 2013 through to February 26, 2014. These sessions were requested by the various stakeholder groups and included municipal councils, organizations and agencies. Meeting summaries were produced for attendees and government staff reviewed all summaries as part of the Phase 3 SSRP feedback.

One hundred and thirty-six submissions were received from the following one hundred and eleven (111) stakeholder groups with several groups submitting multiple times and some groups submitting joint submissions.

Agriculture Sector (20)

Action for Agriculture

Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta

Alberta Beef Producers

Alberta Cattle Feeders Association

Alberta Chicken Producers

Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association

Alberta Hatching Egg Producers

Alberta Milk

Bow to Crow Forest Reserve Grazing Permit Holders

Egg Farmers of Alberta

Elbow Allotment, West of Bragg Creek Grazing Permit Holders

Jumping Pound Allotment Grazing Permit Holders

MacLean Creek Forestry Allotment

Moose Hill Ranch Ltd.

The Pekisko Group

Porcupine Hills Grazing Lease and Disposition Holder

Rocky Mountain Forestry Range Association

Twin River Heritage Rangeland Natural Area

West Bragg Creek Grazing Permit Holders

Western Stock Growers' Association

Development Sector and Other Organizations (6)

Bow Valley Builders and Developers Association

Brookfield Residential Properties Inc.

McMillan LLP

Quantum Place Developments Ltd.

Springshire Developments Ltd.

Western Securities Ltd.



Electrical and Utilities Sector (3)

AltaLink
ATCO Power
ENMAX

Environmental Non-Government Organizations Sector (25)

Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society
Alberta Wilderness Association
Bow River Basin Council
Calgary Regional Airshed Zone
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Association
Castle-Crown Wilderness Association
Crown of the Continent Conservation Initiative
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Elbow River Watershed Partnership
Environmental Law Centre
Ghost Stewardship Monitoring Group
Ghost Watershed Alliance Society
Jumping Pound Creek Watershed Partnership
Livingstone Landowners Guild
Milk River Watershed Council
Nose Creek Watershed Partnership
Oldman Watershed Council
The Pekisko Group
Prairie Conservation Forum
South East Alberta Watershed Alliance
Southern Alberta Land Trust Society
Trout Unlimited Canada
Water Matters Society of Alberta
Wild Canada Conservation Alliance
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

Forestry Sector (1)

Spray Lakes Sawmills

Irrigation Sector (4)

Alberta Irrigation Projects Association
Irrigation Council
Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District
Taber Irrigation District



Mines and Minerals Sector (6)

Alberta Chamber of Resources
Altitude Resources Inc. and Elan Coal Ltd.
Blairmore Coal Canada Ltd., via Capital Investment Partners
Coal Association of Canada
Lafarge Western Canada
Riversdale Resources

Other Orders of Government (22)

Calgary Regional Partnership
City of Calgary
City of Lethbridge
City of Medicine Hat
City of Red Deer
County of Warner No. 5
Foothills Little Bow Municipal Association
Lacombe County
Mayors and Reeves of South West Alberta
Municipal District of Bighorn No. 8
Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66
Municipality of Crowsnest Pass
Municipal District of Pincher Creek
Rocky View County
Ron Casey, MLA
Town of Banff
Town of Fort Macleod
Town of Pincher Creek
Town of Redcliff
Town of Taber
Village of Cowley
Wheatland County

Petroleum and Natural Gas Sector (5)

Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Cenovus Energy Inc.
Explorers and Producers Association of Canada
Shell Canada Energy
TransCanada Pipelines Ltd.

Tourism and Recreation Sector (19)

Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association
Alberta Outdoors Coalition



Alpine Club of Canada – Calgary Section
 Alpine Club of Canada – Rocky Mountain Section
 Bragg Creek and Kananaskis Outdoor Recreation
 Brewster Adventures
 Calgary Area Outdoor Council
 Calgary Coalition of Seniors Outdoor Clubs
 Calgary Mountain Club
 Calgary Women Fly Fishers Club
 Calgary Off-Highway Vehicle Distributor Council
 Crow Snow Riders Snowmobile Association
 Hike Canada En Marche
 Rocky Mountain Dirt Riders Association
 Southern Alberta 4WD Community
 Syncline-Castle Trails Association
 United Riders of Crowsnest Club
 West Winds Seniors Hiking Club
 Windy Coulee Canadian Horses

This summary report provides feedback statements that are reflective of the key themes advanced during the Phase 3 stakeholder sessions, additional stakeholder meetings and written submissions. The report is organized by the draft SSRP six discussion topic areas as follows:

1. Regional vision and outcomes;
2. Economic growth;
3. Biodiversity and conservation;
4. Integrated management of public land and stewardship of private land;
5. Advancing air and water quality and enhancing watershed management;
and,
6. Strengthening communities, enhancing recreation and cultural opportunities and inclusion of aboriginal peoples.

Additional comments beyond the scope of the workshop were also recorded and are included in this summary.



Regional Vision and Outcomes

The Draft SSRP proposed the following vision statement, strategic directions and regional outcomes for the South Saskatchewan Region:

Vision for the Region:

Southern Alberta is a diverse, healthy, vibrant and prosperous region where the natural beauty of the mountains, foothills and prairies are managed so that citizens feel connected to the land and its history. The region is a thriving place that offers a wide range of opportunities to residents and visitors alike. Social, economic and environmental values are effectively achieved with shared stewardship and an integrated approach. The quality and integrity of the landscape is sustained through the use of science, innovative thinking, traditional aboriginal and community knowledge, recognizing the interests of all Albertans.

Strategic Directions:

- Conserving and maintaining the benefits of biodiversity;
- Advancing conservation and integrated management of Crown Land;
- Supporting and enabling conservation and stewardship on private lands;
- Advancing watershed management;
- Managing air quality through continued collaboration;
- Strengthening communities;
- Providing recreation and tourism opportunities, active living and the preservation and promotion of the region's unique cultural and natural heritage; and
- Inclusion of aboriginal peoples in land-use planning.

Regional Outcomes:

1. The region's economy is growing and diversified;
2. Biodiversity and ecosystem function are sustained with shared stewardship;
3. Air quality is managed to support healthy ecosystems and human needs through shared stewardship;
4. Watersheds are managed to support healthy ecosystems and human needs through shared stewardship;
5. Community development needs are anticipated and accommodated;



6. The quality of life for residents is enhanced through increased opportunities for recreation, active living and the preservation and promotion of the region's unique cultural and natural heritage; and
7. Aboriginal peoples are included in land-use planning.

Regional Vision

Supportive feedback about the draft SSRP regional vision and why.

- A balance of social, environment, economic and cultural aspects of development is highly supported.
- The vision incorporates various stakeholder groups well.
- Vision is fine but the challenge is how do we get there?
- Support the aboriginal consultation emphasis.
- Support recognition of diversity of issues and all values are being considered in vision and outcomes.
- The overall vision covers everything – broad, inclusive statement. It reflects the complexity of this dynamic area.
- Makes it so that there is a plan to create a framework.
- Good to see reference to retaining quality and integrity of landscape and environmental values.
- Vision incorporates all different aspects of the region; the landscape, people and economy and how these areas interrelate to each other.
- Broad scope, but it has to be broad if it is a 50 year plan.
- Vision acknowledges complexity of region. How are we going to measure success?
- Support the word science in vision and the emphasis on stewardship and innovation.
- It is understandable and reflects the region; focus on natural beauty for next 50 years.
- All Albertans' is more inclusive than delineating rural and urban.

Concerns about the draft SSRP regional vision and why.

- Somehow we also need to connect visitors to the region in the vision.
- Vision sounds great but doesn't provide an image of what we are trying to achieve.
- Vision is vague and rambling; it needs more clarity.



- Economics is emphasized too much in the vision; need more of an emphasis on the environment.
- Do not support the first sentence; it reads like an advertisement.
- Too little reference made to the agricultural sector; protection of agriculture is needed in the vision statement.
- Covers everything with no specifics; it is very high-level.
- Vision needs more balance; cannot be about just the environment and recreation.
- Direction doesn't mention the growth, only conservation.
- The vision and outcomes gives the appearance of being everything for everyone; the entire plan cannot be that, there are challenges and that should be addressed in this section.
- Strategic direction doesn't say anything about improving the current situation.
- Reflects current state, but not forward-looking; collaboration between different sectors to sustain vision is needed.
- Big vision, very long should be shorter, crisper; should be more memorable.
- Plan has no backbone; it needs to make some tough decisions, it is now spineless.
- The comment vibrant and prosperous doesn't necessarily apply to the whole region; is swayed too much by Calgary.
- Vagueness may lead to different interpretations of what is meant. Need clarity on definitions and implementation.
- It doesn't clearly say/give suggestion for the future – it doesn't say where we want to be.

What is missing in the draft SSRP regional vision?

- Sustainable future needs to be included in the vision.
- Vision needs to have wording to protect viable agricultural land.
- Vision should include desire to connect river valleys and protect environmental aspects of river habitat. Important for wildlife movement, riparian forests, trail development, natural links to grasslands and other surrounding ecosystems.
- We need a strategic direction to the outcome regarding the economy; need to go beyond the main industries.
- Missing the value of ecosystems, correlation to Gross Domestic Product.



- Significant urban component missing within the vision, we need to recognize that we are also an urban region.
- Balance of social, economic and environmental is missing in the vision and critical to success of SSRP; it should be highlighted, not implied.

Regional Outcomes

Supportive feedback about the draft SSRP regional outcomes and why.

- Support for the outcomes, however, we don't know how to get there.
- Support outcome six, but concern for limiting recreation areas too much will damage designated areas from overuse and leave nice areas unknown and unappreciated.
- Support outcomes, but concerns on how it can be interpreted from different perspectives.
- Overall plan is well balanced. Tourism is still a big issue, but Government of Alberta has integrated it well with other important issues.
- You have the right number of outcomes and they touch on all important issues.
- We like focus on history and culture; shared stewardship and integrated approach.
- Support regional planning in general, as municipalities are easily influenced and require guidance.
- Good balance between pie in the sky and scientific tools for evaluation and quantifying.
- Shared stewardship and integrated approach.
- Seven outcomes are good statements that capture important topics at a high level
- Appreciate the recognition and respect of property rights.
- Support of the watershed-based areas of the plan. Should work well for municipalities.

Concerns about the draft SSRP regional outcomes and why.

- Including aboriginal people in land-use planning is not enough; needs to be more active engagement and strategic direction.
- High level, so vague. Not sure what they say, for instance, science/innovation - whose? What do the statements mean?



- Advancing watershed management; weak word, suggest protecting or something that provides direction.
- Would like to see recognition that some areas have not been addressed to date, i.e. use words like increase.
- Recognizing the interests of all Albertans; difficult when some interests conflict.
- Strategic directions are also vague – more definition required for the directions.
- Recreation has too high a priority in the regional outcomes. Need to focus on how people make their living.
- Regional outcomes three and four – air quality and watersheds should be managed to be improved. Make a positive statement.
- There is a focus on beauty but not necessarily actual ecological integrity where I would like to see solid commitments made.
- Social and environmental values should trump other outcomes.
- There is nothing about infrastructure, economics.
- Outcome seven – How did aboriginal leaders have input into the draft plan? Has to be collaboration with people at the grassroots level; more effort required to consult with reserve members.
- Outcome six should be divided into two outcomes: recreation and conservation.
- Outcome one is appropriate, but the draft plan does not put sufficient emphasis on the role of agriculture in the economy. There is too much energy focus.
- Acknowledge up front that we need to control our (human) behavior on a continual basis to achieve goals that are scientifically supported.
- The how in outcomes is lacking and makes the plan not sustainable in the long term.
- Strengthening communities are listened to should be added to the vision/ outcomes. Currently reads as if it is top down.
- Would like to see more words around changing the region – status quo won't do.
- Outcome two should state an increase rather than just sustained. The delay in biodiversity framework creates concern.
- Displays a balance of wants, but they are ambiguous and unbalanced in dealing with conflicts and defining outcomes.
- Strategic directions and regional outcomes are repetitive. Edit it down to substantive issues to reduce this long, unwieldy document.



- Outcomes should not be listed in any priority (use bullets, not numbers).
- Water needs more clarity and direction. We need water conservation and allocation objectives.
- Strategic directions are good, but there are inherent conflicts. Could use underpinning direction that balance will be achieved, and what the priorities are.
- In referring to triple bottom line elements, sequencing is important. Order should be environmental, social and economic. Without society there cannot be an economy, without environment there can be neither a society nor an economy.
- The outcomes are all silo outcomes. They need to be correlated with qualifiers and should not be just blanket statements.
- How do we measure the outcomes? What are we hoping to achieve in the plan? It seems the document suggests that we will find a way to measure later. How do you buy in when there are no metrics?
- Regarding Outcome five, currently development needs are not anticipated or accommodated.
- With Outcome six we see a conflict between increasing recreation and preserving the environment.
- What will the Government of Alberta do to meet the outcomes in biodiversity and the environment?

What is missing in the draft SSRP regional outcomes?

- Regional outcomes are missing a visitors component.
- Where is the relationship between regions; missing associations to all surrounding regions.
- Agriculture needs a regional outcome that includes agricultural protection.
- The region has unique culture and heritage, so we need to stress what makes this region unique.
- Lacking reference to a more diversified economy.
- Thread is missing: how are regional outcomes connected together?
- No legislative authority regarding an ongoing public consultation for continued management of the report.
- Outcome four – ensure that economic development is included as a human need.
- Strategic directions should recognize differences in the region and the different challenges and needs of various municipalities (i.e. rural versus urban).



- Order of importance – environment should be first.
- No reference to adaptive co-management and resilience.
- More direction to municipalities in strategic directions is required. Only Crown lands are mentioned.
- Complete absence of privatization and market driven solutions for environmental protection.
- There should be mention of cross jurisdictional cooperation on lands. Specifically with regards to federal jurisdiction, i.e. aboriginal peoples.
- Active transportation should be added to seventh bullet under strategic directions, page 58.
- There should be a mechanism to coordinate government ministries' decision making so that cumulative effects are considered on an ongoing basis.
- Banff should be included in this area since the headwater is located there; at least include in the conservation and collaboration sections.
- Needs to be more future focused. Seems too current day focused; needs to include responsive and adaptive management.
- Have an outcome in place to ensure that monitoring and review process is in place to adequately address the five-year review and a budget to drive it on an ongoing basis.
- Need to have an educational program for the public to tell them why these initiatives are important and how stewardship can be undertaken.



Outcome 1:

The region's economy is growing and diversified

The Draft SSRP breaks up this outcome into seven categories, including the objective and corresponding strategies for each industry. These seven industries and the objectives for each in the Draft SSRP are as follows:

- Energy (Petroleum and Natural Gas, Coal and Minerals) Objective: Opportunities for the responsible exploration, development and extraction of energy resources are maintained.
- Renewable Energy Objective: Opportunities for the responsible development of the region's renewable energy industry are maintained in support of Alberta's commitment to greener energy production and economic development; and value-added opportunities that enhance the sustainability of Alberta's industries and communities are created.
- Corridors for the Co-location of Linear Infrastructure Objective: The region's infrastructure is planned to facilitate economic and population growth and efficient use of land.
- Agriculture Objective: The region's agricultural industry is maintained and diversified.
- Forestry Objective: The region's forest industry is maintained and diversified.
- Surface Materials Objective: Opportunities for the responsible development of surface materials resources are maintained on public lands.
- Tourism Objective: The region is positioned as a world-class, year-round, tourism destination.

Support for Outcome 1 in the draft SSRP and why.

- Regarding tourism, sustainable development is supported, but needs more explanation on how it will be achieved in each sector.
- Co-location is great because it reduces conflict with private landowners and reduces use of limited land base, for instance, transmission lines in the Milk River area.
- Market valuation of the region's ecosystem is of great value.
- We feel agriculture has been respected and protected throughout.
- Pleased that a review of the plan is in place as needed; at least every five years.
- Infrastructure planning is key and at least it is acknowledged.



- Support the diversification of outcomes. Province should continue proactive support of diversity of economy.
- Yearly review is a great idea.
- Support for forestry objective but forestry strategies are weak, hard to implement.
- Really appreciate mention of renewable energy but indicators for renewable energy are needed.
- Regarding Outcome one and the energy strategy we highly support but please reword to clarify intent to protect freehold rights. Maintain physical access is confusing.
- Support local food production and smaller agriculture operations that service the region's population.
- Stewardship has been recognized in a good way, finally.
- Agree with planned wildfires to increase the health of the forest and habitat areas.
- The location of the current conservation areas are good.
- Commitment to forest health is good.
- Current wording demonstrates agriculture is important to the region. We support the mention of value-added agriculture products and agriculture food sector.
- Like references to different policies and legislations.
- South Saskatchewan region is the flagship of renewable energy for the province; the section on renewable energy is great.
- Very detailed, overall general support.
- Support an increase in government provided park/tourism facilities.

Concerns about Outcome 1 in the draft SSRP and why.

- South Saskatchewan forestry is only 1.47 per cent of Alberta's timber production and should be prohibited to better promote recreation and ecotourism industries as regional economic drivers.
- Outcome one needs connection/interrelation to outcome two, how will the two outcomes be balanced against each other?
- Most strategies would require provincial regulation to implement, direction is needed.
- Curious as to how will strategies be implemented regionally, when they address provincial issues.
- Sustainable tourism is a term businesses seem to abuse and should be defined for each industry and context to promote social accountability.



- Mineral development should be removed. This area does not have many minerals.
- Off-road vehicles are not good for tourism and have high impact on the environment. Hiking should be focus as has more tourism and less impact.
- Need to balance that tourism is more than off highway vehicles. Hiking, horseback riding should have the same focus.
- The strategies for investing in renewable energy sounds good, but are lacking in the implementation.
- The economic development needs to grow responsibly to enhance the overall human health. Health should be included in the direction.
- Reference other regions to formulate a way to plan for recreational opportunities. Recreation needs to be included more in the plan.
- Banff National Park should be included as an economic generator for the region.
- Using language in forestry section regarding diversifying doesn't lead to a diversified economy; it's just more forestry.
- Revise outcome one to read, opportunities for the responsible exploration, development, extraction and transmission of energy resources are maintained.
- Castle Mountain needs more clarity on how the municipality can help with infrastructure needs specific to water and wastewater management.
- Need to manage activities and reduce conflict between uses. Plan was meant to do this but it doesn't.
- Many uses mean that it is a challenge to have exclusivity of one industry. Need to share/balance the landscape across industries.
- Tourism can be an economic driver without using large amounts of infrastructure and resources; studies show protected lands provide higher incomes and are global attractions.
- Give grazing leaseholders the security of renewable leases if they work within the conditions (similar to renewal of producing oil wells).
- The objectives for agriculture and forestry are to maintain but the outcome is to grow.
- Agriculture is a major force in the Eastern Slopes (ranches) and in the province. It is the number two sector in province, so this industry needs to be protected.
- More specifics required for how current and future water rights will operate.



- How are we going to deal with this population imbalance that occurs between Calgary and other smaller areas?
- There is no reference in the SSRP to the market-based instruments of environmental goods and services. What will they be?
- Some high value coal lands in the Crowsnest Pass area will be sterilized from development through the creation of additional parks and protected areas. The loss of these areas could significantly and negatively impact potential future coal project development.
- Forestry on the Eastern Slopes is economically marginal yet the plan has a strong logging focus.
- Protecting watersheds – can be achieved through forestry rather than easy target of four-wheel drivers. Oil and gas development is encouraged because of economic benefits.
- Looking out 20 years, new Calgarians and existing will create demands to create tourism, where are they (going) to go? Overload what is already there.
- Need to include some municipal encouragement to grow differently and preserve high soil quality within their borders.
- Coal boundaries are tough to see in SSRP; however, each minor detail has a huge impact. Opportunities are not being identified.
- Some areas simply can't sustain more development at status quo. There are limits to resources.
- Infrastructure is the backbone of the economic plans, so it needs more currency in this plan.
- We all see the benefits of wind farms and transmission lines, etc. and contribution to economy. We don't want to admit it. We need to accommodate balances.
- Our quality of life has to go down with increased population, we have to expect that, and plan is trying to avoid that. We have to expect saturation at some point.
- Places a lot of responsibility on the municipality without empowering the municipality to follow through
- Irrigation takes up all the water; now irrigation is in a separate document, but issue remains that solutions are not described to manage growth.
- Not enough about the process, about how the government will get there. Enforcement is an issue and not in the plan enough.
- Calgary and Edmonton need to be presented in a more balanced perspective in the SSRP area and bound by principles in this plan.



- Attracting too much tourism will have negative impacts in the long run, threatens endangered species, leads to pollution and water contamination.
- We need diversified college programs to include trades. Need to figure out how to keep trades workers here.
- How much is too much? Cumulative effects management system means continued growth is supposed to reach a threshold.
- Industrialization model has surpassed smaller scale multi-use land-based industries that used to support a suite of job creating opportunities.
- Opposed to the proposed expansion of the Bow Valley Wildland Park because it is incompatible with the existing mineral extraction industries and effectively puts a very limited life span on the industry, as well as being contrary to the clear understandings developed for Special Places 2000.
- Agriculture, forestry and tourism should be included as one rather than separate – all could be affected dramatically by climate change.
- The economic plans are incompatible with conservation plans.
- Plan as written doesn't put enough clarity on the fact that trade-offs have to be made.
- SSRP region is 12 per cent of land base and produces 43 per cent of food (agriculture production), contains 45 per cent of population – increased growth in future – this is a significant location. We need to preserve agricultural pursuits.

What is missing in Outcome 1 in the draft SSRP?

- Iconic tourism seems to focus on rural destinations and not the destinations in urban areas and how we can support these businesses.
- Would like to see all areas of economic growth approached/laid out the same as the tourism section (include indicators).
- Needs to have items to make us a leader of energy conservation.
- Horseback riding and trails should be tourism focus rather than off-road vehicles.
- Developing resources is better than shutting things down. So better balance is required but we need to determine how much access we give people.
- Surface materials could use strengthening. Guidelines for responsible extraction and reclamation are missing.
- Pipelines get missed in the corridor discussion because they are underground, yet they limit development and subdivisions.



- Everything can't flourish without trade-offs. Where are the trade-offs?
- Conservation is missing from economy outcome.
- Economy should be growing but the plan does not have enough emphasis on diversification.
- Areas of known oil and gas reserves or where active oil and gas extraction is occurring is missing.
- No mention of emerging economies or aid for the support of new and developing areas of economic growth and resource development.
- No reference to updating the transportation portion in tourism, how do we get people around Southern Alberta?
- Growth strategy for metropolitan/urban nodes is missing.
- The impacts of various outcomes can be contradictory of others and can negatively impact other outcomes. This omission is obvious and shows the economy as priority.
- Opportunities throughout the region – improve promotion and focus should be there.
- Missing fishing and hunting and how these activities operate, contribute to the economy and need to be supported, (i.e. fishing is world class in the Bow River).
- Only looks at economics from a traditional perspective and doesn't show the value of open spaces/ecosystem services.
- The plan doesn't recognize the conflict between resource extraction and other economic opportunities (i.e. coal mining versus tourism).
- Resource development and iconic tourism/high value recreational areas are not mutually exclusive. There are examples in which oil and gas developments and high value recreational opportunities co-exist in the same area.
- Agriculture is missing grazing lands and ecological goods and services. The focus is on irrigation lands.
- Logging practices south of the Bow River be reviewed to take into account the sensitivity of the area and that a system of performance based standards be developed, instead of regulations, allowing individual circumstances to be more readily addressed and empowering industry to develop innovative and practical solutions to achieve the performance outcomes.
- No reference to education that is vital to economy. There is also the need for more rural education that improves quality of living and economy.
- Add a policy that requires the development of a transportation and utility corridor strategy for the area between Edmonton and Calgary within the next two years, which would be undertaken by Government of Alberta in consultation with the affected municipalities.



Outcome 2:

Biodiversity and ecosystem function are sustained with shared stewardship

The objectives are as follows:

- Terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity are maintained;
- Species at risk are recovered, and key grasslands habitat is sustained;
- Areas are added to the regional network of conservation areas;
- Biodiversity and healthy functioning ecosystems continue to provide a range of benefits to communities in the region and all Albertans; and
- Long-term forest ecosystem health and resiliency are maintained.

The objectives for stewardship and conservation on private lands are listed below:

- The contributions of landowners for their stewardship and conservation efforts on private lands are recognized;
- The contribution and value of private land in supplying ecosystem services is recognized, and opportunities to support ecosystem services on private land are identified; and
- The value of ecosystem services supplied by economic sectors reliant on private lands is recognized.

This section was broken down into two separate discussion topics:

- Discussion Topic #3: Biodiversity Management Framework and Conservation Areas; and
- Discussion Topic #4: Integrated Management of Public Land (Eastern Slopes – Green Area Public Land and Grassland – White Area Public Land) and Stewardship of Private Lands.

Biodiversity Management Framework and Conservation Areas

Support for a biodiversity management framework and the conservation areas in the draft SSRP and why.

Biodiversity Management Framework

- Maintaining our ecological bank is of utmost importance.
- Support concept of biodiversity management but we need it sooner than five years.
- Page 38 – entire last paragraph is very well done and greatly supported.



- Like the fact that the plan recognizes existing initiatives that already have resources and is not starting from scratch.
- Pleased with landowner involvement on species recovery plans; like wording of biodiversity strategy and how it encourage stewardship on public and private lands.
- Support suite of tools (effects, easements, etc.) in the plan.
- Good that Alberta acknowledges biodiversity and conservation areas.
- Support the biodiversity framework. We need to manage access but efforts need to be coordinated regionally and internationally; birds and wildlife will have no benefit if not. They know no borders.
- Most landowners already conduct biodiversity.
- Support using more natural approaches to forest fire management (controlled burns program).
- The plan does a good job to identify tools, areas and plans to try and achieve biodiversity objectives in the region.

Conservation Areas

- Support the Livingstone Range as a conservation area; support municipal bylaws to protect view of range.
- The Pekisko is a positive initiative in the plan.
- Support conservation of Castle, should be extended.
- Support multi-use in conservation areas in appropriate intensities.
- PLUZ land-use coordination is good first step.
- Conservation areas are important given all of these competing land-use interests.
- Connectivity of land in Castle area is important.
- Support that PNG existing dispositions/mineral rights will be honored in conservation areas.
- Happy to see the work that's going into the Eastern Slopes.
- Support that the Wild Horse CMA was dropped. It is currently well managed and doesn't need more planning.
- Support the protection of grizzly bear areas but worry it won't actually be done.
- Need to encourage more of what is happening in the Pekisko area; need to implement some infrastructure for developing conservation areas for private owners.



Concerns about a biodiversity management framework and conservation areas in the draft SSRP and why.

Biodiversity Management Framework

- Further limitations to the industrial development in conservation areas within the rockies is affecting livelihood of coking coal exploration and diminishing opportunities.
- Too much logging in valleys; loggers have committed to reclaim recreation trails, not done to level they were originally in.
- Land management has to improve in order to balance needs to shift to better manage recreation.
- To enhance/improve ecosystems we need to all work together and not in silos. Together we can move past the motherhood statements and into solutions.
- The language of the document needs to be rooted in a science-based ecosystem system approach.
- Language used in plan, i.e. may is too uncertain. Need to be more concrete, i.e. will, shall.
- Need clarity on what we want to do, how we are going to monitor it and resources to implement.
- Require increased transparency and information that is usable to landowners about water and biodiversity.
- Regarding grizzly bear recovery, do not just focus on one specific charismatic mega fauna poster child.
- How are they going to balance the biodiversity management framework with the economic objectives of the SSRP?
- Biodiversity and conservation management doesn't consider existing residents and their communities.
- The planned three year delay of the Linear Footprint Management Plan is extremely detrimental to achieving crucial land-based cumulative effects trade-offs at the heart of what this regional plan should accomplish.
- Expand and better define terms like core and critical, sufficient size, 'based on science'.
- Biodiversity Management Framework doesn't show what the implementation, thresholds, etc. will look like. We want to support, but we are not comfortable.
- Cumulative effects management is challenging when decisions are made by various entities – should be government making the tough decisions.



- Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute has enough research with specific indicators and triggers to have a biodiversity management plan incorporated into the SSRP plan, why the delay?
- How much is enough? We need to protect species but it seems the cost is being borne by our specific area. The protection needs to be spread around the region. The beneficiaries of this SSRP need to pay more.
- Smoke and mirrors – we are protecting mountaintops where no one goes.
- Government needs to compensate private landowners for preventing development on sensitive areas (i.e. wetlands).
- Concern with protecting one species at the risk of another, i.e. hawks versus sage grouse. The cumulative effects are not considered, it is more of a piecemeal approach.
- The document doesn't address climate change, a huge problem in this area. The economy and the environment are both very affected by climate change.

Conservation Areas

- Do not support the Castle protection area as it's currently laid due to the impact on the Castle Mountain Resort.
- Castle conservation has not gone far enough. The level of protection is too low on bottoms along riparian areas and this needs to be reversed. Protect the Castle Special Place in its entirety (1,041 square kilometres) as a Wildland Provincial Park or some other designation that prohibits new industrial forestry and curtails off-highway vehicle (OHV) use.
- When compared to the RAC advice, all protection areas have been greatly reduced and definitions have been watered down.
- All industries should remain and be included with the implementation of conservation areas (i.e. grazing to continue).
- Proper research needs to be done when deciding on what activities are allowed and what impacts they have.
- The draft plan enables integrated management on a small scale, but not at a complex scale. Multiple systems and industry need a plan to illustrate this.
- Four of 12 recreation parks area are within the Elbow area, this is too concentrated in one area. What impact will this have on grazing?
- Access management plans should be motorized recreation plan that considers all aspects of activities and impacts and manages them in an integrated way.



- Conservation areas do not consider the dynamic nature of the forest, i.e. they might not be there in the future to maintain biodiversity (burned by forest fire).
- Conservation areas can affect municipalities' tax base by limiting future linear growth; however, is everyone aware of this cost and prepared to deal with it?
- Management more important than land use designations, for instance, heritage rangeland causes spill-over effects on adjacent land (i.e. oil and gas).
- Bow Valley expansion for conservation is concerning. There is a lot of industry in the area; mysterious that this area ended up in the draft plan.
- If conservation is to expand in eastern portion of the region, it would be good to expand on existing parks and protected wetlands areas, i.e. Kinbrook Island Provincial Park.
- Government should partner with other conservation organizations to develop/purchase conservation areas.
- Pekisko Heritage Rangelands and other heritage rangelands should be managed by ESRD in order to preserve the historic grazing value (environmental) to the native grasslands.
- The Kananaskis area needs to be more defined for needed direction for operations. It is a finite space, trade-offs are necessary.
- All stakeholders need to be contacted (at least two) for areas that are classified as new conservation areas. Need to make sure they don't increase traffic substantially.

What is missing in the draft SSRP?

Biodiversity Management Framework

- The government has placed responsibility to protect the grasslands on primarily the municipalities and private landowners.
- The province needs to take a stronger stance and lead the public by setting the example, provide market based instruments, etc.
- The plan should acknowledge the significant role that municipalities have in land-use management as it relates to the conservation of biodiversity, and the connection between biodiversity and healthy riparian areas.
- Currently only protects the mountaintop and rock, not the valleys, slopes, streams, etc. Need to protect the entire system, a diversity of areas.
- Missing emphasis on the importance of water to supporting biodiversity and conservation areas.



- Missing promotion of knowledge and education so community members develop a shared understanding of what biodiversity and conservation in the region means.
- Too many plan to plan documents to make it all work properly – not enough backup in the plan.
- Biodiversity measurement needs to do a better job of incorporating ranchers, grazing leaseholders and frequent land users in their data collection.
- The recently completed Westslope Cutthroat Trout Recovery Strategy, which outlines potential solutions to maintaining this native species in its native range within the South Saskatchewan watershed.
- The Biodiversity Management Framework does not include the ability to designate new protected areas in key species habitats or landscapes. For the framework to be meaningful and effective, it should include the ability to designate new protected areas.

Conservation Areas

- Designated trails are great but would like management and enforcement details.
- Need more clarification on management intent for all new proposed conservation and recreation areas.
- Proposed conservation areas are patchy, small and unconnected, so they do not align at all with key criteria for conservation areas in the draft plan.
- Within conservation areas, there needs to be more education, collaboration with all user groups including industry and enforcement to ensure people are respecting the land.
- Effort to increasing conservation on private lands is lacking – need to be creating more support for tools and mechanisms such as land trusts.
- Support designated trails where they make sense, need infrastructure, education and enforcement.
- Management plan by 2017 is too long, need precautionary approach for the interim.
- We need better coordination of volunteer efforts around conservation and stewardship. There are a lot of volunteers doing good work who need to be incorporated.
- Conservation groups continuously acknowledge that grazing cattle promotes and maintains a healthy landscape, which has helped maintain the current status of the species at risk and significantly contributes to clean air and water.



Integrated Management of Public Land and Stewardship of Private Lands

Support for integrated management of public land and stewardship of private lands and why.

Integrated Management of Public Land

- Plan is good at recognizing how diverse the region is.
- Support the management systems in the green areas for conservation. Generally it seems pretty good.
- Consolidating linear disturbances is a positive step forward. However, contextual demands might make this very challenging.
- Good to see that grasslands have high priority as it is important for watersheds.
- Support the intent to work in a partnership with grassroots, stewardship and conservation initiatives in the white area.
- We are becoming more efficient in our use of water for irrigation and we support the benefits of bringing irrigation into dry areas.
- Good to see management of invasive species is identified. Support re-establishment and improvement of native grasslands.
- Support conservation offsets in principle; need the tools developed, must include stakeholders in the development of them.
- Support the preservation of native grasslands; concern that this initiative may fall by the wayside as time goes along.

Stewardship of Private Lands

- Nature conservancy should be counted/recognized as a partner for private land stewardship.
- Support market-based incentives for private landowners to keep native grasslands intact.
- Good stewardship needs to be rewarded and recognized and this is starting to be evident in this plan (i.e. farmers, non-governmental organizations, water conservation groups).
- Support regulation on private property if it affects the surrounding areas, particularly in riparian areas.
- The SSRP may provide overall guidance to assist rural communities and provide some standardization and consistency.



Concerns about integrated management of public land and stewardship of private lands and why.

Integrated Management of Public Land

- Non-motorized recreation within public land-use zones needs more emphasis and recognition.
- Regulations should be the same between white and green areas. The goals should be the same.
- Enhance how forestry is managed for water quality and quantity. Companies should manage forest processes and get paid for it (change the model).
- The use of green zone areas for recreation purposes should be addressed just as other green zone uses, there should be regulations, ownership via payment and responsibility, and accountability.
- Regarding hunting and fishing on leased lands, the government needs to clarify process and provide resources for enforcement.
- OHV groups need to develop a united voice and can't expect Albertans to fund single use activities in the area.
- Grizzly bear recovery will impact access management; outdoor recreation activities have been sidelined.
- Adapting to the changing trends of the population will impact land use practices. Necessity will drive change.
- The protection of the land needs to take priority over all forms of economic development.
- Expanding the human footprint needs to balance with the bear habitat. Need to look at the entire picture, not an isolated interest.
- Education is the most important tool to protecting the environment; then comes enforcement.
- The direction appears to be to make Alberta a world class tourism area – we need to ensure that the land use is equal to that idea.
- Need service agreements between province and municipalities to provide services in green area like inter-municipal service agreements if encouraging more people in green area.
- Green area land uses need to be monitored and periodically reviewed for evaluation of their maintenance, growth or reduction.
- Strategy towards grasslands is counterproductive if it does not recognize historical and traditional use or uses other than economic uses.



- There should be no consideration of irrigation for grasslands for expansion. All grasslands should be conserved and water should remain in the river.
- Not in favor of a blanket approach to white area conservation. Treat each case with context specific objectives, evidence, science, etc.
- The wording regarding grassland sales and its relation to irrigation potential should be more clear to explain how these decisions will be made and by who (will determine suitability)
- The rangeland should have very distinct access management plans that everyone can be clear on.
- Grassland conservation areas have been reduced to one – need to create more natural grassland areas.

Stewardship of Private Lands

- Offsets are paying people (for) what they are doing/should be doing already. May be counterintuitive, i.e. not paid for it, so won't do it.
- We can't have conservation and agriculture as separate elements. They require a suite of tools depending on the situation.
- Education and enforcement are the main issues for stewardship issues.
- Landowners are concerned about future constraints placed on them under conservation initiatives on private property identified as having conservation value.
- Incentives for private landowners is very important, but with such a huge percentage of private land this plan doesn't make enough impact.
- Private property should not have any regulatory influence on it. Should be up to individual landowner to decide how to use the land.
- Government should assume liability and provide compensation for enhancing wildlife values on private land.
- Private land conservation tools should not result in further controls by government or others on the private land.
- We feel that if stewardship guidelines or goals are not identified, then stewardship will not happen.
- There should be more education as to what the best management practices are for private land.



What is missing in the draft SSRP?

Integrated Management of Public Land

- Consider a user-pay system for recreation management on public land.
- Would like more information in the plan on the integrated recreation and access management plans for North Castle, Porcupine Hills, Livingstone and Willow Creek locations.
- Recreational pursuits need to be layered with preservation of the area's biodiversity.
- Need more designated route signs to show where recreational vehicles are allowed and not allowed.
- Need legislative mechanism for some roads that are unused to be closed, removed and reclaimed.
- Planning for the utility corridor should be done in advance of development and population growth to minimize impact of these areas.
- Where is the enforcement? It has been reduced over years.
- Better definition moving towards access management as to determine what the priorities are.
- Why is the linear impact focus only in the green area and not the white area? Development of infrastructure needs to be addressed under this focus on linear impacts. Transportation is hardly mentioned.
- No specific conservation areas are noted in the southeast portion of the South Saskatchewan Region. Absence of conservation areas in southeast does not reflect the strong supportive language in the document.
- Opportunities for heritage rangelands should be explored and lead by the government – consideration should be given to have more areas.
- Non-regulatory conservation easements should be explored if appropriate.
- Linear management plan needs to focus as much on ensuring/managing quality of linear disturbance, not only quantity of disturbance due to impact on water.



Stewardship of Private Lands

- A map of what private lands are already conserved would be useful (i.e. under Nature Conservancy of Canada, Land Trusts, etc.).
- Education of landowners and leaseholders on conservation/biodiversity management is useful. Workshops, field days, demonstrations, etc. will also build relationships.
- If private land is going to be protected, what is the mechanism for making this happen? What makes the land valuable?
- Increase awareness and successes of the programs out there that have given good outcomes.
- Missing policies on reclamation in stewardship on private lands section.
- Conservation easements worry some landowners because it could tie the land up for generations. Try to find ways to put something in place regarding an escape clause. Examples in the United States that have had mixed success.
- Would like to see an educational program to go along with the stewardship program (not only how to do it but why, what tools are available).



Outcome 3:

Air quality is managed to support healthy ecosystems and human needs through shared stewardship

The objective for advancing air quality is as follows:

- Releases from various point and non-point sources are managed so they do not collectively result in unacceptable air quality.

Support for the air quality management framework in the draft SSRP.

- Support addressing regulated and non-regulated industries and pollution sources through SSRP (point source and non-point source).
- Excellent that air quality and water quality is being addressed, especially considering estimated population increase.
- Synergy with established airsheds and this plan in implementation and info sharing is a must.
- Vast improvement to RAC phase.
- Value this area's existing positive air quality; would like to keep it that way.
- Objectives and strategies are great and should be implemented now because impacts are happening and increasing.
- Support the use of science and numbers for limits and triggers.
- Support the use of triggers and thresholds in this section – would like to see this throughout the document.

Concerns about the air quality management framework in the draft SSRP.

- Regarding air strategies, how will this be done and who will do it? Should include education programs and partnership with airshed groups.
- Air management should include airshed volunteer groups but this work is too important to rely on them and we need to incorporate them in government.
- The air quality and water quality issues need to be explored and understood on a regional level. It is beyond the municipalities, and up to the entire region.
- Cumulative effects plan doesn't address the outside airshed influence from other jurisdictions like Saskatchewan.
- Climate change should be front and center in the document, – it is buried in page 89.



- We are not supportive of the fact that the plan leaves it to municipalities to voluntarily participate in air quality issue.
- Plan is very reactive about air quality.
- Air quality is still a provincial responsibility, and their management should be funded by the government.
- How will air nuisances be separated/identified from air quality issues leading to health concerns? How will this impact municipal land use?
- Acceptable levels of emissions should be consistent throughout the province, not more stringent only in Calgary and Medicine Hat area, industrial areas. This plan should create an airshed for southwest Alberta.
- Would like to see a relationship between air quality and topography addressed during the monitoring stage.
- Air quality standards aligned with provincial standards should be sufficient for region. Special regulations might not be necessary.

What is missing in the draft SSRP?

- Include a map of airshed organization areas in the final plan.
- Understanding of ambient air quality is required through monitoring to understand cumulative effect of industry.
- Nothing in the plan about greenhouse gas mitigation.
- Would like to see data regarding where air emissions are coming from as a guide to some of these policies.
- Incentives not incorporated for people to improve air and water quality the way it is in other parts of the SSRP.
- Missing discussion on cumulative effects from industry and operations on air quality and how those are monitored/managed if thresholds are hit.
- Transportation is the number one cause of air pollution. This statement needs to be added to address this.



Outcome 4:

Watersheds are managed to support healthy ecosystems and human needs through shared stewardship

The objective for surface water quality is as follows:

- Surface water quality in Bow, Oldman, South Saskatchewan and Milk rivers is managed so current and future water uses are protected.

The objective for enhancing integrated watershed management is as follows:

- Regional approaches and tools support integrated management of water and aquatic ecosystems.

Support for the water quality management framework and strategies for advancing watershed management in the draft SSRP.

- We support increased understanding of groundwater, we need to accelerate this process and make it a top priority.
- Support education and awareness programs as well as best management practice strategies for water management.
- Appreciate the use of very specific and concrete indicators.
- Good to see the importance of management of the headwaters (very important)
- Supportive of a collaborative approach to water quality management.
- Promote demonstration and sharing successes from hands-on education related to riparian areas.
- Support shared stewardship of watershed; not sure how enforcement will be funded though.
- Support for the current regulations to protect water quality. They are sufficient to protect groundwater.
- Support flood hazard mapping, but maps should be updated and revised for accuracy.



Concerns about the water quality management framework and strategies for advancing watershed management in the draft SSRP.

- Concern that the watershed groups and their good work are not being seriously considered in regional planning.
- Forestry in the mountains is negatively affecting the watershed and erosion.
- Worried about another layer of approval/regulation and the timeline that could be now larger and more complicated.
- Headwaters are not very well protected in the green area. Only high elevation areas are protected.
- Groundwater information is flimsy. Groundwater is very important and should be much more of a focus.
- We have some of the best water in the world – quality is not the issue, quantity is.
- Concern there is an imbalance in priorities of water and how it's allocated.
- Eastern Slopes needs special attention for each specific development in order to manage cumulative impacts.
- Stronger regulation and legislation supported by public education, can't have teeth if there is no public education/support.
- Plan doesn't address flood prevention; for example, plan doesn't talk about headwaters or forestry systems as a means of flood prevention.
- Would have liked to see the SSRP as a consolidation of existing water plans and guidance rather than just a reference to the plans.
- Maintaining all existing water licenses ties our hands to move forward. Some licenses established years ago have never and will never use their license potential and others can't get a license.
- Concern outdoor recreation is causing increased negative impacts on water quality because of uncontrolled access to waterways.
- We need to formulate a bridge between various levels of government levels including reserve land, municipal land and separate provinces.
- Water management systems fail to address the value of the landscape and the impact they have on surrounding landscapes. A comparison of values between water management systems and landscape is necessary.
- Increase the number of indicators of pollution caused by heavy industry (arsenic, mercury, cyanide, biocycles, phosgene, DDT).



- Intact forests do a much better job at flood management and ensuring water supply than engineered solutions. They are the buffer that protects downstream infrastructure.
- Drought management planning/preparedness is very important. Needs more emphasis in plan.
- The SSRP boundaries should be amended to include the Bow River headwaters located within Banff National Park.
- Wetland and groundwater relationship is critical to quantity and quality of water – this should be emphasized/considered more in the plan.
- Water for Life initiative is great but funding continues to be cut, how will those outcomes be realized now?
- The binding notification authority granted the Regulatory Details Plan may prevent a district from civilly recouping its damages from the polluter because the minister's notification may force the municipality or district to accept contamination of its water supply (i.e., minister could acknowledge the exceedance but notify an irrigation district not to take action, essentially granting the discharger a license to pollute for a period of time).

What is missing in the draft SSRP?

- How would water withdrawal affect other parts of the province? Surface water challenges should be monitored versus managed system.
- Where does the money come from to fund all the encourage? What are the priorities?
- What kind of collaboration with federal government in national parks in terms of headwater protection? Need federal/provincial collaboration plans.
- This plan does not clearly address who manages water (Province? Municipalities?).
- Would like to see this plan address possible collaboration or communication between users of water.
- We need a more specific plan on what we are going to monitor and what are the measurement tools.
- Flood management should include natural solutions (soils, vegetation) not just infrastructure solutions.
- Hydraulic fracturing effects on groundwater should be explained and addressed.
- Recycling of water is not addressed by the SSRP.



- More clarity on definition of headwaters is required in the plan. Concern that all headwaters are not protected with the proposed conservation areas. Only upper reaches of headwaters are being protected.
- Need education regarding riparian area health and be encouraged by this plan to help landowners become better stewards. Emphasize education and stewardship programs – a win-win situation.
- The quality of waste water management is important to municipalities and should be explored to ensure improved practices.
- Hard to plan without data, more data needs to be collected in areas in Alberta.
- Universities and colleges need a role in understanding air and water and land impacts resulting from diversification and new value added industry.



Outcome 5: Community development needs are anticipated and accommodated

The following is a list of objectives for planning cooperation and integration:

- Cooperation and coordination are fostered among all land-use planners and decision-makers involved in preparing and implementing land plans and strategies;
- Knowledge sharing among communities is encouraged to promote the use of planning tools and the principles of efficient use of land to address community development in the region.

Calgary Regional Partnership

- Municipalities in the metropolitan areas are encouraged to work together to:
 - Plan for future growth; and
 - Decide on the criteria and decision-making processes for local and regional development approvals to the collective satisfaction of all members within their mandate.

Below is the objective for building sustainable communities:

- Ensure provincial government is provided to municipalities and other stakeholders to:
- Promote healthy and sustainable communities;
- Foster the establishment of land-use patterns for an orderly, economical and beneficial development, as well as to maintain and improve the quality of the built environment;
- Support timely planning and provision of social infrastructure;
- Contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of a healthy natural environment;
- Foster preservation of historic resources through responsible land-use management;
- Contribute to a safe, efficient and cost-effective transportation network; and
- Minimize risks to health, safety and loss to property damage as a result of land-use decisions.



Strengthening Communities

Support for the draft SSRP and why.

- Support the outcomes and strategies for strengthening communities. Particularly flood planning and investment in existing facilities and access management plans.
- Support the design of urban areas focused on people rather than cars.
- Support the recognition that water is a contributing factor to the economic and social growth of municipalities.
- We support collaboration between province and municipalities.
- This section is better laid out with more details in how the strategies will be used than other sections.
- Support SSRP including recognition of communities and focus on municipalities, especially providing guidelines for development and collaboration when plan is also focused on regulating industry.
- Support improved communication and accessibility of provincial staff and their knowledge.

Concerns about the draft SSRP and why.

- Integration of plan has to be carried out.
- The SSRP does not forecast growth for the 50-year horizon, nor identify any specific growth areas; therefore, while the SSRP's vision speaks of positioning the region for 50 years of prosperity and growth, it gives no indication of how much growth there could be, where and in what forms growth can best be accommodated, nor how government funded infrastructure could encourage and support that desired pattern of growth.
- Integration of the Calgary Regional Partnership seems good, but independence needs to be secured while working together.
- Growth in the region is not sustainable – the document needs to recognize limits in growth; unlimited growth is not possible.
- Municipalities need access to subject matter experts within government.
- The SSRP must take priority over Calgary and all their plans; it cannot be parallel to their processes.
- Province needs to support development and renewal of infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater). A stronger partnership between province and municipalities is required.
- Municipalities need the resources for emergency response services to support non-resident recreation.
- Municipalities need the resources to develop, support, respond to and maintain SSRP initiatives.



- Plans need place-based, contextual approaches for smaller communities. There needs to be a better collaboration instead of large centers.
- Cities and smaller adjacent municipalities need to communicate and collaborate as opposed to being in conflict.
- Developers need to be included in creating healthy communities. They need to be in support and behind the goals.
- There needs to be a balance between municipal discretion and regional vision policies. Consider targets and thresholds in varying locations.
- How does the SSRP provide direction to the MGA when there are no regulations? Will there be direction or policy coming?
- Collaborative approach to flood mitigation is key. Include all the experts, it needs to be an integrated approach.
- No permanent development in flood zones – reconsider restrictions, more stringent regulations in riparian areas - and flood mapping.
- Economic sustainability is important for healthy communities: economic formulas are not working for rural communities.
- Communities will be strengthened by diverse economies, not single industry resource extraction.
- The provincial government must still acknowledge small municipalities' decision making autonomy and not favor Calgary/Edmonton's interests.
- Need policies as well as government support to enable/improve communities to provide for quality of living, infrastructure, labor force by considering natural capital, cultural capital, and economic capital.

What is missing in the draft SSRP?

- Community support should focus on communities that are experiencing a downturn. That way other elements of the plan, like tourism infrastructure, can be implemented.
- Consider additional engagement opportunities for municipal representatives to actively participate in this plan, it is too important for them not to be involved.
- Healthy needs to be defined, social determinants, etc. needs a much bigger description and definition in the final plan.
- The plan is missing a meaningful process to listen to municipal views. Needs accountability to report back to Albertans.
- Neighboring municipalities may have different approaches and governing jurisdictions for land-use planning that should be recognized/addressed in SSRP.



- Plan does nothing to address diverse economy and encourage new people to come to the area. Most renewal is through immigration.
- Transportation networks only address highways; that isn't really about moving people. Need to look at other means of transport, i.e. trains, trails, etc.
- A great feel good document but some indication of costs (implementation) is needed and is missing.
- Municipalities need more tools and be able to set more limits on how new developments occur.
- Plan needs to better address the Calgary Metropolitan Plan and how it will function as a sub-regional plan.
- What happened to the Efficient Use of Land strategy and why was it not incorporated into the SSRP?



Outcome 6:

The quality of life of residents is enhanced through increased opportunities for recreation, active living and the preservation and promotion of the region's unique cultural and natural heritage.

The objectives for enhancing recreation and cultural opportunities are as follows:

- A wide range of recreation experiences and tourism opportunities that meet the preferences of regional residents and visitors will be provided; and
- The artifacts, fossils, historic places and aboriginal heritage sites that define the region's distinctive character are identified and effectively managed.

Support for the draft SSRP and why.

- The general direction for recreation opportunities looks good with some additional refinement.
- Writing on Stone as a world heritage site is a great idea.
- Good to see recreation management being addressed.
- New OHV friendly parks supported but we need timelines on when these happen because they are needed now.
- Population and urban development has grown and tourism and recreation areas. There is a lot of support for trails, campgrounds, and area expansions proposed.
- Support the goal of enhancing Alberta culture.
- Support connected trails on public lands to encourage multi-day trips and avoid conflicts on private lands.
- Support strategy – education, outreach and enforcement – to promote stewardship.
- Support of the plan's conservation areas to protect the iconic areas for tourism.
- Draft plan does a good job of finding the balance between different needs/ uses.
- Support addition of camping areas in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat areas without having detrimental impact to agriculture industry.
- Recreation indicators are measurable which is excellent; this type of indicator should be used in all sections of the plan.



- Page 117, destination management strategy, we strongly agree with identifying mechanisms for engagement with the tourism industry, infrastructure providers and private investors
- Support more enforcement of random camping; like initiatives like gravel pads.

Concerns about the draft SSRP and why.

- Recreation business on Crown land needs to be monitored to prevent exclusion on public land (i.e. prevent access exclusivity on crown land).
- Not enough of the regulation is legally binding.
- Having logging, OHV and random camping entrenched in the plan is inappropriate.
- Reduce emphasis on motorized recreation, increase and promote emphasis on non-motorized recreation (geo/ecotourism). Promote non-motorized activities to offer sustainable land use practices.
- Eliminate casual (random) camping. Promote private or public managed campsites.
- It is hard to invest your life, business and dollars in the mountain areas when there seems like the government is always moments from changing the rules/access areas/ etc.
- Does the integrated trail plan mean that other trail developments will be on hold until 2017 when it's been run through its pilot? Timing is unclear and confusing.
- If we are connecting communities via trails they should be accessed by all, maintained, enforced and funded.
- The dark green areas shown at Dead Man's Pass, Race Horse and Middle Kootenay Pass are limiting trail connectivity in the area (and into British Columbia) and will decrease tourism dollars.
- There is a need for user fee for random camping, we need funding for implementation.
- Tourism in the headwaters needs to be balanced with water conservation, quality, quantity, etc.
- The Ghost area access management plan has been unsuccessful and should not be the template for other areas.
- There should be thresholds identified to determine the lands capacity for recreation, as well as all of the other activities that go on in the area.
- Opening up Writing on Stone to even greater numbers of people is scary from an aboriginal perspective.



- Need a better balance between providing opportunities and managing impacts (too opportunity focused).
- Need more thought on random camping areas – clustering them will not provide the solitude experience random campers desire.
- Remove the barriers that frustrate volunteerism/volunteer contributions in the recreation area such as when OHV clubs build bridges for all to use, but provincial government require club to maintain liability insurance on bridge.
- Creating new areas may take too long; current areas are being damaged now. Need to prioritize management of more local areas (i.e. McLean area).
- Should focus on the surrounding areas having an appropriate level of development to support tourism. Local economies could benefit, and need it in this area.
- Further development of parks lands (expansion) is just like urban sprawl. We should expand recreation use in parks that are existing.
- Stakeholders must be consulted for decisions around new public land recreation areas (location, size, etc.).

What is missing in the draft SSRP.

- Recreation and access management plans could be developed with a Delegated Administrative Organization (DAO). Activities need to be coordinated through a provincial organization.
- Environment and Sustainable Resource Development should create a master recreational plan for each sub-region, similar to subregional integrated resource plans.
- Would like enhanced enforcement of current camping regulations.
- Require a focus on diverse economic development and not just recreation.
- Enforcement has to be included with the outreach and education goals.
- Would like a trail pass or recreation pass to access the backcountry and pay to maintain it.
- Why can't the access management plan, trail management plan and linear footprint be one plan or initiative?
- Nature-based recreation definition should be included as a sidebar in this section.
- We need enforcement – if resourcing/financing is required, then establish a cost for recreating (fee based participation).



- Joint responsibility for maintenance and development of outdoor recreation areas, i.e. reservoirs, for both urban and rural jurisdictions.
- A greater balance between hunting and other recreational areas.
- Establish a clear and transparent conflict resolution process that permits independent review of implementation decisions.
- Purpose-built trail systems that are dynamic, moveable and not just re-purposed.
- The protected areas need the valley bottoms included as part of the recreation areas.
- All conservation areas in the eastern areas were taken out in this plan from previous drafts.
- Plan could gain strength if it addressed how to incorporate the 1600 kilometres of abandoned railway lines into trail plans.
- Need to have a good trail network but need a plan, education and enforcement program that is funded first.
- Include Fish Creek Provincial Park on Schedule D. The SSRP does not include any rationale for excluding urban provincial parks.
- Fishing in the Bow River is a huge attraction, and this is not included in the draft plan.
- Too many costs for things like cultural or recreation opportunities are being downloaded onto municipalities.
- Would like to see an education program to teach best practices for public land use for recreation.
- Consider partnerships between municipalities and irrigation districts to develop water storage facilities that can be used for recreation.
- An east-west recreational route necessary for the continuity of the cross-Canada footpath, and suggest that one option to provide this continuity is for the national trail to parallel the south side of the TransCanada Highway.
- Include the Four E's trail management process laid out by National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council:
 - Engineering – clear and transparent access to the resource, credible draws tied to sustainable populations.
 - Education – education regarding the benefits of compliance.
 - Enforcement – effective enforcement that is predictable and fair.

Evaluation – gather credible data and share with community members to close the loop.



Outcome 7: Aboriginal peoples are included in land-use planning

The inclusion of aboriginal peoples is according to the following objective:

- To encourage aboriginal peoples' participation in land-use planning and input to decision-making in recognition of the cultural and economic importance of land use to those aboriginal communities with constitutionally protected rights. This will provide both aboriginal communities and the Government of Alberta with a basis for better addressing current and potential land-use conflicts, in a manner supportive of aboriginal traditional uses, such as the exercise of treaty rights.

Support for the draft SSRP and why.

- Aboriginal people should definitely be included.
- Hold information session on reserves to help encourage First Nations participation in regional plans.
- Important to include their cultural heritage in the plan. Aboriginal consultation is a given.
- Support mutual collaboration, but not forced collaboration.
- Outcome seven is well written, well outlined. Really want to see the follow through with this outcome.

Concerns about the draft SSRP and why.

- Too much power in Cabinet decision-making capacity versus legally binding land use plans.
- Having separate aboriginal consultations is opposite of inclusionary, the provincial and federal government need to better facilitate inclusive consultations.
- Regarding Outcome seven, rethink the strategy to engage First Nations groups in such a way that they feel comfortable at the tables at the stakeholder workshops so that it is truly an all-inclusive approach.
- When issues of overall land, water and air quality are discussed, the reserve members (all, not just council) need to be engaged.
- Aboriginal engagement is not done early enough in the process to meaningfully contribute to this engagement process.
- Aboriginal peoples' involvement dictated by Supreme Court, Government of Alberta does not have much choice in the matter or how it's done.



- The government's capacity to consult with First Nations for development on the land is limited.
- Should not be an afterthought, we need to invest in ways to engage to be proactive not reactive and not an add on.
- Would like to have an integrated process for consultation rather than two separate processes – would be good to hear their perspective during this process.

What is missing in the draft SSRP?

- SSRP approach to integrating First Nations and promoting cultural communication is lacking.
- Aboriginal input is not integrated in draft plan in a meaningful way and only noted that consultations are occurring.
- Recognize and address there are different levels of interest and understanding in regional planning within First Nations groups.
- Would like to see more of a knowledge base about this project and how it affects aboriginal youth.
- Would like more emphasis on the balance between development and protection of the environment on aboriginal lands.
- Aboriginal knowledge should be used and placed as an outcome in SSRP.
- More opportunities for aboriginal peoples to showcase their history (and protection of sacred places in the Castle) should be considered.



Additional Comments

The following additional comments and questions were raised during the stakeholder workshops that were deemed outside of the six discussion sessions but were captured as part of the stakeholder feedback.

- Regulation and policies should increase communication between all interested parties.
- Seems this plan is already set by the government; the consultation is just a process that has no real impact.
- The document as a whole feels a bit watered down and approaches the land use plan as business as usual.
- Concern about how the city of Calgary will have an impact on all decisions in the SSRP.
- Page 51 – include the provision of health care facilities in local communities – what will these be?
- General concern about how much impact outside users (other SSRP municipalities) are having on the local implementation and regulations.
- The Eastern Slopes need to be managed differently than the boreal forest.
- Process issue, the stewardship/slopes/grasslands discussion is confused with the biodiversity discussion.
- There must be a follow-through plan of enforcement of the regulations laid out in the plan.
- Crowsnest Pass not marked on majority of maps throughout the plan.
- SSRP should be encouraging consultation between municipalities in the planning process. Need to know what ideas we are trying to balance.
- Although the plan looks good on paper, concerned about how the Government of Alberta will implement and enforce the plan. Will the plan run how they say it will?
- How will the plan address the conflicts between different priorities and objectives? Who decides? How to appeal?
- Regulation section should be separate in SSRP document structure.
- Average Albertan cannot comment on document because of organization and structure of plan.
- We must embrace opportunities to work closely with aboriginal people.
- Attempts to manage the land in the past were abandoned and restarted often.



- Transfer of development credits is missing from the plan, what is the legislation on this?
- Would like the government to share GIS data (i.e. for conservation areas) with the public.
- Municipalities need capacity to deal with emergency services with increasing recreation.
- The impacts on municipal services from tourism/recreation and population growth need to be addressed as part of this plan.
- Connection between SSRP and Old Man Watershed is a concern because the watershed is very conservation based while SSRP is very broad and covers more topics.
- SSRP – 45 per cent of Alberta’s population does not get 45 per cent of the focus because of the LARP. Oil and gas-need more focus diverted from oil sands region depending on what happens with oil and gas exploration
- There need to be hard targets for what happens when quality levels are exceeded.
- Needs to be a monitoring network independent of industry for testing both water and air quality.
- This plan is trying to be too much for too many people. Need to make some hard choices, especially on recreation.
- Banff National Park should be included in the SSRP boundary.
- This comes across as more of a business plan (list of uses) versus a land plan (prioritizes the list of uses).
- Document as a whole needs more teeth to it; it needs to properly define what everything is.
- Explanation/rationale for significant changes from RAC consultation phase through to Phase 3 in the plan. Missing transparency creates distrust.
- This draft does not address things from a land use perspective; it is a business plan with next to no implementation strategy at a land use level.
- Very concerned that the strategic plan is non-binding, especially surrounding conservation.
- More definitions in the side bar to make easier read.
- Regulatory details throughout the plan (only binding portion of the plan) are limited.
- There should be no planning of expanded recreational opportunities if provincial government is not prepared to provide sufficient and appropriate recreational management resources, including enforcement.



- SSRP feels to be piecemeal with no connection or consistency for decision making throughout.
- Health of the economy versus health of the people, seek the balance of both in the plan.
- The secondary surface water quality indicators (two metals and four pesticides) are not identified.
- How will conflicting interests be addressed?
- Define: Crown land, agriculture, agricultural grazing land. Need a definitions section and sidebars.
- The sessions are helpful to see different points of view.
- Please provide: notes pages version of the PowerPoint, read aloud; the actual PowerPoint slides; email or website.
- Hard to read plan because of structure and hard to understand the content and intent.
- Regulations should be included in one section (appendix) and include links to the rest of the plan.
- Integrated Resource Plans have not realized their goals (i.e. Castle IRP). The SSRP is not providing significant mechanisms (i.e. legislation) to ensure goals are realized. What are the root causes for failure to implement IRP's? Need to identify these barriers and address them.
- Too many contradictions in the SSRP to be implemented.
- The region is too large, would like to see it split into two pieces (Old Man River, Milk River).
- The entire plan needs to review the Results Based Budgeting – currently underway for EAE (Enterprise of Advanced Education).
- How will this contradiction be resolved: SSRP mentions/endorse Alberta's Irrigation: A Strategy for the Future.
- The targets in this irrigation strategy include irrigation expansion and water storage, targets that may not be consistent with SSRP.
- Conflicting ideas between outcomes: Irrigation plans on agricultural land versus re-establishing native grasslands.
- Plan should reflect and acknowledge the validity of non-governmental organizations' input.
- Consultations at this scale diluted the information. Consider a smaller, more intimate discussion consultative level prior to the large group consultation like this.
- Comments and submissions to the SSRP phase 2 were not even acknowledged. Did it just go into a black hole?



- Good strategy to have people change up discussions for different perspectives for public consultation.
- Language of the draft SSRP is too much about potentially things could happen
- The outcomes seem to conflict with what is being said in the overall document.
- Compilation of materials and requirements, combined with public awareness would increase viability of these plans.
- Plan does not establish priorities for uses of land.
- Not all municipalities have the tools, resources, background information, staffing or education to implement this plan.
- Is the word encouraged strong enough?
- Environmental card is being played. Social and economic concerns/areas are being ignored. Needs to be balance in all three.
- Page 87, strategies B) – support the work of WPACs – the IWMP (integrated watershed management plan) process is superseded by this plan. WPACs should be taken out of the higher level planning and brought back into the implementation plans where they could provide more value. (i.e. regional stakeholder cooperation).
- Final plan needs to be more organized, the draft has sections that are all over the place.
- After plan is finalized in addition to summaries of public/stakeholder input there also has to be a document that identifies what input was incorporated and not - and why.
- Government needs to put money into enforcement and education – if not, all wasted.
- Education needs to be effective, long term and long range.
- Government needs to put resources behind actual implementation of this.
- Support the plan but if it can't be enforced or respected it will make no impact.
- Document is excessively wordy – creates more interpretations with more words.





