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National Park

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Site Guidelines

For Development and Use
Sunshine Village Ski Resort

Banff, Alberta
December 14, 2018



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Message from Parks Canada's Chief Executive Officer

Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas protect some of Canada's most inspiring, iconic and important parts of Canada. Indeed, these special places make up one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and cultural heritage areas in the world.

The Government of Canada is committed to preserving our natural and cultural heritage, expanding the system of protected places, and contributing to the recovery of species-at-risk. At the same time, Parks Canada must continue to offer quality visitor activities and outreach programs so that Canadians and visitors from around the world can experience national parks and learn about our environment, history and culture. Managed responsibly, skiing is a valued part of the winter experience in the Rocky Mountain national parks, just as limited visitation to these areas forms part of summer experiences.

The Sunshine Village Ski Resort *Site Guidelines for Development and Use* support this vision in that they represent a significant step toward ensuring ongoing protection of Banff National Park, while supporting its unique appeal as a national park destination within a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

These site guidelines align with Parks Canada's obligations under *the Canada National Parks Act*, and reflect key policy documents such as Parks Canada's *Ski Area Management Guidelines* and the *Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan*. They were developed using the same criteria applied to the other Rocky Mountain national park ski areas. They serve as a road map to guide the ski area operator in planning a future that will protect or improve the natural environment while providing exceptional experiences to ski resort guests.

To prevent adverse impacts on wildlife, vegetation and aquatic environments and to advance ecological integrity in the areas within and around the ski resort these guidelines:

- Establish ecological management parameters that must be achieved for all future development and use proposals;
- Require a number of detailed operational plans for water and wastewater management, vegetation management, environmental management, all of which will provide for more environmentally sensitive operations;
- Set permanent limits to growth (maximum 8,500 skiers-at-one-time), and commercial development (lifts, runs and other facilities);
- Establish measures to protect Healy Creek and the sensitive Sunshine Meadows region; and
- Enable 61 hectares of land with high ecological value to be removed from the lease and returned to Parks Canada, so it may be protected from future development.

To facilitate an improved experience for visitors, these guidelines:

- Require that any growth in skier capacity will only take place after all the necessary infrastructure is in place to support it;

- Provide the ski resort with an additional 3,650 square meters of commercial space at build out, and facilitate development of 8 new ski lifts and up to 80 hectares of new ski terrain;
- Require improved presentation and interpretation of the natural and cultural history of the area; and
- Allow for transportation and parking improvements through a combination of augmented transit, demand management strategies, such as people movers and incentive programs and/or a parking structure of no pre-determined size.

Collectively, the items above provide a clear framework and certainty for the ski area operator in planning its business into the future.

The site guidelines were developed with engagement and input from the ski area operator, industry experts, environmental specialists, Indigenous peoples, the Canadian public including local and regional residents, visitors and the dedicated team at Parks Canada. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to these guidelines for their commitment and spirit of co-operation.

As the Interim Chief Executive Officer responsible for Parks Canada, I am pleased to approve the *Site Guidelines for Development and Use for Sunshine Village Ski Resort*.

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1 National Park Ski Area Management



Across the country, Parks Canada’s system of national parks and national historic sites serves to protect and present significant examples of Canadian heritage. Charged with the task of managing these special places on behalf of Canadians, Parks Canada’s fundamental responsibilities consist of fostering public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of these places, while protecting ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations. Maintaining or restoring ecological integrity, is the first priority when considering all aspects of national park management.

Ski areas are the largest commercial leaseholders in national parks. They contribute significantly to the experience of many visitors, and to the regional and national economy. As a result of their use and development, they can also have significant impacts on the park ecology.

Parks Canada’s *Ski Area Management Guidelines* (2006) provide a framework for consistent planning and management of national park ski areas. These guidelines describe the general types of land use and development that will be considered, with the intent of protecting the park environment and facilitating memorable visitor experiences and educational opportunities, while supporting a sustainable business operation.

When the planning process is complete each ski area will have resort specific site guidelines and a long range plan. These documents are not developed in isolation - they must be consistent with: the *Canada National Parks Act* and Regulations; the specific Park Management Plan for the national park in which the ski resort is located, and all other relevant laws and policies. Before being finalised, site guidelines and long range plans are made available for public review and comment, and are subject to environmental review.



Site Guidelines for Development & Use

Site guidelines help ensure long-term certainty for a ski resort by:

- Establishing site-specific parameters to guide potential development and use;
- Establishing guidelines for limits to growth; and

- Providing land-use guidelines regarding the types of use and development that will be considered under the lease should specific land uses or developments be advanced in the future. Once finalised, the site guidelines are appended to a new ski resort lease – coming into effect when that lease comes into effect.

2 Context and Challenges

The Sunshine Village Ski Resort

The Sunshine Village Ski Resort is one of four long-standing, internationally recognized downhill ski resorts in Banff and Jasper National Parks. Sunshine Village Ski Resort is the second largest ski resort in Canada's national parks covering approximately 900 hectares of diverse mountain terrain in Banff National Park. Banff National Park is in the territory of the Treaty 6, 7, & 8 First Nations. Historically there is a long-standing connection to the Bow Valley by these, and many other Indigenous groups including the Métis, who used these lands for sustenance, ceremony and travel. (Figure 1).

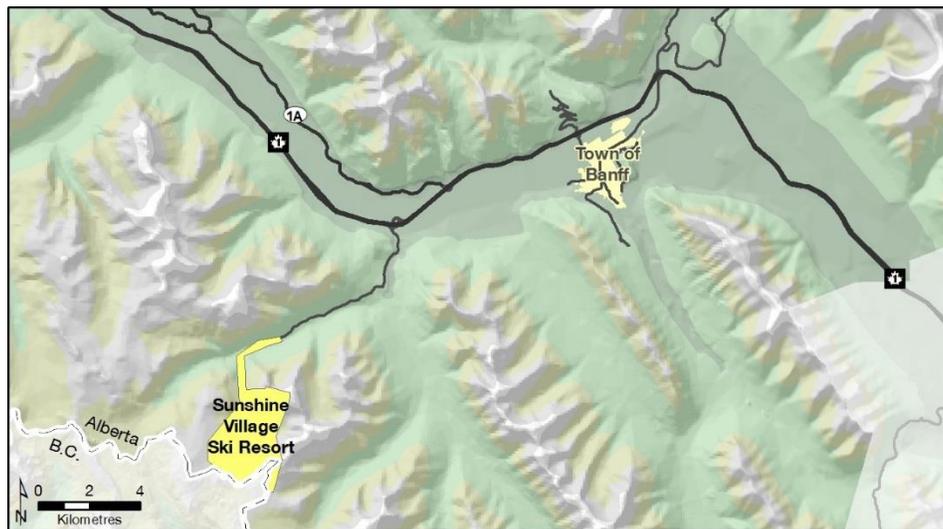


Figure 1. Sunshine Village Ski Resort Location

It is an extremely popular winter resort, and as such plays a significant role in mountain national park visitation and visitor experience, providing winter and summer recreational opportunities that attract visitors from across Canada and around the globe.

The resort sits about 15 minutes outside the community of Banff, and is accessed by bus or private vehicle via an 8km long access road managed by Parks Canada, running between the Trans-Canada Highway and the ski resort lease.

From the resort's main parking area and base, skiers take a gondola to the resort lifts and main village. The gondola base and parking lot are located within a steep, narrow avalanche-prone valley, with stream habitat and wildlife movement routes running throughout.

The typical winter operating season of the resort is from the long weekend in November to the long weekend in May. Summer operations are in place from late June through to

late September, each year. Summer operations are considerably reduced in scope and scale compared to the winter operations.

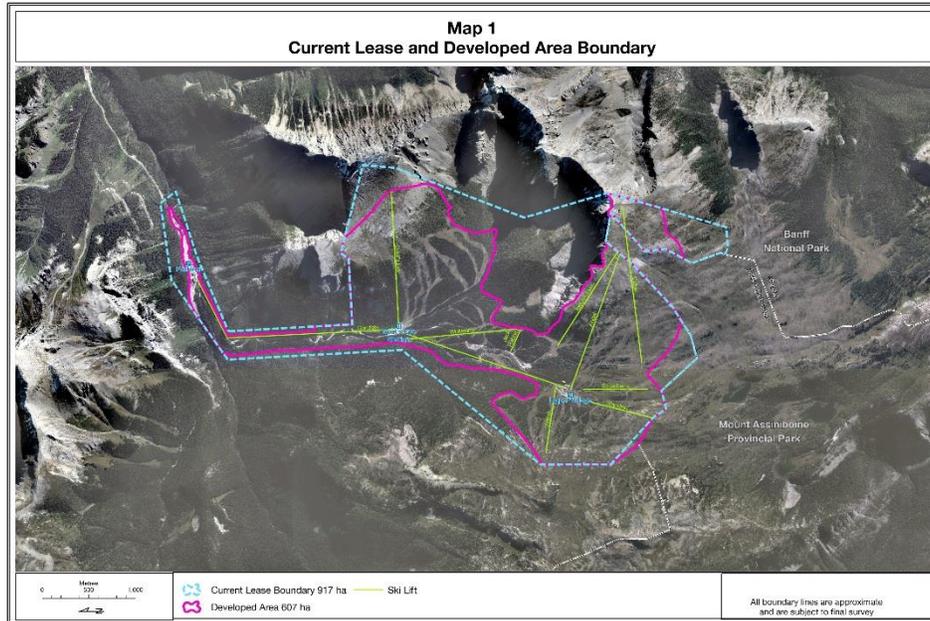
Design capacity represents a daily, at-one-time guest population that can be comfortably supported by each component of the ski resort infrastructure (e.g. parking, ski lifts, access and egress, ski terrain, commercial space, water and wastewater). When each component is designed to support the same maximum number of guests at one time, a ski resort is then considered to be 'balanced'. If some components support fewer guests at one time than the others, then the resort is 'out-of-balance' and limited overall by that factor. Industry standards feature prominently in how "balance" is determined.

Sunshine Village Ski Resort has a Parks Canada-approved daily capacity of 6,000 skiers. In theory, this means that all parts of the ski resort infrastructure should comfortably accommodate up to 6,000 skiers at one time. However some infrastructure components (e.g. transportation/parking supply, ski-out trails), are insufficient to support this number, while other components (e.g. ski lifts) have been designed to support up to 6500 skiers. As a result, this creates an out-of-balance situation for the resort.

Consequently, congestion on the ski out trail at peak times currently exceeds safe skier density industry standards. Although the ski resort is currently meeting industry standards related to commercial space per skier for 6,500 skiers-at-one time, crowding at food and beverage facilities during peak times is an issue due to the lack of larger permanent facility at the base of Goat's Eye.

Current Daily Skier Capacity	Current Commercial Space	Current Skiable Terrain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,500 skiers (design capacity) when considering lifts, terrain and commercial space • 6,000 skiers (Parks Canada approved capacity)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10,125 sq m total • 9,092 sq m (not including hotel and deck space) • 1.4 sq m per skier (based on 9,092 sq m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 431 hectares within the Lease • 1 gondola, 9 quad chairs, 2 surface lifts • 16% beginner runs, 47% intermediate runs, 37% advanced/expert runs

**as per the 1978 Sunshine Village Ski Resort Long Term Development Plan*



The resort's water system infrastructure includes: a pipeline from Rock Isle Lake in the province of British Columbia which supplies water to three reservoirs located at the headwaters of Sunshine Creek; potable water treatment and distribution systems; a wastewater treatment plant; and a water well for domestic use at the gondola base area. Wastewater is piped from the Upper Village, and trucked from the Goat's Eye facilities to the wastewater treatment plant. Wastewater from the gondola base is held and trucked offsite to a receiving facility outside the park.

Ecological Features of the Area

The area within and around the Sunshine Village Ski Resort functions as important habitat for a wide variety of terrestrial and aquatic species including grizzly bear, black bear, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, bighorn sheep, wolves, cougars, wolverine, lynx, and mountain goat, limber pine and several federally-listed species at risk such as Westslope Cutthroat Trout.

Additionally, the park's most extensive alpine meadows extend from the Sunshine Village Ski Resort northwards to Healy and Harvey passes and are contiguous with alpine meadows in British Columbia's Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park. This area is of high ecological importance to the park and region. It includes significant stands of the Whitebark Pine, a Species at Risk, 69 known rare plant species, and important movement routes for wildlife. The meadows were a significant factor in the nomination of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks for UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

Most areas adjacent to the ski resort leasehold are legislated as Wilderness by Parks Canada, and consequently no activities or development may be permitted in these places that are likely to impair, directly or indirectly, their wilderness character.

Historical Features of the Area

Historically, there is a long-standing connection to the Rocky Mountains and the Bow Valley by many Indigenous groups. The lands around and within the Sunshine Village Ski Resort were traditionally used for sustenance, ceremony, and trade and travel. They continue to be used today by Indigenous communities for ceremony and harvesting of medicinal plants and teepee poles. The Piikani, Kainai, Siksika, Tsuut'ina and Stoney Nakoda Nations, as well as the Metis people have strong connections with the land that long pre-dates the establishment of Banff National Park and the ski resort. Their ability to access the area for traditional practices was virtually eliminated when the national park was created, to the detriment of those and other Indigenous groups, and to park management and presentation.

Additionally, there are four known cultural resource sites that may be potentially impacted by ski resort development and operations: a historic cabin near the confluence of Healy and Sunshine Creeks; a 1920's horse campsite reputedly used for the storage of teepee poles; an old dump site at the base of the Tin Can Alley ski run; and Sunshine Camp – a stopover for the 1920's Wheeler Walking Tours near the base of Teepee Town Chair.

Parks Canada and the ski area operator are responsible to ensure that cultural resources are conserved and their heritage value is shared for the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of present and future generations. This involves understanding the current and past Indigenous use of the land, the history of the cultural resources, their current condition and any threats to their condition, and the past and current importance of these sites to all Canadians.

Existing Challenges

The convergence of ecological, visitor experience and economic factors associated with the Sunshine Village Ski Resort, and its distinctive location creates a complex set of planning considerations.

Current challenges at the Sunshine Village Ski Resort include:

- A lack of alternate ski terrain below treeline for bad weather/poor visibility conditions;
- Narrow ski traverses, and skier congestion on the ski-out and in the Upper Village area;
- Overcrowded restaurant/lodge space at peak times;
- More demand for parking than space, and steep, confined terrain that limits potential parking options within comfortable walking distance of the gondola;
- The potential for damage from visitor use and operations within the sensitive Sunshine Meadows environment;
- Consistently meeting all of the wastewater leadership targets in the Banff National Park Management Plan (2010);
- The on-site wastewater treatment plant releases treated effluent into Teepee Town Creek, an ephemeral tributary to Sunshine Creek. As these creeks are dry for much

of the year, treated effluent is essentially deposited to ground without dilution from a watercourse for much of the year. In the spring when the creeks start to flow again, there is a downstream flush of nutrients that collected over the weeks that it was dry. This results in higher values nutrient values during some (summer) months of the year than is ideal for aquatic health;

- Parking lot proximity and operations negatively impacting the aquatic health of Healy Creek;
- Roughly half of the Sunshine Village Ski Resort environment lies within upper subalpine and alpine ecosystems where the potential impacts of ski resort use and development may result in long-lasting or essentially irreversible changes to ecosystem health. This is due to the fragile nature of those ecosystems and their limited capacity for reclamation given the harsh environment and significantly shorter growing season. Hence, the resort is challenged to ensure that development and use, particularly summer use, do not compromise the fragile Sunshine Meadows environment and/or wildlife habitat security in and adjacent to the resort;
- The need to ensure that summer use and operations in the Sunshine Meadows area is consistent with its unique location, the goals and expectations of Parks Canada and British Columbia Parks (BC Parks), and its role as an iconic component of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site ; and
- Strengthening relationships with Indigenous groups that used the area traditionally and facilitating their reconnection with the land.

Additional Challenges

The downhill ski industry has evolved considerably over the last 40 years. Along with the introduction of snowboarding, there have also been significant changes to lift capacity and speed, snowmaking, grooming equipment, and recreational equipment technology. It is anticipated the industry will continue to evolve, and the Sunshine Village Ski Resort will need to continue adapting to changing markets, technologies, and visitor expectations to stay commercially viable.

Additionally, the North American and global ski industry anticipate that investment and effort will be required to respond to the effects of global climate change including changes in amounts of precipitation, freezing altitudes, and season length. At Sunshine Village, this is likely to result in:

- Need for increased snowmaking at lower elevations of the resort, particularly on the ski-out;
- Limited water resources triggering requests for water reservoirs and the need for conservation and recycling systems to ensure adequate water resources; and
- Changes in visitation as the winters grow shorter and the summers grow longer, which in turn may impact the Sunshine Village Ski Resort business model.

Finally, regional population growth, increasing domestic and international tourism, and the increasing competitiveness of the Canadian ski industry, suggests that visitation at the Sunshine Village Ski Resort will continue to increase over time.

3 Management Direction

3.1 The Long Term Vision

The long term vision for the Sunshine Village Ski Resort includes:

- Environmental stewardship and protection is a standard way of doing business that is clearly imbedded in all aspects of the Sunshine Village Ski Resort operation including exemplary, consistent application of best practices, sustainable design, efficiency of resource use, and a philosophy of continuous improvement.
- The nature, timing and intensity of development and use for both winter and summer operations is planned and managed so that ecological integrity is maintained across the resort and within the Sunshine/Egypt Landscape Management Unit.
- Winter development and use is focused on the enhancement and balance of existing snow riding opportunities. Terrain expansion or reconfiguration within the lease occurs to achieve terrain balance or to address adverse weather or snow conditions.
- Avalanche control activities take place at various locations within the ski resort lease and outside and above the leased area through the execution of a winter-only Licence of Occupation, for the Delirium Dive area, the Howard Douglas Bowls, the Wild West area and the Eagle Crest area (Alpine Bowls Area Map 4d).
- Summer recreation at the Sunshine Village Ski Resort is ancillary to the winter offer and is focused on the understanding of and appreciation for the Sunshine Meadows environment through hiking and interpretation. Summer gondola access to the Upper Village, the day use of the Upper Village facilities, the hotel and the limited use of lifts, supports the provision of hiking and interpretation opportunities.
- Resort infrastructure and facilities provide safe experiences for visitors while maintaining a character that respects and blends into the natural environment.

3.2 Desired Outcomes

Sustainable Resort Planning

- The Sunshine Village Ski Resort is an exceptional provider of winter and summer visitor opportunities that reflect its national park location, and its historical and cultural context. Having clear parameters for growth, development and use, the resort management is able to react and adapt to changing business and market conditions. The approved capacity of the Sunshine Village Ski Resort is reflected in its development proposals,

operational approach, and marketing so that visitor use is managed safely and capacity is not exceeded.

Visitor Access and Design Capacity

- Visitor access to the ski resort is safe, comfortable, and balanced with the approved design capacity and known environmental constraints.
- Ski resort infrastructure components such as parking, access and egress, commercial space, water and wastewater treatment, and terrain and lift capacity are designed to support the same, planned number of skiers in order to meet or exceed all environmental standards and targets, and to provide memorable and safe visitor experiences, minimize congestion and eliminate unsafe conditions. This means that at any given time, each independent ski resort component can comfortably serve or accommodate the volume of skiers that represent the planned design capacity for the ski resort.
- Any consideration of an increase to the skiers at one time capacity is contingent on first addressing those aspects of the resort that are out of balance for a design capacity of 6,500 and/or do not consistently meet industry standards or applicable regulations or policies.
- Skier egress from the upper mountain to the base area is planned and actively managed to ensure it is safe and efficient in all circumstances, and within established industry standards.
- Both winter and summer operation are actively and consistently managed so the natural resources and visitor experience of the Sunshine Meadows are not compromised.
- The ski resort works to shift skier expectations and choices regarding access to the hill through implementation of transportation strategies and programs that reduce demand for individual parking spots and/or increase the efficiency of use of the existing parking space.

Visitor Experience

- The ski resort sets the stage for visitor experiences that fit with and reflect the national park setting, values and history.
- Ski resort components such as parking, commercial space, terrain and lift capacity are 'balanced' when taken together and with the allowed capacity of skiers at one time, in order to minimize congestion and crowding and maximize the quality of the visitor experience.
- Enhanced visitor experiences and learning opportunities at the ski resort strengthen the connection of visitors to Banff National Park, the perspectives and history of Indigenous Peoples on the land, and the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- Natural viewscales are maintained, and where feasible, restored, while sensory disturbances such as noise and unnatural light, and excessive lighting are minimized where feasible.
- Direct or ambient lighting from facilities or outside areas is contained so as to not penetrate into wildlife movement pathways.
- Public access for hikers and skiers on designated trails through the ski resort to backcountry destinations including Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park, and Simpson and Healy Passes in Banff National Park is allowed. Facilitated backcountry access through roads, lifts and gondolas, is strategically and proactively managed with the ecological parameters as the first priority.

Ecological Integrity

- Land use decisions concerning the ski resort contribute positively to Parks Canada's ecological goals with respect to: vegetation management, wildlife connectivity and habitat protection, maintenance of natural processes, water quality, and species at risk protection and recovery. Each decision fully considers and addresses the ecological parameters identified in these site guidelines.
- Terrestrial and aquatic habitat conditions for species such as Whitebark Pine, Limber Pine, Grizzly Bear, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Wolverine, Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Bull Trout, are maintained or improved to support healthy ecosystem functioning.
- Water quality and quantity is improved and protected in accordance with chemical, physical and biological parameters established by Parks Canada, with consideration for the implications of inter-basin water transfer.
- Vegetation is managed to reflect natural composition, diversity and patterns, and to maintain function of sensitive soil-vegetation complexes, including rare plants, wet soils and alpine plant communities.
- Leadership is demonstrated in environmental management, stewardship, monitoring and best practices. Water withdrawal and wastewater treatment systems are designed and managed to provide certainty in operations and opportunity for potential design capacity increases accounting for climate change, water resource availability and downstream water quality scenarios.

Heritage Resources

- Cultural or historic resources are identified, addressed and protected as part of best management practices, the long range planning process, and associated environmental impact analyses.

Indigenous Relationships

- Indigenous peoples are: engaged in documenting and presenting their culture and relationship to the landscape; facilitated in practicing traditional activities

on the land; and proactively engaged as part of the review process for any future activities that entail development with new landscape disturbance.

3.3 Environmental Gains and Exceptions

Parks Canada policy allows for ski resorts to propose development that would not normally be considered (e.g. new lifts and runs outside the current “developed area” or major terrain modification), if other changes can be made that result in substantial environmental gains which supports long-term certainty of maintaining ecological integrity in the area. A reduction of the ski resort’s current lease is one way to achieve this. Specifically, removing land with high ecological value from the lease, enables those areas to be protected from future development. Under Parks Canada’s *Ski Area Management Guidelines*, this allows for certain site-specific (development) exceptions to be considered over and above what is allowed for in section 4.

3.3.1 Lease Reductions

To support the vision and desired objectives in section 3, the lease will be reduced by approximately 61 hectares (9%) from the current 917 hectares (Note: References to area are approximate), when the following lands are removed:

1. *Upper Healy Wildlife / Gondola Base Corridor (21 ha)*

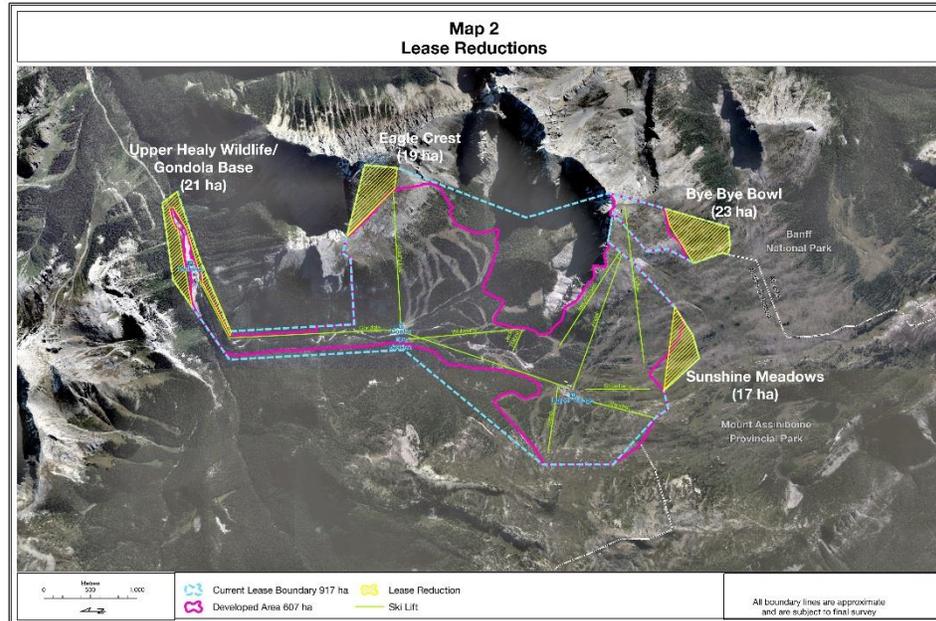
This consists of lands on either side of the existing parking lot and gondola corridor that function as wildlife corridors and habitat along the upper Healy Creek valley to its confluence with Sunshine Creek. For clarity this includes: The Bourgeau Bench on the north side of the parking lot; the slopes on the south side of the parking lot; and the undeveloped lands at the far east end of the lease within the run-out zone of Eagle Four avalanche path. This helps protect wildlife habitat and movements in a topographically constrained area, and will support current and future goals for improving and maintaining water quality and aquatic habitats in Healy Creek.

2. *Sunshine Meadows (17 ha)*

This consists of undeveloped ski terrain at the southern extent of Sunshine Meadows adjacent to the provincial boundary. This is part of a pristine alpine meadow system which is habitat for species at risk and home to dozens of rare plants. This area may potentially be zoned as an Environmentally Sensitive Site in the next *Banff National Park Management Plan* and serve as a valuable ecological baseline for the rest of the Meadows environment.

3. *Lower Bye Bye Bowl (23 ha)*

This includes the undeveloped and un-skied terrain below the existing traverse line back to ‘cat-track corner’. It is considered to be part of the Sunshine Meadows environment. Removing this area from the lease eliminates the potential for expanded lift, road, utility, and run development in the sensitive meadows environment. It is also a relatively pristine ecological baseline site.



Eagle Crest

Lands above the top terminal of the Goat's Eye Express lift (19 ha) will be removed from the lease and granted back to the ski area operator as part of the Licence of Occupation for the purposes of avalanche control. See 3.4.3 below.

3.3.2 Exceptions

Subject to the substantial environmental gains garnered through the lease reductions described in section 3.3.1 above, the following development proposals may be submitted for consideration as described in sections 3.4, and section 4.4 of these guidelines.

1. Surface Runoff Capture Reservoirs

The development of two new surface runoff water reservoirs in previously disturbed areas to provide snowmaking and potable water to the Goat's Eye base area and lower ski-out. These also have the potential to provide additional water for ski resort operations and remove direct withdrawal from Healy Creek. This type of development, while potentially resulting in an environmental gain through better water management, is also considered an exception as it typically requires major terrain modification.

2. New Ski Lifts and Runs Outside the Existing Developed Area

In order to provide balanced skiing opportunities and address design capacity on bad weather/visibility days, the ski resort may propose the development of new ski runs, terrain and lifts outside the existing developed area (but within the ski resort lease) as follows:

- Lift, run and glade expansion into the Hayes Hill area (Fig. 2) to treeline; and
- Lift run and glade expansion into the lower Meadow Park area (Fig. 2).

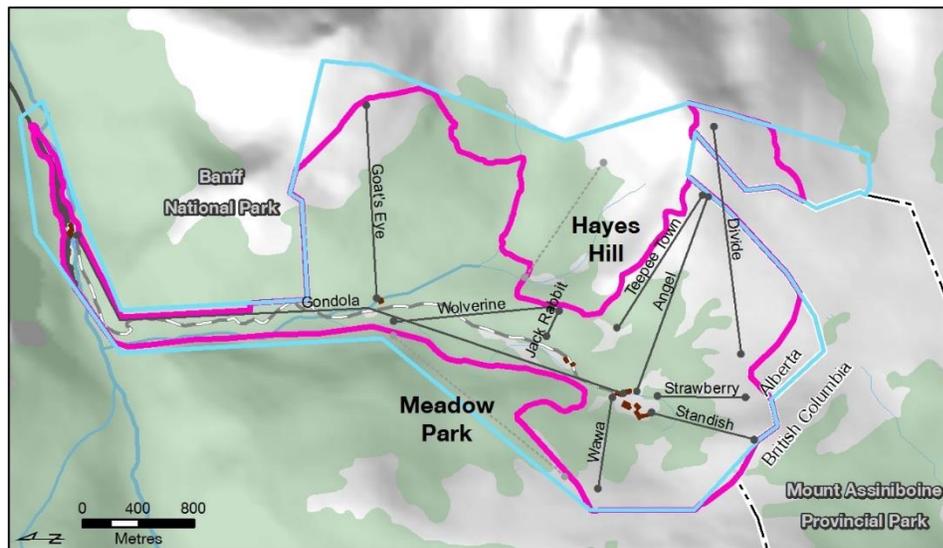


Figure 2. New areas for ski lift, run and glade expansion, outside the developed area

*Note that the potential development of these runs is in addition to those allowed inside the developed area as described in section 3.4.

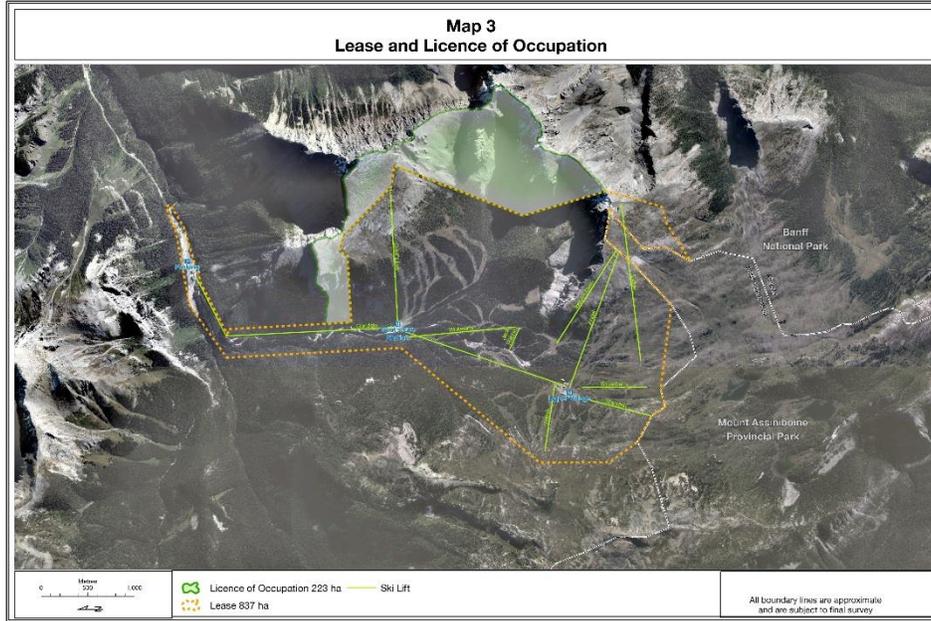
Any proposals related to the above locations, remain subject to overall resort design capacity growth limits.

3. Improvements to the Angel Ski-Way

Major terrain modification is considered an exception under the *Ski Area Management Guidelines*. The Angel Ski-Way joins intermediate terrain both above and below a set of steep slopes and rocky outcrops in between the Teepee Town and Angel chairlifts. The ski-way traverses diagonally across this difficult ground following natural ledges and breaks, and must reasonably present terrain that intermediate skiers can safely and comfortably navigate within their skill level. The purpose of ski-way improvements is not to create an all-season road or access route, but would be to enhance the ability to capture snow over a surface wide enough to facilitate effective grooming and safe descent.

3.3.3 Lease Reconfiguration and Licence of Occupation

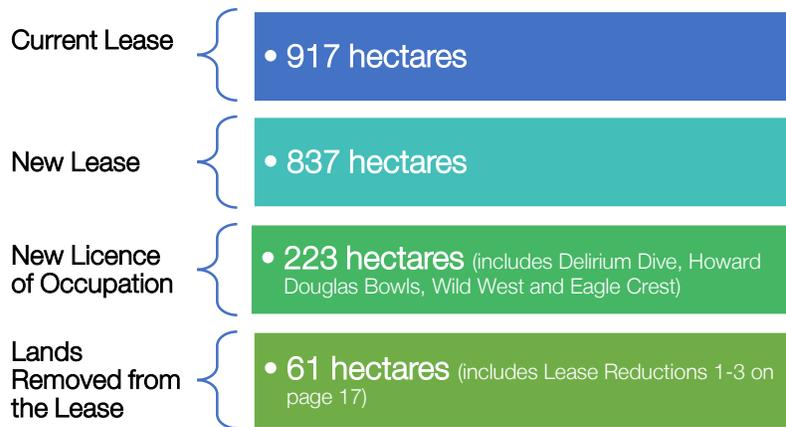
In addition to the lease reduction described in 3.3.1, the existing, on-going avalanche control program and skier and snowboarder use in areas adjacent to the lease boundary, will be formalised through a Licence of Occupation (Map 3).



The total size of the Licence of Occupation for this area will be 223 hectares including the Eagle Crest lease reduction of 19 ha. The majority of the terrain consists of steep, windswept, exposed cliff and bedrock extending to the height of land, with only a limited portion (approximately 60 hectares) that is useable for off-piste (out-of-resort) skiing when snow and avalanche conditions allow. Avalanche control in this area is essential as it affects skier safety and the assets within the lease lying below it.

The Licence of Occupation does not grant any interest in the land to the ski area operator, and will clearly specify the winter-only use and operations of the area. It will provide for increased skier safety, while ensuring the area cannot be developed in the future. For more information on the Alpine Bowls Area see section 5.4.

Summary of Lease and Licence of Occupation Land Effects



Administrative Process

- A land survey of the new, reduced Lease and the Licence of Occupation area, and entry of that survey as an amendment to Schedule 5 of the Canada *National Parks Act* will be completed.
- A new Lease and Licence of Occupation will be executed with the ski area operator that references these boundaries. The new Licence of Occupation will run concurrent with the term of the new lease, be limited to the winter season, with allowable uses only for avalanche control and limited skiing on undeveloped and unserviced terrain.
- The final site guidelines for the Sunshine Village Ski Resort and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment will be appended to, and form part of, both the Lease and the Licence of Occupation.

3.4 Limits to Development and Growth

As described in section 2, the ski resort infrastructure is not presently balanced for the number of people it serves. This results in congestion, some safety issues, and diminished visitor experience.

Objective

All ski resort infrastructure components are designed and constructed to support the same number of people (design capacity) to ensure resort balance. Bringing the resort into balance for 6,500 skiers is the first priority before any future growth can be implemented. Maintaining balance thereafter will be the key objective. Any and all development and growth is subject to meeting all of the guidelines described throughout this document.

Guidelines

Establishing design capacity is the foundation of modern ski area planning. Design capacity is determined by identifying the total amount of ski terrain that could be accessed from a given lift or lift system. Other elements such as commercial space and parking capacity required to provide balanced services can then be calculated using standard formulas based on the skier capacity.

The maximum future allowable growth limits for Sunshine Village Ski Resort were calculated by a third-party industry expert through an analysis of the resort's potential ski terrain capabilities, densities and limitations; the amount of commercial space, lift capacity, private vehicle parking and mass transit capacity; all compared against industry standards.

The maximum future allowable growth limits for the Sunshine Village Ski Resort will be:

Maximum Skiers at one time Capacity	Maximum Commercial Space	Maximum Skiable Terrain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8500 skiers* (design capacity when considering lifts, terrain and commercial space) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12,742 sq m total, (includes the potential additional 3650 sq m provided in these guidelines, but does not include hotel accomodation rooms and deck space), 1.49 sq m per skier at build out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 511 hectares (includes up to 80 hectares of additional ski terrain within the ski resort lease area) potential for 8 additional new lifts and associated runs continued out-of-resort skiing in Delerium Dive and Wild West

- *The first long range plan must ensure that existing key imbalances related to transportation/parking supply, skier access/egress, and water supply will be addressed prior to or as part of any proposal to increase ski resort capacity beyond 6,500 skiers. Any additional development proposals and/or subsequent long range plans will ensure that these key components remain in balance.
- All future commercial use and development proposed through long range plan proposals will be reviewed against this capacity and associated limits.
- Expansion of the hotel will not be permitted.
- Development of up to 80 hectares of additional ski-able terrain will be considered. Potential areas for this development within the Developed Area include terrain associated with new lifts at: Lookout, Goat's Eye II, Goat's Eye Carpets (2), a lift parallel to the gondola, and short in-fill runs and glades in other locations. Some runs outside the Developed Area may also be proposed (noted as exceptions in section 3.3.2) in association with lift development at: Hayes Hill (Hayes Hill Express and Hayes Hill surface lift) and Meadow Park as shown in figure 2.
- Proposals for maintenance, operations and administrative space may be submitted as part of a long range plan.

3.5 Ecological Management Parameters

Ecological management parameters serve as the on-the-ground benchmarks against which the environmental impacts of future development and use proposals will be assessed. They are intended to ensure ski terrain design and vegetation management reflect natural conditions, protect unique features and sensitive and rare vegetation, prevent displacement of sensitive wildlife from important regional habitat, maintain adequate flow required for aquatic habitats, and meet or exceed water quality leadership targets already in place. Detailed information on the context, ecological parameters, and related issues, can be obtained from the *Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Sunshine Village Ski Resort Site Guidelines for Development and Use*.

Objective

All long range plans, strategies, and development and use proposals for Sunshine Village Ski Resort must demonstrate that the ecological management parameters have been fully considered and effectively addressed.

Guidelines

Native Vegetation

Considerations specific to native vegetation communities are:

- Managing for changes to vegetation structure and maintenance of alpine vegetation communities;
- Ensuring the protection and recovery of Species at Risk such as Whitebark Pine individuals and communities, as well as rare species such as limber pine; and
- Maintaining the diversity of subalpine and alpine vegetation characteristic of the Sunshine Meadows environment.

Native species and communities should dominate vegetation throughout the ski resort, reflecting regional and local vegetation structure and diversity. This is supported by:

- Glading and thinning simulate natural vegetation patterns and structure;
- Below tree line, the maximum width of new and existing runs is 50 meters;
- On either side of runs, a strip of contiguous forest at least as wide as the run must remain for all new runs or modifications to runs; and
- Forested areas between runs are irregular in shape and of sufficient size to provide effective wildlife habitat and movement cover.

Native vegetation should serve as an anchor against soil and terrain erosion. This is supported by:

- Construction, terrain modification and vegetation removal activities that avoid the disturbance of saturated soils or surficial deposits; and
- Construction and terrain modification that do not alter rock flow features.

Habitat conditions for rare and sensitive species should be maintained, including critical habitat for all species listed under the *Species at Risk Act*. This is supported by:

- Favourable habitat conditions, stand and age distribution of Whitebark pine so as to sustain the ecological function of the species, are enhanced and maintained over time across its expected range at the ski resort;
- Old growth Larch and other old growth subalpine forest trees are protected;

- The composition and structure of vegetation provide habitat for the expected range of native species;
- Rare and sensitive vegetation communities, and the terrain features and habitat conditions that support them, are maintained or restored; and
- Annual surveys quickly detect non-native species and they are immediately removed using pre-approved protocols. All results are recorded and reported annually to Parks Canada.

Wildlife Habitat and Movement

Considerations specific to wildlife movement and habitat are:

- Maintaining or improving Grizzly Bear habitat security;
- Maintaining habitat quality and connectivity for Wolverine;
- Maintaining habitat quality, patch size, and connectivity for small mammals;
- Ensuring that habitat and movement patterns of mountain goats in the Bourgeau Mountain area remain unimpaired;
- Limiting potential disturbance to the movement of wary species through Healy and Sunshine Creek Wildlife Corridors through all seasons such that the effectiveness of these wildlife corridors is maintained or improved; and
- Maintaining winter habitat for Bighorn Sheep and Mountain Goat populations in and around the Gondola Base Area and along the Sunshine Access road.

Changes in development, operations and visitor use should maintain or improve the environment for Grizzly Bears as indicated by reduced displacement, habituation and bear-human conflicts. This is supported by:

- Summer visitor numbers and patterns of use do not result in reduced habitat security in any of the land management units that include or are adjacent to the ski resort, or within the north core of Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park; and
- Ski resort development and use preserves natural food sources for Grizzly Bears and does not create non-native sources of food that would attract them.

Ski resort development and use should not displace Mountain Goats or Bighorn Sheep from seasonally important habitat areas or from established local travel routes.

Ski resort operations should provide seasonal and diurnal periods with low levels of disturbance periods for wary wildlife to enable wildlife movement and habitat use throughout the ski resort. Night time operations in summer, will be minimized to provide at least 6 hours of predictable low disturbance times for resident Grizzly Bears and other wildlife.

Ski resort development and use does not create habitat conditions or result in human use patterns that alter characteristic predator/prey relationships.

Upper Healy Wildlife Corridor

Wildlife must have opportunities to access and travel through the wildlife corridor during predictable periods with low levels of human use, during sensitive seasons, or times of restricted habitat use. Specifically:

- Development and operations are timed so as to allow for predictable, seasonally-based periods and patterns, in order that wildlife can establish and maintain secure patterns of movement and habitat use; and
- Normal daily and seasonal spatial patterns of wildlife use and movement are maintained by avoiding development or operations likely to result in potential displacement of wildlife from established movement routes.

Wildlife must have low-disturbance access to and through the wildlife corridor, through a range of natural daylight conditions, including morning and evening daylight periods where feasible according to season, crepuscular and nocturnal periods.

Development and use in the base area should not reduce the effectiveness of the wildlife corridor.

Development and use in the base area will be designed to facilitate vertical wildlife movement and habitat use for Mountain Goat and Bighorn Sheep between Bourgeau Bench and Healy Creek through the parking lot.

Aquatic Ecosystems

Considerations specific to aquatic habitat are:

- Maintaining surface and subsurface flow regimes, both in terms of quality and quantity of water, within natural ranges of variation in consideration of climate change;
- Improving downstream (Healy Creek) water quality parameters by ensuring wastewater treatment consistently meets all of the Banff National Park Management Plan leadership targets, and effectively addressing impacts associated with parking lot operations;
- Protecting and restoring riparian habitat;
- Protecting and recovering *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) listed Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Bull Trout populations upstream and downstream of the ski resort; and
- Understanding the possible implications of the current inter-basin water transfer from British Columbia to Alberta.

Development should not impair the effectiveness of natural surface and subsurface water flows and water course connectivity.

Riparian and aquatic ecosystem processes function to maintain parameters that sustain:

- Riparian, aquatic invertebrate and native fish ecosystems;
- In-stream flows and seasonal variability in support of aquatic fish and wildlife; and
- Flooding and seasonal flow patterns that maintain riparian vegetation communities.

Riparian and aquatic habitat structure important to Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Bull Trout and other rare or sensitive aquatic and riparian species must be maintained or restored.

Consistent protection of water quality in accordance with leadership targets established by Parks Canada including chemical, physical and biological parameters affected by ski resort development and operations.

4 Guidelines

4.1 Winter Use

The Sunshine Village Ski Resort's primary purpose is to provide a winter recreational snow riding experience. Traditional and current winter activities are focused around winter snow riding including downhill skiing and snowboarding, along with supporting service facilities such as lodges, restaurants and bars, ski schools and rental / retail services. Sunshine Village is the only ski resort in the mountain national parks with overnight commercial guest accommodation.

The resort includes a portion of the Sunshine Meadows ecological complex, which extends into other national park lands and into Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park in British Columbia. Winter use of the meadows in Assiniboine Provincial Park is governed by the Mount Assiniboine Management Plan and permits issued by BC Parks.

Evolution of snow sports has and will continue to create demand for new services or infrastructure. In the past, this evolution has been demonstrated by the advent of snowboarding and terrain parks. More recently, advances in ski technology have opened up terrain that was once considered un-skiable and the interest in accessing out-of-bounds backcountry skiing by using in-bounds lifts, continues to increase.

Regional racing, ski and snowboard competitions, and special events are considered traditional ski resort activities, but have also evolved over time with new standards, equipment, support requirements and event types. There is potential interest in other winter sports offers at the ski resort such as snowshoe touring.

Increasing popularity of the ski resort itself and winter activities at the ski resort influence wildlife movement and use in the Healy Wildlife Corridor and through the entire ski resort. Maintaining quiet crepuscular periods, physical space or separation and habitat parameters for wildlife are important considerations with respect to ski resort winter activities, times and hours of operation.

Objective

The primary focus of the ski resort's winter use is snow riding, consistent with the vision and objectives for the resort and its national park setting.

Guidelines

- The primary focus of the ski resort's winter use is to be on snow riding activities. Services and facilities that directly support snow riding activities such as food services, ski school, daycare, rentals and other retail services are allowable uses.
- On-hill operating hours and outdoor guest programs and activities will be established to ensure low use periods (e.g. from two hours after the lifts stop running to two hours before the lifts start running) to facilitate normal use and movement by wildlife in and around the ski resort.
- Limited outdoor recreation activities in the Upper Village for the primary enjoyment of overnight lodge guests may be considered subject to meeting the parameters in these guidelines, and to Parks Canada's standard review and permitting processes.
- The Sunshine Village Ski Resort will develop and implement Best Management Practices for new competitive and public events that address impacts on the environment, skier safety and circulation as part of the first long range plan.
- The development of new ski terrain, or permanent or temporary facilities outside of the new lease boundary (as it appears in Schedule 5 of the *Canada National Parks Act*) will not be considered.
- Significant terrain modification above natural, unbroken treeline will not be considered.
- The development of new roads, cut-and-fill ski-ways, reservoirs or permanent utilities and infrastructure will not be considered in the Sunshine Meadows Area, or at and above natural, unbroken treeline anywhere within the new lease boundary except as specifically noted otherwise in these site guidelines.
- Effectively buffering Healy Creek from the impacts of the parking lot operations is essential and must be addressed at the earliest opportunity and before any additional development, including like-for-like projects, will be permitted. This may be a combination of wider and or improved buffers, design changes to the existing lot, swales and separator traps, physical barriers and/or protocols to ensure that snow (and other debris) plowed from the lot, will not be deposited adjacent to the creek. In the interim, no additional paving of the lot will be permitted, as this changes the permeability of the areas and increases run-off issues.
- Night skiing or night use of lifts other than the gondola is not consistent with the ecological parameters in section 3.5.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to the objectives, growth limits, area concepts and parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada's review:

- New competitive and/or large-scale public events;
- Changes to the buffer, berming and re-vegetation to improve protection of Healy Creek adjacent to the parking lot; and
- Goat's Eye Daylodge subject to the objectives, growth limits, area concepts and parameters described throughout this document. Should a lodge be developed at Goat's Eye base in future, limited evening use may be considered subject to environmental review.

Through a long range plan and subject to the objectives, growth limits, area concepts and parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- New snow riding features, structures or services that are consistent with established trends or the evolution of snow riding sports;
- Warming huts;
- Ski lifts and runs;
- Additional traditional non-motorized winter sport or winter recreation activities;
- Goat's Eye Daylodge if not submitted in advance of a long range plan;
- Additional non-motorized winter sport or new winter recreation activities that are consistent with *Guidelines for New Recreational Activities in Banff National Park* and other related policies; and
- New lifts, run and commercial space development as described in section 3.4.

The long range plan will be subject to detailed environmental review. As part of this process it is expected that the operator engage the public and Indigenous groups to ensure the opportunity for them to make their perspectives known and have them incorporated in the planning to the degree possible.

4.2 Summer Use

The Sunshine Meadows lies in an ecological complex both within and outside the ski resort lease, including a large portion located in Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park in British Columbia and a portion in Banff National Park. It provides important habitat for grizzly bears, wolverine, rare alpine plants, and other native species.

Summer use of the meadows on Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park is governed by the Mount Assiniboine Management Plan and permits issued by BC Parks. The portion of the meadows outside the lease but in Banff National Park, is zoned as wilderness (zone 2) within the *Banff National Park of Canada Management Plan*, most of this area has also been designated under the *National Parks of Canada*

Wilderness Area Declaration Regulations. This means that activities or developments which might impair the wilderness character of the area cannot be allowed.

The footprint of summer use at the resort is limited to the gondola base, the Upper Village (the hotel, food and beverage outlets, and the Standish Chairlift), and designated trails in the Sunshine Meadows Area. Summer use is not permitted elsewhere in the resort including Goat's Eye Mountain and the Alpine Bowls. The base area serves as the access and staging point for summer use. Overnight accommodation and hospitality services are offered in the Upper Village area.

The Sunshine Meadows area offers day hiking, and a departure point for backcountry trips into British Columbia and Banff's Egypt Lake Area. The use of the Standish chairlift and the gondola provide a safe, high alpine experience for those who might not otherwise be able to enjoy it.

Re-institution of summer use of the gondola, Standish chair and hotel by the ski area operator in 2016, substantially increased visitation to the area from about 14,000 visitors per summer to about 33,000 visitors per summer. Average daily visitation in 2017 was 419 visitors per day, however when facilitated by the gondola and chair operation, it exceeds 1300 people on peak days. Estimated visitation in 2018 was around 50,000 people for the season; hence management of the impacts of human use has become even more critical.

While Parks Canada wishes to see visitors experience and enjoy the exceptional landscape and environment of Sunshine Meadows, over the years off-trail travel associated with visitor use has resulted in some negative ecological impacts such as erosion, trail braiding, the introduction of non-native vegetation and disturbance to wildlife species.

The ski area operator has worked closely with Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park and Parks Canada for the last three years to address these impacts. Through techniques such as trail hardening, signage, trail delineation, public education, etc., they have made progress in key spots. Sunshine Village-maintained trails in Banff National Park and Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park received condition ratings of *slight*. Parks Canada maintained-trails' conditions ranged from *slight* to *severe*.

Interpretive programs are largely aimed at providing information about the ecological value of the area. Historical and cultural / Indigenous perspectives are largely missing from any of the information presented.

Indigenous groups have expressed a desire to see their perspective reflected in the interpretive programming, and to have access to the area for ceremonies and harvesting of medicinal plants.

Objectives

Protecting the unique Sunshine Meadows environment is important for ecological integrity, and for maintaining the wilderness character of the area. Summer use will continue in a fashion and at a level that does not compromise: wildlife habitat effectiveness and movement, the natural condition of the fragile Sunshine Meadows area, the adjacent Declared Wilderness areas and/or British Columbia Provincial Park lands.

Summer activities focus on hiking, natural and cultural heritage interpretation and education, wildlife viewing and sightseeing opportunities which directly and clearly support understanding and appreciation of the Sunshine Meadows natural and cultural environment.

The perspectives and priorities of Indigenous groups are understood, and they are facilitated in using the lands for ceremonies and gathering of traditional plants and other materials.

Guidelines

- Development of additional permanent summer use attractions will not be considered.
- Large-scale outdoor public events within the resort and/or the use of the Sunshine Access Road as a venue for events hosted by the resort will not be considered.
- A plan to engage Indigenous groups with the goal of better understanding their perspectives on the ski resort lands and facilitating their use of the land for traditional purposes shall be developed and implemented by the ski area operator at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Use of the upper access road should be minimized during crepuscular and evening hours to the degree possible.
- A Summer Use Plan shall be developed by the ski area operator to include:
 - A detailed description of existing summer use including historical visitation numbers.
 - A description of the maximum number of visitors that can be accommodated at the following locations at any single point in time: Standish viewpoint, all viewpoints on the Rock Isle – Grizzly - Larix Lake circuit.
 - Desired visitation targets on a daily and seasonal basis.
 - An operational plan including: trail opening and closing procedures, bus, gondola and lift capacity and operating hours, guest programs (number, type and scope, activities, education, and safety; management of garbage and waste); infrastructure requirements, and a monitoring program for levels of visitor use, and ecological and visitor experience parameters. The operational plan should reflect:
 - ✓ Programming and operating hours (particularly of the gondola and Standish chair) that ensure daily periods of minimal wildlife disturbance during crepuscular and evening periods;
 - ✓ Restricted and monitored use of the upper access road with the goal of reducing its operational use generally, and completely eliminating its use except for emergencies, between dusk and dawn;
 - ✓ Operation of the gondola and day use facilities base to expedite visitor access and egress, while reducing on-the-ground impacts;
 - ✓ Visitor programs that focus on understanding the history, natural and cultural features of the local; and

- ✓ Monitoring and management of off-hours staff and guest use of the trail system, upper access road, village facilities, or supporting outdoor activities for overnight guests so as to meet ecological objectives.
- Strategies to: monitor visitor numbers and to address if daily demand exceeds the daily target; and to educate visitors to the area and its need for protection.
- Proposals for trail modifications or facility development (must be aimed at mitigating the environmental pressures of visitor use rather than providing added 'attractions' in and of themselves).
- Strategies for early identification of wear and tear on trails and facilities, and to ensure protection of vegetation, terrain and shorelines.
- Until a Summer Use Plan is developed by the ski area operator and approved by Parks Canada:
 - Summer use will be limited to sightseeing and hiking, and will be confined to the gondola base, the Upper Village, and the Sunshine Meadows Area with access to designated trails only (the Parks Canada seasonal restrictions on off-trail use will remain in place);
 - Early season and off-trail travel in Sunshine Meadows will continue to be discouraged through public communications, operational protocols, and Parks Canada area closures and restrictions;
 - No new guided business licences for the Sunshine Meadows area will be issued by Parks Canada, so the level of use and physical capacity of the infrastructure in the area can be evaluated;
 - The ski resort's summer operations in Sunshine Meadows will extend from the Friday before July 1 to the end of the third weekend in September, only if trail conditions permit as determined by Parks Canada staff. The days and hours of operation of the Standish Chair may not exceed those of the summer of 2016 (which provides the baseline data for re-instituted hotel, gondola and chairlift operations);
 - The ski area operator's procedures and plans must be described in an annual operational plan provided to Parks Canada and Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park in advance of season opening. Further, a report outlining total visitors and modes of arrival must be provided to Parks Canada and BC Parks at each season end within 2 months of season end; and
 - Development and maintenance shall be limited to only those structures or activities necessary to mitigate the impacts of human use at current levels such as outhouse facilities, hardening of trails and rest stops; or other measures to protect vegetation and to prevent soils trampling and erosion.
- If Parks Canada monitoring indicates unacceptable levels of environmental impacts due to human use, additional restrictions on the gondola and/or Standish lift use, group size and other options as required, may be imposed by Parks Canada.

4.3 Terrain Modification

Major terrain modification involves essentially permanent change to the physical, ecological or aesthetic configuration of the local landscape over wide spread areas or where reclamation or restoration in the future is difficult, unlikely or uncertain. By

Parks Canada policy, it is to be avoided whenever possible. That being said, new runs, lifts and development inevitably involve terrain modification. Additionally, there are specific situations at the ski resort on certain existing runs (constricted, icy, congestion, sudden drops and poor visibility) and the ski-out, where there may be safety issues, especially for beginner and intermediate skiers that can only be effectively addressed through terrain modification.

Objective

The development and/or modification of ski-ways in the alpine reflects thoughtful design to avoid permanent scarring, visual and ecological impacts associated with lengthy rehabilitation or permanent landform alteration.

Guidelines

- Improvements to existing ski-ways should not rely on cut-and-fill approaches.
- Any proposed alpine ski-way structures or designs must be visually unobtrusive from locations outside of the ski resort; visual impact modelling will be part of ski-way proposals.
- New ski runs and reconfiguration of existing runs must be designed to avoid the need for major terrain modification / linear cut-and-fill techniques;
- The jagged lines and broken nature of local rock outcrops and bands are to be maintained through design;
- The use of structures that avoid the need for major terrain modification and are readily reversible should be used wherever possible.
- Grading of new runs will be minimized to only what is necessary to remove hazards (such as rocks and exposed stumps) and to otherwise provide a safe skiing experience. Native ground cover and soils will be preserved to the extent possible and used for reclamation.
- Non-permanent features such as terrain parks may be developed and managed where no terrain or soil disturbance is required, where snow cover can be managed to prevent direct impact to underlying soils and vegetation, and where snow compaction and spring melt conditions do not trigger changes to native vegetation community structure.

Proposals for terrain modification will be subject to the following:

- No major terrain modification above the unbroken treeline will be considered, except as described below for Angel traverse;
- Terrain modification is proposed only where (re)configuration of existing runs, lifts or vegetation cannot address safety (e.g. management of constricted, icy, congested situations and sudden drops and visibility), environmental or operational issues;

- Within the scope of the preceding bullet, terrain modification may only be used on stable slopes within the lease where vegetation reclamation is assured within a reasonable timeframe;
- Within the scope of the preceding bullets, terrain modification is undertaken using only low-impact equipment, machines and techniques to ensure minimal disturbance, quicker reclamation and minimal visual impact;

Note: Minor terrain modification that is required with other approved ski resort developments such as buildings, or lift terminals is inherent to those development processes and not subject to the guidelines and conditions in this section. See *Appendix Three: Terrain Modification Application and Definitions*.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Rock or other hazard removal on existing ski terrain in the Developed Area, to address skier or operational safety issues.
- Improvements to existing drainage installations and new systems to reduce erosion and icing, or to protect natural drainage channels.
- The widening and reconfiguration of the ski-out and connecting egress runs if no terrain modification is required.

Through a long range plan, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- The widening and reconfiguration of the Angel Ski-Way and ski-out and connecting egress runs using a combination of structural support and limited site-specific terrain modification to improve track width, to address safety issues, subject to visual impact and other considerations as described in this document, the mitigations in the *Strategic Environmental Assessment*, and any other mitigations associated with an Environmental Impact Analysis for the project. The scope of work should not result in major terrain modification or in the destruction of vegetation extending the length of the traverse; rather it should be selective - following existing breaks and ledges in the natural terrain to limit the extent of terrain modification and potential visibility of the traverse from other parts of the ski area. It is anticipated that design and construction approaches will blend ski-way improvements into the natural landscape and avoid impacts that are visibly inconsistent with natural features.
- Proposals for the improvement of the existing ski-ways involving minor terrain modification.

4.4 Ski Lifts (Aerial or Surface)

Sunshine Village Ski Resort currently operates ten lifts and two surface conveyors (magic carpets). This includes the two-stage main gondola, which is the only lift currently providing skiers with access to ski runs serviced by the Goat's Eye and Upper Village areas.

Objective

To improve resort balance, ski lift development is coordinated with changes to ski terrain, facility and infrastructure (transportation, utilities, etc.) improvements. Outdated lifts are replaced to ease maintenance requirements and costs, and to offer skiers quicker ascents and shorter lift lines. Adjustments to lift alignments or proposals for new lifts provide for improved skier circulation and more efficient access to different skiing pods, thus reducing the need for long alpine ski-ways.

Guidelines

- The main gondola lift will continue to provide the primary access to the Goat's Eye and Upper Village areas.
- Proposals for new or replacement ski lifts must:
 - demonstrate consistency with the approved design capacity limits and resort balance;
 - provide skiers with timely, convenient and safe access to the terrain and conditions most suited to them;
 - take into account skier access, and circulation to reduce and avoid congestion at ski-ways, ski run and terrain pinch points, and base area and upper lift terminals;
 - not be located where they would encourage out-of-bounds skiing and effectively result in an increase in lift-serviced ski terrain; and
 - use energy efficient technologies to the degree technologically feasible.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Replacement of the current gondola and existing lifts as allowed for under the like-for-like provisions of Parks Canada's *Ski Area Management Guidelines* (2006).

Through a long range plan, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- A lift or second gondola from the base area through the mapped Gondola Corridor, to provide additional capacity from the base area to Goat's Eye or the Upper Village.
- New ski run, terrain and lifts within the ski resort lease boundary to provide balanced skiing opportunities especially on bad weather/visibility days:
 - Lift, run and glade expansion into the Goat's Eye II area below treeline (including Goat's Eye Carpets);
 - Lift, run and glade expansion for Lookout;
 - Lift, run and glade expansion into the Hayes Hill area to treeline (including Hayes Hill surface lift); and
 - Lift run and glade expansion into the lower Meadow Park.

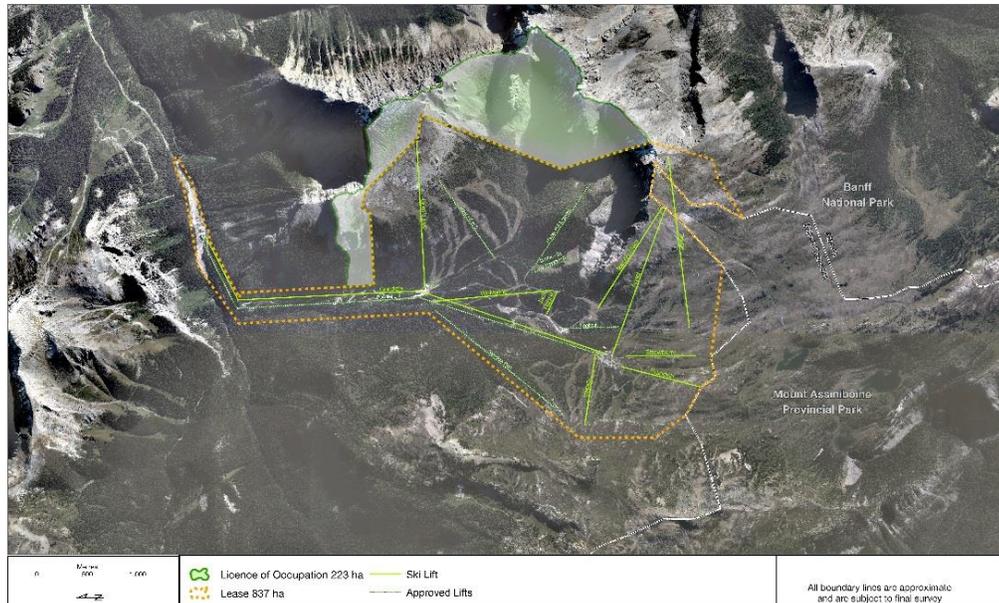


Figure 3. Existing and approved ski lifts

Note: Any proposals related to the above locations, remain subject to overall resort design capacity growth limits.

4.5 Facilities

Ski resort facilities are focused in three areas: the Gondola Base (parking, welcoming, ticket sales, some food and retail, administration); Goat's Eye (temporary daylodge structure providing food and beverage); and the Upper Village (daylodge, food and beverage at a variety of outlets, overnight commercial accommodation, ski school and daycare). Ski resort operational buildings and facilities are dispersed throughout the resort and include maintenance yards, first aid facilities, ski patrol huts, snow making operations, wastewater treatment plant, avalanche control facilities, etc.

Objective

Ski resorts can be leaders in implementing energy efficiency techniques and increasing the use of renewable energy within their operations to conserve natural resources, reduce pollution and greenhouse gases and reduce the potential impacts of climate change. Ski resort facilities provide convenient, comfortable and safe experiences for visitors while maintaining a character that blends into and connects visitors to the natural environment.

Guidelines

- The ski resort will monitor and report annually in the form of an environmental management and monitoring strategy (section 4.10) on its current energy (e.g.,

kWh/ft²) and water use in its facilities through monitoring and audits, and this should guide plans for future improvements.

- Make water efficiency, energy efficiency and clean energy use and materials efficiency priorities in the design of new facilities and upgrades to existing facilities. Incorporate green building principles, such as using energy, water and material efficiency techniques and sustainable building practices consistent with the Sustainable Slopes, Environmental Charter for Ski Areas (USA National Ski Areas Association),
- Development should be consolidated where feasible.
- Any and all new facilities must be designed, located and sized so as to minimise visual and environmental impacts, and maintain the smallest physical and operational footprint possible. Note: Any proposals for commercial facilities remain subject to overall resort design capacity growth limits, and all of the guidelines and area concepts in this document.
- Minimize disturbances to habitat by applying environmentally sensitive on-mountain construction practices (e.g. over-snow transport techniques, ground protection mats, scheduling/phasing of activities, buffers, minimizing footprints).
- Proposals for new development must include a detailed description of the development's effects on skiers-at-one-time capacity, power and water consumption, wastewater treatment, operational hours and scope, and transportation / parking demand.
- Structures must meet all applicable codes and standards.
- Emergency evacuation plans should be in place for all facilities.
- Operations buildings and yards will be consolidated where possible.
- Buildings and associated facilities that are no longer in use must be removed and their sites rehabilitated to the satisfaction of Parks Canada.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Modification of existing commercial facilities if no change to commercial space requirements;
- Construction of a daylodge at the base of Goat's Eye (Note: a daylodge proposal for Goat's Eye may also be tabled as part of a Long range plan);
- Modification of operational support buildings; and
- Redevelopment or replacement of maintenance buildings consistent with the *Ski Area Management Guidelines*.

Through a long range plan, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Any proposals for new or expanded commercial buildings at the ski resort;
- Any proposals for new or expanded operational facilities in the Gondola Base area;
- Any proposals for the redevelopment of the Upper Village area in whole or in part; and
- Any proposals for new winter-only warming huts, including a proposal for a warming hut on the same disturbed footprint as the existing Lower Divide building. (Warming huts are considered to be basic, modestly-sized day use facilities providing only heated shelter, washrooms, and possibly limited snack and beverage services. They do not contain other retail, guest services or administrative space, and are not intended for group functions or evening use. In most cases they will require utilities, water, and wastewater systems which may, or may not be self-contained).

4.6 Utilities and Water-Wastewater Infrastructure

There are no known issues associated with power at this time. Potable water meets the standards prescribed by Alberta Health. The existing wastewater treatment system has been upgraded over the years and while its performance is improving, it does not consistently meet the wastewater treatment leadership targets identified by Parks Canada (Banff National Park Management Plan). The ski resort is seeking to install a fibre optic line roughly paralleling the access road, from the Trans-Canada Highway to the resort, in order to provide improved services to their guests.

Objective

Ski resort utilities and infrastructure support comfortable, safe services for visitors in a manner that is consistent with best practices in environmental management and stewardship, the ecological parameters of the area, and the aesthetics of the location.

Guidelines

- Consideration for the 40 MW electrical limit for Banff National Park must be demonstrated in all future development proposals as increases above this limit require environmental review, approval of the Alberta energy regulator and the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.
- Wastewater treatment must not compromise human or ecological health and must consistently meet or exceed all applicable standards (as determined by Parks Canada). Monitoring results should be used to drive continuous improvement of wastewater treatment plant performance.
- No new development that will increase the skiers-at-one-time capacity will be considered without utility infrastructure in place to support it.

- Any proposal that may impact water withdrawal from Rock Isle Lake in British Columbia, will be shared with the appropriate department of the Provincial Government.
- Alternative energy systems, green design or retrofitting of existing facilities or other minimal impact technologies should be used whenever feasible.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Implementation of water conservation measures and technologies, and an effectiveness monitoring plan.
- Upgrades to the existing wastewater treatment system.
- Solutions to reduce risks to human and/ or environmental health associated with effluent discharge to ground.
- Fibre optic installation from the TCH interchange, up the access road to the resort. This will require a Licence of Occupation.

Through a long range plan, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Proposals to ensure adequate, sustainable water supply and wastewater systems, as part of any proposal for expansion or modification or on their own; and
- Proposals for alternative energy systems, green design or retrofitting of existing facilities, passive solar or other systems.

4.7 Transportation and Parking

The ski resort has existed commercially since the 1930's and Sunshine Village now hosts up to 6500 skiers per day. Where there has been considerable development and re-development over the decades, parking has been a challenge for the resort on peak days since the late 1970s. Typically most skiers arrive by private vehicle and few by mass transit.

The main parking lot Gondola Base can park approximately 1690 vehicles accommodating 4732 skiers (using an average of 2.8 skiers/vehicle). A portion of this lot is currently used for staff and hotel parking, and storage of equipment and materials. For their current approved daily capacity of 6000 skiers, this results in a shortfall of 453 spaces if it is assumed that no skiers arrive by other means (e.g. mass / tour group transit, drop-offs, etc.).

Sunshine frequently operates above its approved daily skier capacity. According to data offered by the ski area operator, visitor parking demand exceeds the capacity of the main parking lot 17-33 times per season (over the last 9 years), depending on the year. Parks Canada's road counter data for the 2017/18 ski season indicates the main lot capacity was exceeded 13 times from season opening to March 31, 2018.

Historically, parking demands over and above what is provided for in the main lot have largely been offset by skiers parking outside the ski resort lease along the Sunshine Access Road and/or in two Parks Canada parking lots at the bottom of the road, with a smaller number arriving by transit. (Note: The upper half of the Sunshine Access Road is affected by avalanche paths and parking is not permitted in this section.)

Sunshine Village has operated transit from the communities of Calgary and Banff to the resort for a number of years. In 2017/18 it expanded the service frequency from Banff and made it free of charge in an effort to increase local ridership. Sunshine reports its shuttle had a daily service capacity of 1204 persons, however generally less than that number avail themselves of the service.

Expansion of the current parking area, either upslope into the Healy Creek wildlife corridor or further down the valley, to increase potential ski resort parking capacity is constrained by the steep, narrow avalanche prone valleys, unstable slopes, stream habitats, and wildlife movement routes.

Many ski resorts in North America have encountered similar problems with parking supply and this has been the catalyst for moving to broader strategies to manage demand and re-shape customer expectations for how they access the resort. Research indicates that the creation of more parking in response to increasing demand is often a short-term solution, as any increased capacity incentivises even more people to use their personal vehicles.

Objective

The primary mode of arrival at the ski resort shifts from one that is predominately characterised by one or two people in a car, to one that reflects high vehicle occupancy and/or mass transit. Parking pressures are addressed through a variety of strategies that support a shift away from personal vehicle transportation to other modes, so the resort's design capacity and skier capacity are in balance.

Guidelines

- Mass transit and other demand management strategies should figure prominently in the ski resort's future operation and promotions as core tools for managing parking supply.
- Parking strategies and day-to-day management must continue to accommodate park visitors seeking trail head access to areas beyond Sunshine Village, whether or not they are clients of the ski resort.
- All strategies must demonstrate maintenance or improvement of wildlife corridors and aquatic resource protection along with other ecological concerns outlined in the site guidelines.
- Within the ski resort lease, existing service roads or trails required for the operation of the ski hill must be consolidated wherever possible.
- Efficient and safe traffic flow and circulation for guest, emergency, and operational purposes in the base area should be reflected in all planning.

- No new development that will increase the skiers-at-one-time capacity will be considered without the transportation system in place to support it. Further, measures to address transportation / parking supply that is sufficient for the existing design capacity of 6,500 must be implemented before any infrastructure improvements that increase in daily skier capacity are pursued.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Skier-pedestrian shuttle systems or people movers within the existing base area / parking lot footprint;
- Proposals to improve parking efficiency or capacity within the existing base area through relocating or reconfiguring existing facilities or parking space; and
- Proposals for a multi-level parking structure(s) within the existing base area parking lot footprint, which reflect design and engineering that:
 - Meets all applicable building and safety codes and performance standards as legally required and/or otherwise determined by Parks Canada;
 - Considers the landscape, visitor use patterns, and architecture of the overall base area;
 - Ensures run-off from the structure is managed in a way that prevents deleterious substances from entering Healy Creek; and
 - Is sensitive to typical routes used by wildlife in accessing the Upper Healy wildlife corridor.

(Note: operational changes (e.g. carpooling incentives, etc.) to better manage parking supply that do not involve use of land, do not require Parks Canada approval).

Through a long range plan, in the context of a Transportation and Parking Plan, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Measures to address sufficient parking demand for the existing design capacity of 6,500 (if not advanced through one of the measures above that may be implemented prior to long range plan approval).
- Transportation and parking proposals consistent with a maximum capacity of up to 8,500 skiers at one time.
- Other strategies for effective and efficient use of existing space.

4.8 Water Management and Snowmaking

There is minimal ground or surface water available in the area for ski resort use. Currently the majority of water used is captured as runoff in reservoirs and supplemented as needed by inter-basin transfer by pipeline from Rock Isle Lake in British Columbia. The upper reservoir supplies potable water and snowmaking water for the Upper Village area. At the Gondola Base area potable water is supplied

using a shallow well within 30 metres of Healy Creek. Healy Creek supplies water for snowmaking on a specific section of the ski-out by using a portable pump and hoses, ensuring a longer season of operation for the ski-out and increased skier safety.

Objective

Water is an important resource for ski resorts as well as the surrounding natural environment and downstream communities, and should be used as efficiently and effectively as possible. Water management for the ski resort will support and align with the parameters of these site guidelines in addressing the ecological objectives related to protecting and restoring aquatic habitat.

Guidelines

- A reliable and sustainable water supply will be obtained primarily through the use of multiple sources and storage structures.
- Rider safety and soils and vegetation protection should be achieved through seasonal snow fencing in exposed locations along access and egress routes only.
- Expansion of snowmaking into areas above the unbroken treeline does not conform to park policy that aims to protect important upper subalpine and alpine vegetation and habitat. Snowmaking will not be permitted in the Alpine Bowls Area or along egress trails.
- Below treeline, expansion of snowmaking may be considered for the primary purpose of providing adequate snow coverage to ski-ways, high traffic areas, collector runs and snow retention trouble spots.
- The development of water reservoirs in the Sunshine Meadows and Alpine Bowls areas will not be considered.
- Any proposed changes to water withdrawal limits or water management systems must be assessed through detailed professional analysis and independent peer review of minimum in-stream flow needs required for Westslope Cutthroat trout, Bull Trout, and other fish and aquatic species.
- The need for direct, on-demand water withdrawal from Healy Creek should be minimized.
- The use of water from Rock Isle Lake in British Columbia, adjacent to the ski resort lease boundary may only occur in accordance with the conditions described in the water licence granted by the Province of British Columbia and with the inter-basin water transfer considerations approved by Parks Canada.
- Implementing energy efficient technologies for snowmaking, water conservation, grey water recycling and wastewater systems, and the potential use of treated effluent for snowmaking should be considered in all future proposals.

- Regular and consistent monitoring and inspection of systems should be implemented to reduce water loss from leaks or other failures.
- The application of *the Best Management Practices for Development at Ski Areas in Banff and Jasper National Parks of Canada* for permanent snow fencing should continue and be applied to temporary fencing where warranted.
- Snowmaking operations should use modern, high efficiency snow guns and air compressors, as well as real time controls, sensors and monitoring systems to optimize the system and reduce electrical demand.
- A Water Management and Snowmaking Strategy should be developed and implemented. It must reflect the parameters contained in these guidelines, and:
 - Include objectives for water conservation and treatment, erosion and sedimentation control, surface runoff water quality and protection and restoration of riparian habitat function; and
 - Consider adequate in-stream flows to maintain fish and fish habitat; Parks Canada and the Province of British Columbia water withdrawal conditions and permitted limits; potential system failures and erosion potential; reservoir potential with alternative supply sources such as recycling, surface drainage, groundwater or charged during periods of peak flow; and potential impacts of warming climate conditions.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be proposed to Parks Canada:

- Infrastructure and technologies that enhance snowmaking water efficiency and conservation without increasing overall water use.

Through a long range plan, in the context of the Water Management and Snowmaking Strategy, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Permanent snow fencing and other snow capture structures to collect snow in exposed locations where snowmaking has not been approved;
- The construction of new water reservoirs as outlined in section 3.3, including a proposal for snowmaking water reservoirs fed by surface runoff or utilizing treated effluent in the Gondola Corridor, sized for the purpose of ensuring a reliable snowmaking water supply for the ski-out, and to eliminate or significantly reduce the need for water extraction from Healy Creek. Any reservoir must be located, sized and designed to maintain natural drainage and runoff patterns in Sunshine and Healy Creeks;
- A proposal for a reservoir to provide snowmaking and potable water for ski terrain and warming hut development serving the Hayes Hill area; and
- The development of a new surface runoff water reservoir in a previously disturbed area to provide snowmaking and potable water to the Goat's Eye base.

4.9 Ski Run and Vegetation Management

A few locations throughout the ski resort feature narrow ski-ways that link one ski pod to another. This creates points of congestion, can be challenging for beginner and lower intermediate skiers to navigate, and presents safety hazards related to potential falls and collisions. In some areas of the resort there are concerns regarding invasive species and altered natural vegetation patterns, composition and structure.

Objective

The ski run and vegetation management approach for the ski resort is consistent with approved design capacity limits and with the ecological management parameters outlined in section 3.5.

Guidelines

- Regular ski area vegetation management, including the maintenance of existing runs and glades, may occur outside of a Ski Run and Vegetation Management Strategy, subject to Parks Canada's permitting and review processes.
- All new and replacement lift proposals must clearly:
 - Demonstrate consistency with design capacity limits and resort balance;
 - Take into account skier access, and circulation to reduce and avoid congestion at skiways, ski run and terrain pinch points, and base area and upper lift terminals; and
 - Use energy efficient technologies.
- Development of new lifts will be coordinated with changes to ski terrain, parking capacity and mass transit improvements to maintain resort balance.
- Transit / parking capacity needs to be sufficient to support added skier capacity arising from new and upgraded lifts.
- Both routine vegetation management and ski run vegetation management proposals must reflect any applicable SARA requirements, the Mitigating Measures, and parameters specific to Whitebark Pine in the *Strategic Environmental Assessment*. Further, Whitebark Pine may not be cleared to facilitate snow riding in the Alpine Bowls Area.
- Maintaining natural vegetation patterns to preserve natural appearances and views for off-site visitors shall be a priority in run development and glading.
- Existing and new clearing for the gondola and lift lines may be combined with ski-out widening and the development of linking egress runs to facilitate increased skier egress capacity.
- All clearing for new or modified lift lines, utilities, ski-out improvements and egress run development in the gondola corridor will be planned and designed to maintain natural drainage and runoff patterns in Sunshine and Healy Creeks.

- The ski area operator shall develop a Ski Run and Vegetation Management Strategy that includes but is not limited to:
 - A detailed description of the existing ski run and vegetation situation at the ski resort, including detailed site mapping and inventory of all whitebark pine and limber pine locations and any non-native vegetation;
 - Objectives and planning for new ski terrain based on a review of existing ski run terrain, providing balanced terrain options for all skill levels; and a comparison against industry standards and future trends;
 - Describing the resort's on-the-ground approach to: mimicking of natural forest structure and succession for glading in different ecological zones and habitat types across the ski resort; protection of ground cover vegetation diversity, wet soils and environments; and protection and restoration of habitat features and conditions that support vegetation communities and species diversity throughout the Sunshine Meadows environment and other upper subalpine and alpine locations.

In advance of a long range plan and subject to all applicable development and environmental reviews and permitting, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada's review:

- Replacement and upgrade of existing lifts consistent with the *Ski Area Management Guidelines* and under the conditions that resort balance is improved or maintained and environmental parameters are met.

Through a long range plan, in the context of a Ski Run and Vegetation Management Strategy, and subject to the guidelines described throughout this document, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Proposals for new lifts or the realignment of existing lifts; and
- Proposals for new runs, glading, infill runs, run widening, and specific beginner/intermediate areas that contribute to ski resort balance, visitor safety and enhanced visitor experience.

4.10 Environmental Management and Monitoring

Environmental management and monitoring is needed for an organization to successfully address the immediate and long-term impacts of its products, services and processes on the environment. It also supports the organization in meeting its statutory, contractual or policy obligations with respect to the environmental practices. A formal environmental management system or strategy is considered a standard practice for modern businesses. Monitoring supports environmental management in that it provides essential and on-going feedback as to how effective the mitigations, approaches, and activities of the organization are in addressing the key environmental parameters.

Objective

The environmental management approach at the ski resort is an on-going process that both improves its efficiency and reduces the environmental impacts associated with operations and activities year-round.

Guidelines

The ski resort should develop and implement an Environmental Management and Monitoring Strategy based on the Sustainable Slopes, Environmental Charter for Ski Areas (USA National Ski Areas Association) at the earliest opportunity that should address/include:

- Objectives and targets for energy conservation, carbon emissions, wastewater management and standards, water conservation, solid waste management and reduction, and integrated pest and invasive species management;
- Programs, operational controls and other actions to achieve the objectives and targets (including best management practices where applicable);
- Time frames to implement the actions and program above;
- A program for regular monitoring and measurement to ensure continuous improvement and achievement of objectives; and
- a program for annual reporting of the monitoring results to Parks Canada, and to the public via Sunshine's own public communications program to ensure transparency and public accountability;;
- Any long range plan development proposals for the ski resort should link to and support the Environmental Management and Monitoring Strategy.

4.11 Staff Housing

The Sunshine Village Ski Resort has approximately 700 employees in peak winter season with the majority living in Banff and Canmore. There is current staff accommodation on-site for 190 employees, where resident employees provide building security, on-hill operations, and essential staffing for the commercial accommodation units. The rest of the employees live in the communities of Banff and Canmore.

Potential growth and expansion at the ski resort may trigger the need for additional staff and increased housing capacity. The *Ski Area Management Guidelines* require that additional employee accommodation as necessary be located in nearby communities.

Objective

Staff requirements are proactively considered in all future growth and development plans for the ski resort, and sufficient, adequate housing is available for ski resort employees.

Guidelines

- Staff accommodation units will not be utilized for any commercial (visitor) use; conversely, commercial accommodation units will not be used as staff accommodation units.

- On-hill staff accommodation may not increase beyond the current 190 employees. Requirements for housing additional staff must be satisfied within neighbouring communities.
- A Staff Housing Strategy should be developed and implemented to address/include the approach to addressing any increase in staffing levels within current communities realities and priorities.

Through a long range plan, in the context of a Staff Housing Strategy, and subject to the parameters described in these guidelines, the following may be submitted for Parks Canada review:

- Modification of current on-hill staff housing.

4.12 National Parks Interpretation and Education

By virtue of its exceptional environment and setting in Canada's first and most popular national park, the ski area operator has an exceptional opportunity to engage and educate people on the importance of alpine areas, the protection of flora and fauna in those areas, climate change, and historical use and cultural values associated with the Sunshine Village Ski Resort.

Current winter programming at the resort is largely through static displays, which require updating. Progress has been made in recent years with summer programming including visitor orientation, trail ambassadors, and a renewed sign / interpretive program. Lacking is any reference to the traditional Indigenous use of the area and its location within the territory of the Treaty 7 First Nations of Alberta.

Objective

Ski resort facilities, services, operational practices and programs contribute directly to a unique and memorable visitor experience that fosters appreciation for the natural and cultural heritage values of the area within the context of the national park, the World Heritage Site, and Indigenous history and perspectives on the land. Providing opportunities for Indigenous involvement, based on the interests of the individual nations, is an important component of the interpretive programming at the site.

Guidelines

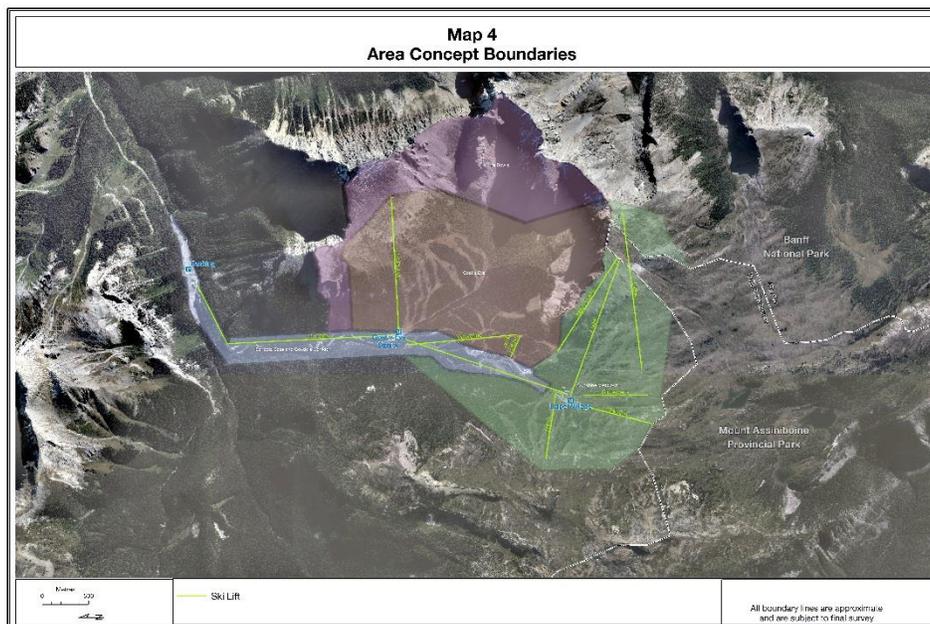
- The resort should develop an Interpretive and Education Strategy for winter and summer designed to inform and connect visitors to the natural, cultural and historical features of the resort, and its significance to the park and to the World Heritage Site. Where the strategy touches on the Sunshine Meadows area, it must be consistent with the Mount Assiniboine Park Management Plan. The strategy should address or include:
 - A description of the key features of the area; and its significance in the context of the local ecosystem, the national park, the World Heritage Site and to Indigenous Peoples;
 - Objectives for visitor education and engagement;

- Key themes, storylines and messages;
- Use of digital communication tactics including social media and website content;
- Use of non-personal (e.g. interpretive displays, print material, maps, signs, etc.) media to achieve objectives;
- Use of personal programming (e.g. orientation sessions, guided programs, etc.) to achieve objectives; and
- An evaluation program to determine the effectiveness of the strategy.

Interpretive Plans completed by Parks Canada and input from interested Indigenous groups should provide a framework for this strategy.

5 Area Concepts

For greater certainty, specific sectors of the ski resort have been identified for detailed discussion (Map 4) including a vision outlining future development and use, along with specific guidelines and conditions that reinforce or support the vision for that area.



5.1 Gondola Base and Gondola Corridor Area Concept

The gondola base and corridor includes the parking area, gondola lower terminal, Bourgeau Lodge, and the Goat's Eye gondola and lift buildings and structures. The corridor also includes the ski out and ski runs that serve to provide egress from the ski resort, and operational compound and buildings.



Future Development and Use

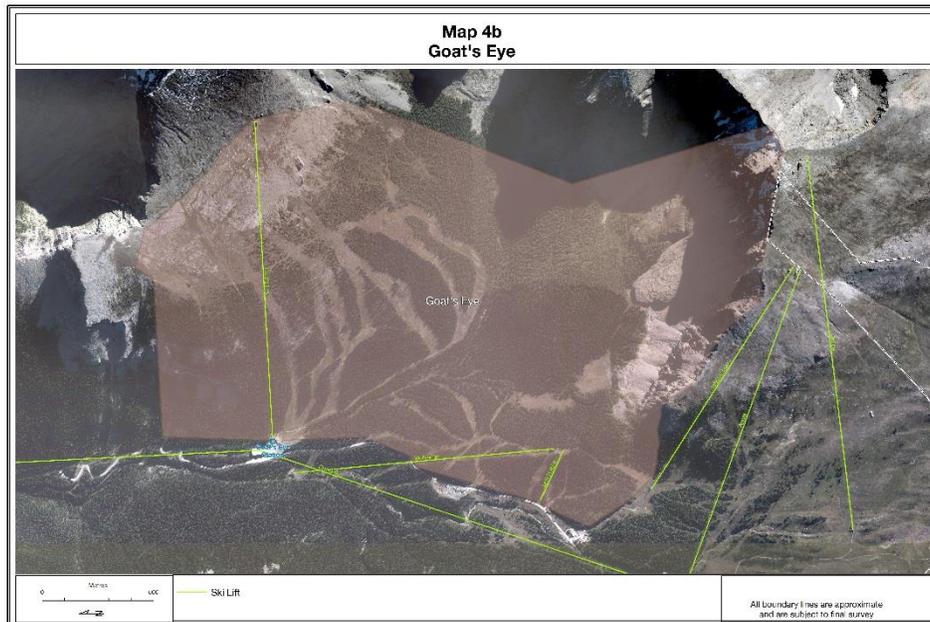
The Gondola Base Area serves as an operational hub as well as the visitor welcome centre and portal to the rest of the ski resort for summer and winter visitors. Visitor facilities are characterized by a design and layout that facilitates ease of access, easy circulation and efficient business transactions. Design and services (including visitor information and education) make clear links to Banff National Park and contribute to a sense of welcome to the park as well as the ski resort.

Guidelines

- The Base Area serves as the access and staging area for summer visitor and operational activities on the upper mountain. Convenient parking and park visitor access to the Healy Pass Trailhead will be maintained at all times. Guidelines for summer use are outlined in section 4.2.
- The Base Area serves as the staging area for winter visitor and operational activities in support of snow riding and approved special events on the upper mountain. Guidelines for winter are outlined in section 4.1.
- Transportation and parking proposals may be considered as outlined in section 4.7.
- Facility development may be considered as outlined in section 4.5.
- Ski run and vegetation management may be considered as outlined in section 4.9.
- Snowmaking may be considered as outlined in section 4.8.
- Ski lift development may be considered as outlined in section 4.4.

5.2 Goat's Eye Area Concept

The Goat's Eye Area includes the lift-serviced ski terrain in the west facing valley between Eagle Mountain, Mount Howard Douglas and Lookout Mountain. Areas outside and above the lease in this valley are captured in the Alpine Bowls Area Concept. The Goat's Eye area includes ski terrain associated with the Wolverine and Jackrabbit lifts as well as the main Goat's Eye chair.



Future Development and Use

The Goat's Eye area provides alternative snow riding terrain, primarily near to, or below treeline, offering additional opportunities and resort balance for skiers and alternate challenging terrain, especially during inclement weather and poor visibility days in the Sunshine Meadows area.

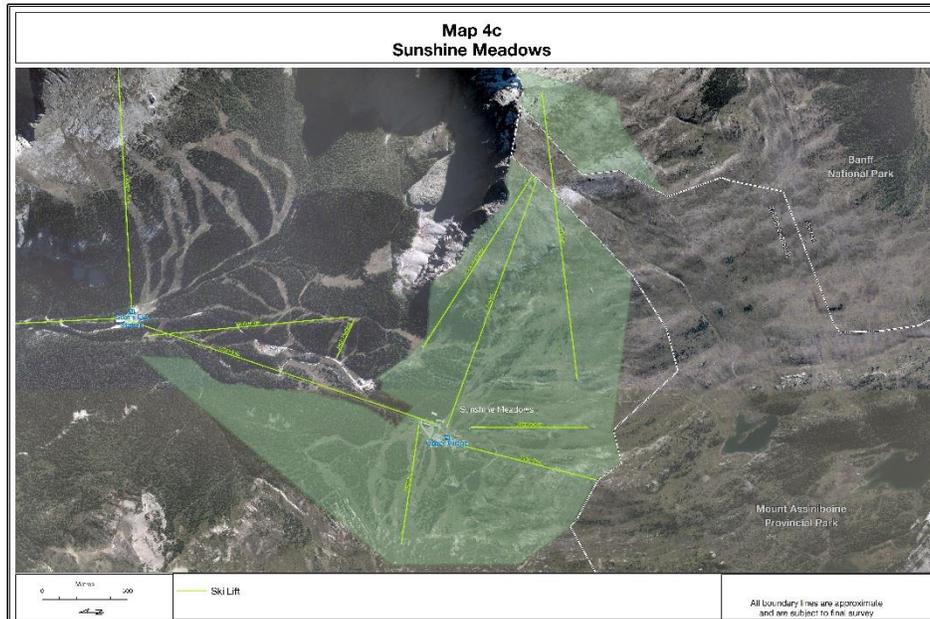
Guidelines

- There is to be no summer use in this area.
- The Goat's Eye area will be managed to accommodate moderate to high density snow riding experiences consistent with industry resort design and resort balance standards. Guidelines for winter use are outlined in section 4.1.
- Facility development may be considered as outlined in section 4.5.
- Ski run and vegetation management may be considered as outlined in 4.9.
- Terrain modification may be considered as outlined in section 4.3 and non-permanent features such as terrain parks may be developed and managed on suitable terrain below treeline.

- Snowmaking may be considered as outlined in section 4.8.
- Ski lift development may be considered as outlined in section 4.4.
- A Goat's Eye day lodge proposal can be advanced prior to a long range plan, subject to the development review and environmental assessment process.
- Development of a small winter use only warming hut associated with one of the bottom lift terminals may be considered subject to commercial space capacity and brought forward through a long range plan. This includes development of a reservoir in the area of the warming hut for potable water and to supplement snowmaking systems.
- The Sunshine Coast traverse in the Goat's Eye area is not considered to be a developed ski-way. Improvements to the traverse that may be brought forward in a long range plan that would assist with early season snow capture below treeline may include a combination of snow capture structures with reversible, site-specific terrain modification, subject to visual impact considerations.

5.3 Sunshine Meadows Area Concept

The Sunshine Meadows Area includes the Upper Village and terrain served by the Upper Village and associated lifts and runs on Mount Standish and Lookout Mountain.



Future Development and Use

The spectacular peaks and alpine meadows of this area serves as the core of the Sunshine experience for both winter and summer visitors. Winter skiers and snowboarders experience wide open alpine terrain and scenery combined with natural snow conditions along the Great Divide. Via a trail system shared with British Columbia Parks and enhanced with educational and interpretive opportunities, summer visitors experience beautiful landscapes and world-renowned ecological diversity of the largest expanse of alpine meadows in the Canadian Rockies.

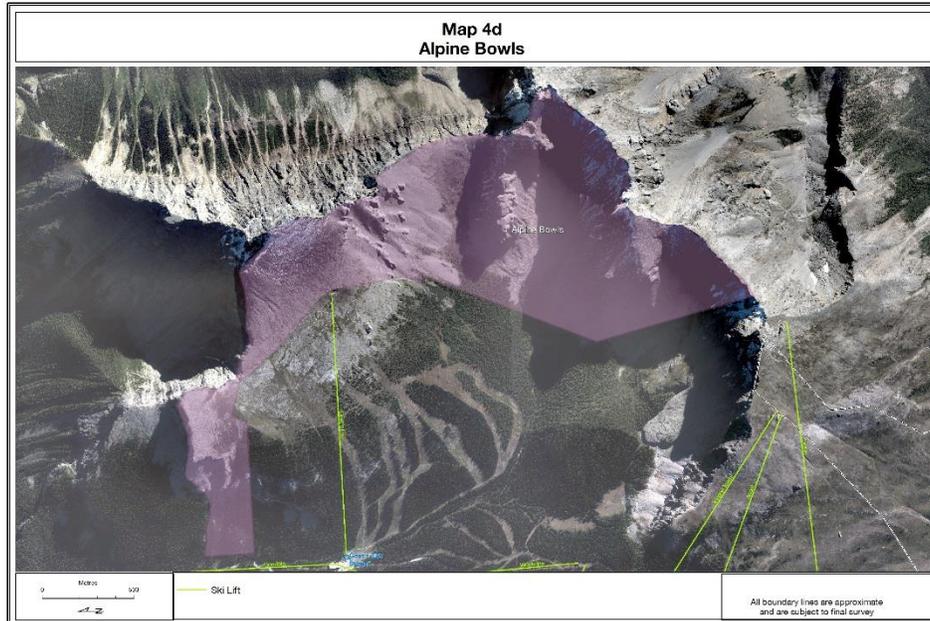
Guidelines

- The focus of summer use at the ski resort is on day hiking, interpretation, and experiential programs and activities in the Sunshine Meadows Area.
- Guidelines for summer use are outlined in section 4.2.
- Winter skiing and snowboard activities in the Sunshine Meadows Area are focused primarily on the experience of natural terrain and snow conditions. Guidelines for winter use are outlined in section 4.1.
- Facility development may be considered as outlined in section 4.5.
- Ski run and vegetation management may be considered as outlined in section 4.9.
- Snowmaking may be considered as outlined in section 4.8.
- Ski lift development may be considered as outlined in section 4.4.

5.4 Alpine Bowls Area Concept

The Alpine Bowls Area falls within the height of land lying above the Goat's Eye area and the Gondola Corridor including the areas locally known as Delirium Dive, Howard Douglas Bowls, Eagle Crest and Wild West. Portions of the Alpine Bowls Area have been skied for years by more advanced skiers and riders.

Consequently, avalanche control in the Alpine Bowls has been, and will continue to be, required as the run-out zones potentially threaten skier safety and assets within the lease boundary. From the height of land down to the lease boundary, the geographic area of the Alpine Bowls is classified as Zone 2 in the Banff National Park Management Plan. As such it is intended for visitor use that requires minimal services and facilities. None of the lifts adjacent to the bowls, nor ski terrain accessed from the bowls, provide ready access into any Zone 2 areas.



Future Development and Use

The Alpine Bowls provide an opportunity for adventurous skiers and snowboarders to access natural, un-groomed, and challenging terrain when snow and avalanche conditions allow. The ongoing effectiveness of the ski resort’s avalanche control program will continue to ensure skier safety and enjoyment to the highest degree possible. The type of visitor use and operational activity occurring in this area will continue to be the same in future as it is presently.

Guidelines

- Commercial summer use by the ski area operator in the Alpine Bowls area is not permitted in these guidelines.
- Recreational activities in the Alpine Bowls area will be limited to skiing and snowboarding within the Licence of Occupation area, as well as associated educational programs such as avalanche awareness or backcountry travel courses.
- New facility development in this area is not allowed. The existing access structure to Delirium Dive may remain to facilitate skier and snowboarder access from the controlled entry point through rocky areas into the Upper Bowl areas.
- This (out of resort) area is for off-piste skiing only; there will be no run grooming or clearing. Subject to the guidelines for ski run and vegetation management outlined in section 4.9, clearing of hazard trees and shrubs may take place as part of regular operations.
- Egress from Alpine Bowl areas may be facilitated by designated and maintained skier trails. Egress trail design must take advantage of natural terrain features

and limit trail width to only that necessary to provide safe skier egress focusing on vegetation clearing. A full width groomed egress trail is not considered necessary or suitable to this area and will not be considered. Limited trail construction and minor terrain modification will only be considered on a site-specific basis to address skier hazard or environmental concerns.

- Snowmaking in this area will not be allowed above treeline as per the Ski Area Management Guidelines.
- The ski area operator must also develop an Alpine Bowls Controlled Skiing Plan to address:
 - Fencing and signage into Alpine Bowl areas including the designation of controlled access into hazardous areas through specific entry points;
 - A perimeter fence and sign plan so it will be clear to skiers/boarders that they are leaving the managed ski resort and that there is no maintained egress, no avalanche control, no safety patrols and that they must be self-reliant and familiar with backcountry travel. The sign plan must also clearly communicate the hazards, equipment requirements, ability level, egress, and other relevant information; and
 - Use of digital communication tactics to inform the public about the experience, ability level, hazards and requirements for skiing in the Alpine Bowls area.

6 Long Range Planning & Monitoring

The Long Range Planning Process

The next step in the management and planning process for national park ski areas is development of a long range plan. A long range plan outlines the development and operation of the ski resort for all seasons for a period of five to 15 years.

Long range plans are prepared by the ski area operator describing specific projects and initiatives that it wishes to undertake. Everything in the long range plan must be consistent with the approved site guidelines. Long range plans are evaluated in a manner and at a level of detail consistent with standard development review processes for the mountain parks and are subject to environmental and public review.

The following outlines the key steps and responsibilities in preparing and completing a long range plan:

- Determine scope of projects to be included in the long range plan ensuring resort balance is achieved (Parks Canada, Ski Area Operator);
- Prepare *Environmental Impact Analysis* Terms of Reference (Parks Canada based on the *Site Guidelines Strategic Environmental Assessment* and scope of projects to be included in the Long range plan);
- Prepare draft long range plan (Ski Area Operator);

- Prepare draft Environmental Impact Analysis according to Terms of Reference and work with interested Indigenous groups to complete cultural site assessments (Ski Area Operator and Indigenous groups)
- Undertake Indigenous and public review and comment of the draft long range plan (Ski Area Operator) and the draft Environmental Impact Analysis (Parks Canada);
- Analysis of public and Indigenous comment (Parks Canada);
- Revisions to long range plan and Environmental Impact Analysis (Ski Area Operator) as per comments received;
- Determination of the Significance of Environmental Impacts (Parks Canada);
- Recommendation to Minister on the long range plan (Parks Canada); and
- Ministerial decision to approve or not approve the long range plan.

Projects described in an approved long range plan may or may not be subject to additional development, environmental or public review and Indigenous engagement, depending on the amount of detail provided in the plan and its accompanying environmental assessment information. Any additional development, public, Indigenous or environmental review requirements will be specified as part of long range plan decisions and determination of environmental impacts.

Projects in Advance of a Long Range Plan

Following the completion of site guidelines, and in recognition that it will take time to prepare a long range plan, Parks Canada may consider additional projects if they: conform completely with the *Ski Area Management Guidelines*; do not have potential for significant cumulative environmental effects, are not linked to other projects or Long range plan decisions, and do not result in incremental expansion. Projects that may be considered in advance of a Long range plan are described throughout this document and/or in the *Ski Area Management Guidelines*.

Monitoring

Key areas of background research and monitoring associated with evaluating projects implemented under an approved long range plan include:

- Stream flow quantity and water quality impacts in all creeks within the Lease boundary;
- Water intercept or withdrawal effects and potential inter-basin issues associated with Rock Isle Lake;
- Wildlife movement through Healy and Sunshine Creek Corridors;
- Sunshine Meadows vegetation, including whitebark pine and limber pine, community structure and diversity; and
- Grizzly Bear habitat security trends.

For each of these areas, and others that may be identified as part of future plans, Parks Canada will draft the terms of reference or parameters for research and monitoring to be completed by the ski area operator. Essential monitoring parameters will be confirmed through the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

7 Strategic Environmental Assessment Summary

Environmental considerations influenced the *Ski Area Management Guidelines* and will influence the *Sunshine Village Ski Resort Site Guidelines for Development and Use*. The *Strategic Environmental Assessment* (SEA) is neither the first nor the last step in the environmental analysis of the ski resort. It falls between a very broad overview and specific assessments for projects brought forward in the Long range plan.

Parks Canada completed a *Strategic Environmental Assessment* of the site guidelines to examine their implications and to help decision-makers understand their potential consequences. The SEA was then reviewed by two independent specialists. It identified a number of mitigations and planning/information requirements that must be addressed in the long range plan and its accompanying environmental assessment.

The SEA for the July 2018 draft of the site guidelines suggested that the key issues to be mindful of in future were working to mitigate effects of the parking lot operation on Healy Creek; ensuring Sunshine Meadows remains ecologically intact in the face of increasing summer use, and preserving wildlife corridor functioning. The draft SEA concludes that aside from the need to address those key issues, the site guidelines can be expected to achieve the desired outcomes.

Changes to these final guidelines that were made in response to the key issues flagged in the SEA. These include:

- Requiring the operator to remediate effects of the parking lot on Healy Creek prior to any further development;
- In advance of an approved Summer Use Plan summer operations in Sunshine Meadows will:
 - extend from the Friday before July 1 to the end of the third weekend in September, only if trail conditions permit as determined by Parks Canada staff. The days and hours of operation of the Standish Chair may not exceed those of the summer of 2016;
 - be monitored closely;
 - be allowed on designated trails only (i.e. Parks Canada's seasonal restriction on off-trail use will be maintained); and
 - not accommodate any additional guided hiking (i.e. no new business licences for the area will be issued by Parks Canada).
- Eliminating the option for terraced parking along the north east edge of the current parking lot so as to avoid encroachment on the wildlife corridor.

Further, the final site guidelines also reflect a change from the draft version in the areas to be removed from the lease. The draft site guidelines contemplated removal of an area referred to as Meadow Park. Further environmental review of this idea indicated that the environmental gains from doing so was not likely to be substantial; hence this area will remain with the lease. This is addressed in addendum 2 to the SEA.

8 Appendix One – Definitions

1. **Approved Capacity** means the capacity limit set forth and approved by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.
2. **Commercial Space** means the total floor area of all storeys and basement levels of a structure with a clear ceiling height of 1.8 meters or more, contained within the outside of the exterior and basement walls or glazing line of windows including all roofs, decks and porches, but excluding enclosed or unenclosed parking areas, garbage and loading rooms, floor space and vertical penetrations devoted exclusively to mechanical or electrical equipment servicing the structure, lift towers, and staff housing.
3. **Design Capacity** means a daily, at-one-time guest population that the ski area infrastructure components (e.g. parking, ski lifts, access and egress, ski terrain, commercial space) is designed to support as set forth in the site guidelines. When this is achieved, a ski area is then considered to have ‘resort balance’.
4. **Developed area** means the area on the Land modified for skiing or other uses through the construction of physical works, or through clearing/removal of trees and other vegetation, landscaping, terrain modification or other activity associated with ski area operation. It includes ski runs, lift lines, parking areas, commercial buildings, operational buildings and forested areas between ski runs. It does not include Undeveloped Areas, Unserviced Terrain and Unskied Terrain. The perimeter of the Developed Area is determined by: the top terminal of the upper most lifts; the outer limits of formally cut ski runs/gladed areas or approved Ski Terrain; and the perimeter of base/parking, staging and operational areas.
5. **Development** means the construction, modification or expansion of any fixed physical works (including trails, roads, parking lots, utilities, etc.) or structures; expansion or modification of Ski Terrain; modification of vegetation structure or composition; routine tree removal on existing Serviced Terrain for regular maintenance, safety or to meet code requirements is not included; the introduction of new land uses and activities, excluding those activities that are similar in nature and which are all based on sliding downhill on a ski run, such as skiing, snowboarding and tubing; and substantive changes in intensity of use (summer or winter) in areas that were previously low use.
6. **Exception** means exceptions to the site guidelines for facilities, parking, terrain modification limitations and adjustments to the perimeter of the Developed Area that can be considered where there are Substantial Environmental Gains. Exceptions will not be considered for on-hill accommodation, Growth Limits, water permits and infrastructure requirements.
7. **Facilities** means any buildings, erections, lifts, surface conveyances, fixtures and improvements existing on or under the Land from time to time.
8. **Growth Limits** means the maximum amount of development/resource utilization over time; represents build out as set forth in the Management Guidelines and the site guidelines.
9. **Lease** means a contract between the Crown who is the lessor and another party who is the lessee, whereby land is demised to the lessee for a specified term in consideration of a rent, and on other terms.

10. **Licence of Occupation** means a licence to enter upon and use the Crown's land in a certain manner or for a specified purpose. It is a personal right granted to the licensee and does not create a proprietary interest in the land itself. Licences generally may be revocable upon notice.
11. **Long range plan** means a plan that is intended to outline the development and operation of the ski area for all seasons for a period of five to 15 years. Long range plans are prepared by the ski area describing specific projects and initiatives that they wish to undertake. Everything in the Long range plan must be consistent with the approved site guidelines. Long range plans are evaluated in a manner and at a level of detail consistent with standard development review processes for the mountain parks and are subject to environmental and public review.
12. **Serviced Terrain** means an area on the Land that is lift accessible and regularly maintained to facilitate or improve visitor use and safety, including the provision of signage, avalanche control, ski patrol, grooming, snowmaking, brushing, individual tree removal and access/egress.
13. **Ski Terrain** means an area on the Land that is routinely skied over the course of a normal ski day (subject to avalanche and snow conditions). It includes alpine areas, formally cut ski runs, trails, gladed areas, cat tracks, roads, lift lines or connectors and has been developed or is serviced. It does not include areas that require ski touring, hiking, or climbing to access or egress areas that are not serviced.
14. **Substantial Environmental Gain** means a positive change in key ecological conditions (wildlife movement and habitat, wildlife mortality, sensitive species/areas and aquatic ecosystems) that leads to the restoration or the long-term certainty of maintaining ecological integrity.
15. **Undeveloped Area** means a natural area on the Land that has not been previously developed or altered for skiing or other uses, and is outside the perimeter of the Developed Area.
16. **Un-serviced Terrain** means an area on the Land that may or may not be accessed from existing lifts, but is not regularly maintained and services to facilitate or improve visitor safety, including the provision of signage, avalanche control, ski patrol, grooming, snowmaking, brushing, individual tree removal and access/egress, are not provided.
17. **Un-skied Terrain** means an area on the Land that is undeveloped and unserviced. Skiing is limited to those activities that typically occur in backcountry areas and involves ski touring, hiking, climbing and personal avalanche safety management.
18. **Use** means any human activity that occurs on or adjacent to the Land.
19. **Utilities** means all systems related to electricity, water, power and wastewater.

9 Appendix Two – Ski Area Management Guidelines

Ski Area Management Guidelines December 7, 2006

Introduction

Downhill skiing has a long history in Canada's national parks. The Banff Ski Club was formed in 1917 and the first commercial ski facility began operations in 1934. Downhill skiing has since become a cornerstone of winter tourism in the Rocky Mountain national parks. Banff and Jasper National Parks of Canada are international ski destinations attracting hundreds of thousands of skiers each year. Due to the pressures placed on alpine and sub-alpine environments, the 2000 *Canada National Parks Act* prohibits developing new commercial ski areas inside the national parks.

The nature of skiing and skier expectations, as well as national parks policies have changed considerably since the initial Long range plans were developed for the Lake Louise, Sunshine Village, Mount Norquay and Marmot Basin ski areas in the 1980s. In order for these areas to operate in a manner that will not impair the ecological integrity of the parks and assist them to remain competitive, a clear and consistent approach to managing ski areas is required.

Ski Area Guidelines were established in 2000 to guide the development of new Long range plans. In order to facilitate improvements to ecological integrity, reflect the full scope of Parks Canada's mandate and address the concerns of communities, ski areas, tourism associations and environmental groups, some refinements to the guidelines are necessary. These refinements reflect the original intent of the guidelines and will be the basis for managing ski areas in the mountain national parks.

Basic approach

The following outlines the broad approach that will be taken to manage the mountain national park ski areas:

- Parks Canada's fundamental responsibilities are protecting heritage resources, facilitating opportunities for public education and memorable visitor experiences. As part of this integrated mandate, the *Canada National Parks Act* requires that the maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity will be the first priority when considering all aspects of the management of parks. These responsibilities will form the foundation for decisions.
- Parks Canada's primary goal for the management of ski areas is to achieve long term land use certainty that:
 - ✓ ensures ecological integrity will be maintained or restored;
 - ✓ contributes to facilitating memorable national park visitor experiences and educational opportunities; and
 - ✓ provides ski area operators with clear parameters for business planning in support of an economically healthy operation.
- To address the needs of the ski areas and Parks Canada, a collaborative approach is desired.
- Growth Limits and parameters to guide development and operations have been established for communities and outlying commercial accommodation to ensure

ecological integrity and reinforce their location in a national park. Ski areas will be treated in a similar manner.

- The requirements of the *Canada National Parks Act*, *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Species at Risk Act* will be met.
- The 2000 Ski Area Guidelines recognized that existing Long range plans were out of date. They identified the need to have new plans completed by 2002. These plans are overdue. New development will be addressed through new Long range plans. In advance of new plans, development will be restricted and may only be considered under the conditions outlined in these guidelines.
- Ski Area site guidelines will be approved by the CEO of the Parks Canada Agency. Ski Area Long range plans will be approved by the Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency.
- Parks Canada will work with ski areas to advance long range plans in a timely manner. Regulatory options to increase certainty in terms of planning and development processes and acceptable time frames for the preparation of Long range plans will be considered.
- Parks Canada will seek to work together with ski areas, communities, the tourism industry and agencies to support a vibrant winter experience.

Principles to guide new long range plans

The following principles will guide the preparation of long range plans:

- The approach taken to manage growth and the preparation of site guidelines and long range plans at ski areas will be similar to that taken for communities and outlying commercial accommodation.
- Inside the existing Developed Area, new development can be considered where potential ecological impacts can be mitigated.
- Outside the existing Developed Area, new development can be considered if there is a Substantial Environmental Gain within or adjacent to the leasehold.
- Ski areas will contribute to a unique, memorable national park experience.
- Ski areas will promote public appreciation and understanding of the heritage values of the park and World Heritage Site and local conservation initiatives.
- Ski areas will be leaders in the application of environmental management, stewardship and best practices.

Application of principles

The following information outlines how the principles will be applied.

Existing Developed Area

The existing Developed Area represents the area modified for skiing or other uses within the leasehold through the construction of physical works, or through clearing/removal of trees and other vegetation, landscaping, terrain modification or other activity associated with ski area operation. It includes ski runs, lift lines, parking areas, commercial

buildings, operational buildings and forested areas between ski runs. It does not include Undeveloped Areas, Un-serviced Terrain or Un-skied Terrain. The perimeter of the Developed Area will be determined by:

- ✓ the top terminal of the upper-most lifts;
- ✓ the outer limits of formally cut ski runs/gladed areas or approved Ski Terrain;
and
- ✓ the perimeter of base/parking, staging and operational areas.

Within the Developed Area, improvements to services and facilities can be considered. Additional infill ski runs, glading, run widening and parking can be considered. However, to ensure ecological integrity and address aesthetic issues, modification of physical terrain and forest cover will be carefully managed.

Site guidelines will identify ecological management parameters to ensure ecosystem functioning is maintained and that sensitive areas are protected.

At a minimum, this will include maximum run width, minimum distance between runs, maximum number of new runs and the prohibition of development in sensitive areas. Other parameters will be determined on a ski area by ski area basis.

The long range plan will include a run improvement and vegetation management strategy that ensures:

- ✓ a sustainable alpine and forest ecosystem;
- ✓ preventing the spread of exotic non-native invasive plants and their elimination where practical;
- ✓ non-native species are not introduced;
- ✓ the reclamation of degraded landscapes, no longer in use, to natural conditions;
- ✓ wildfire facility protection;
- ✓ the maintenance and where practical the enhancement of wildlife habitat and movement in all seasons;
- ✓ the protection of habitat for any species at risk;
- ✓ minimizing water erosion; and
- ✓ the maintenance and where practical the enhancement of the health of aquatic ecosystems.

Capacity

The capacity of ski areas can increase but development will be permanently capped through site guidelines. Growth limits will be established for Ski Terrain, the Developed Area and commercial buildings. These limits will represent build out.

Within the developed area and the context of ensuring ecosystem functioning and terrain limitations, the balancing of ski area components can be considered. These components are Ski Terrain, commercial buildings, out-of-base lift capacity, total lift capacity and parking (including transportation shuttle systems).

In determining growth limits and balancing requirements of individual ski area components, Parks Canada may seek the advice of external experts. Ski area development to the maximum growth limits can be considered if the principles and conditions set out in the approved site guidelines and long range plans are met.

Within the Developed Area the following can be considered:

- ✓ lift replacement, upgrade, realignment and new lifts;
- ✓ increase in day lodge and commercial building size;
- ✓ relocation and replacement of existing lodges and facilities; and
- ✓ new warming huts and washroom facilities.

Development of new on-hill accommodation and the expansion of the number of rooms of Sunshine's existing hotel will not be permitted. New facilities, including day lodges, will not be permitted. New employee housing, except those required for security reasons, will be provided in the near-by communities.

The Goat's Eye Day Lodge proposal was at an advanced stage of review when the 2000 Ski Area Guidelines were announced. The guidelines indicated the Goat's Eye Day Lodge would be subject to a comprehensive study as required under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. Accordingly, a proposal for the facility can be considered as part of a Long range plan or advanced outside of the plan.

Use of mass transit will be the primary means to address parking issues. Parking lot reconfiguration and expansion within the existing Developed Area can be considered within terrain and ecological limitations. New skiing parking nodes will be prohibited. Use of existing parking lots off-site can be considered, preferably in the communities, in order to support shuttle bus services.

Significant terrain modification will be prohibited. No new alpine ski ways will be permitted. Existing ski ways can be improved to address skier safety, terrain stability and aesthetic issues. Changes must minimize ground disturbances, address aesthetic impacts and be reversible.

Expansion, modification or introduction of snowmaking can be considered. Long term decisions on snowmaking will be made in the Long range planning process. Where applicable, long-term water withdrawal limits and protocols will be established to ensure minimum stream flows are maintained and a healthy aquatic environment. Limits will be subject to review and adjustment based on the hydrological information available at the time the application for a water permit is sought. Ongoing monitoring will be required. Snowmaking operations will be addressed as part of the Best Management Practices component of the Long range plan.

Infrastructure (e.g. water, sewer, power) capacity increase can be considered. Infrastructure must have sufficient capacity and meet environmental standards before ski area growth can take place.

Exceptions to these Guidelines for facilities, parking, terrain modification limitations and adjustments to the perimeter of the Developed Area can be considered if there are Substantial Environmental Gains. Exceptions will not be considered for on-hill accommodation, Growth Limits, water permits and infrastructure requirements.

Summer Use

Existing and potential summer use of ski areas presents ecological challenges beyond those of winter operations. There are more and different wildlife species that utilize ski area slopes in summer than in winter including sensitive species such as grizzly bears, woodland caribou, mountain goat, lynx and wolverine. Wildlife are particularly vulnerable during the spring and early summer because of sensitive life cycle requirements such as nesting and rearing newborn. In addition, several of the ski areas

have important wildlife routes adjacent to the leaseholds or transecting them that are essential to the long-term health of wildlife populations.

The summer season in the parks is the busiest visitor season. To address park ecological issues a range of visitor experience and ecological strategies have been developed for each park. While the number of summer users at ski areas will likely be substantially lower at most ski areas than the winter season, the ecological impacts at both the ski area and the broader park ecosystem are potentially greater.

The ecological circumstances, sensitivities and adjacent land use strategies are different at each ski area. For these reasons ski areas will be managed on a ski area by ski area basis and proposals for changes in summer use or new initiatives will only be considered where it can be clearly demonstrated that ecological issues can be successfully addressed.

A precautionary approach will be applied to decisions on summer use. In order to consider new summer use and changes to existing summer use, proposals must demonstrate that the following criteria will be met:

- ✓ No significant increase in wildlife-human conflict, wildlife habituation, displacement, disturbance or in human caused wildlife mortality.
- ✓ Wildlife habitat and movement patterns are protected.
- ✓ Visitor use is concentrated to minimize wildlife impacts. There is no significant increase in access to sensitive areas nor increase in visitor use adjacent to the ski area.
- ✓ The focus is on learning about the park and World Heritage Site. Services and activities that are in direct support of facilitating visitor learning opportunities can also be considered. New activities will only be considered if they are consistent with the park management plan or related park wide direction.
- ✓ Education must be an essential aspect of any new summer use outside of the base area.
- ✓ The experience reinforces the unique location in a national park.
- ✓ Potential impacts on other park users are satisfactorily addressed.
- ✓ Initiatives complement broader area land use strategies. Site guidelines for each ski area may identify additional site -specific requirements.

Decisions on summer use will be determined through a Long range plan and application of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. Where summer use is permitted it will be carefully managed to ensure ecological values are not compromised. Ongoing monitoring programs will be put in place to ensure ecological issues are being effectively addressed. Additional mitigations will be put in place if necessary.

Outside the developed area

Ski area expansion into Undeveloped Areas, Un-skied Terrain and Un-serviced Terrain can only be considered if there are Substantial Environmental Gains.

An example of an exception that can be considered is a leasehold reduction or reconfiguration that results in better protection of sensitive areas in exchange for development in less sensitive areas. New land, in exchange for removal of the sensitive areas from the leasehold, will be managed through a Licence of Occupation consistent with the tenure of the lease.

Leasehold expansion will be prohibited. Licences of Occupation will be used to manage avalanche trigger zones that are outside of existing leasehold areas.

Memorable experiences

The nature of ski area operations and visitor experiences will reflect and reinforce its location in a national park and World Heritage Site consistent with the expectations for communities and outlying commercial accommodation operations.

In winter, new activities will be consistent with the park management plan or related park wide direction. Motorized (excluding ski lifts) activities will not be permitted. Activities that take place inside commercial buildings and non- motorized activities, that take place on ski runs and that involve sliding downhill similar to skiing and snowboarding, can be considered outside of a long range plan subject to the Superintendent's approval.

Education

Ski areas will be encouraged to provide winter educational opportunities that focus on the heritage values of the park and world heritage site as a component of the skiing/snowboarding experience.

Environmental stewardship

An environmental management system and monitoring system, consistent with the environmental policies and the principles identified in *Sustainable Slopes, The Environmental Charter for Ski Areas*, will be a component of a long range plan.

Leases

At the request of a ski area operator, a new 42-year lease will be negotiated as part of the Long range planning process. Exceptions to the *Ski Area Management Guidelines* and development in less sensitive areas can be considered, as previously noted, for those ski areas that advance leasehold reconfiguration during the planning process, to expedite better protection of park lands.

Alternatively, a ski area operator may elect to negotiate a new 42-year lease upon expiration of their current lease.

The new lease will rationalize the leasehold boundary with the perimeter of the new Developed Area and reflect the negotiated Growth Limits.

New leases will continue to be subject to legislation, regulations, policy and guidelines in force and as modified from time to time.

Projects in advance of a new Long range plan

Since 2002, criteria have been in place that allowed the consideration of projects that had minimal potential to impact cumulative effects, to be considered in advance of a new Long range plan.

Several projects have met the previous criteria and have either been approved or are at an advanced stage of discussion. These can continue to be considered and are listed below:

Marmot Basin

- Lower chalet deck expansion

Sunshine Village

- Terrace Wing hotel replacement
- Temporary snowmaking on lower ski out

Following the completion of site guidelines, and in recognition that it will take time to prepare a Long range plan, Parks Canada may consider additional projects if they are entirely within the existing Developed Area, do not contribute significantly to cumulative effects, are not linked to other projects and Long range plan decisions and do not result in incremental expansion.

The following are the types of projects that may be considered:

- Replacement of existing ski lifts;
- Parking lot improvements within the existing footprint;
- Limited terrain modification of existing ski runs; and
- Improvements to snowmaking infrastructure to support existing ski runs currently covered by snowmaking; water withdrawal would need to remain within existing water permit limits.

Beyond the types of projects noted above, the consideration of future projects in advance of site guidelines and Long range plans will be strictly restricted to those that are maintenance, repair, replacement on a true 'like-for-like' basis or that are supported by Parks Canada for environmental reasons.

Definitions

Developed Area

The Developed Area represents the area modified for skiing or other uses within the leasehold through the construction of physical works, or through clearing/removal of trees and other vegetation, landscaping, terrain modification or other activity associated with ski area operation. It includes ski runs, lift lines, parking areas, commercial buildings, operational buildings and forested areas between ski runs. It does not include Undeveloped Areas, Un-serviced Terrain and Un-skied Terrain. The perimeter of the Developed Area will be determined by the:

- ✓ top terminal of the upper most lifts;
- ✓ outer limits of formally cut ski runs/gladed areas or approved Ski Terrain; and
- ✓ perimeter of base/parking, staging and operational areas.

Growth Limits

The maximum amount of development/resource utilization over time; represents build out.

Like for Like

Buildings and facilities can be replaced if they remain essentially the same. Lifts can be replaced, but the nature and location cannot. Buildings can be replaced with ones that have the same size, functions, capacity and location.

Long range plan

Outline the development and operation of the ski area for all seasons for a period of 5 to 15 years. Long range plans will include an environmental management system and Best Management Practices. As required by the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, ski area Long range plans are subject to a comprehensive study. Following the approval of a Long range plan, development, consistent with the plan, can proceed to the permitting stage without the need for additional environmental assessments.

Serviced Terrain

An area that is lift accessible and regularly maintained to facilitate or improve visitor use and safety including the provision of signage, avalanche control, ski patrol, grooming, snowmaking, brushing, individual tree removal and access/egress.

Site Guidelines

Based on the Ski Area Management Guidelines, ski area specific site guidelines outline what development and use may be permitted, Growth Limits, the broad parameters for the type, nature and location of development and use and the approaches to enhance the character of the ski area's operation to reflect its location in a national park and World Heritage Site. They provide direction for the preparation of long range plans. Site guidelines are intended to guide development and use for the foreseeable future.

Ski Terrain/Run

Ski terrain/run is an area that is routinely skied over the course of a normal ski day (subject to avalanche and snow conditions). The terrain includes alpine areas, formally cut runs/trails, gladed areas, cat tracks, roads, lift lines or connectors. The terrain has been developed or is serviced. It does not include areas that require ski touring, hiking, or climbing to access or egress areas that are not serviced.

Substantial Environmental Gain

An environmental gain is a positive change in key ecological conditions (wildlife movement and habitat, wildlife mortality, sensitive species/areas and aquatic ecosystems) that leads to the restoration or the long-term certainty of maintaining ecological integrity. In order to determine if an ecological gain is substantial, the following criteria will be considered:

- magnitude – major as opposed to minor improvement;
- geographic context – broad scale as opposed to localized impact; and
- ecological context – improved protection or positive impacts to high value, rare or sensitive species/or multiple species.

Undeveloped Area is a natural area that has not been previously developed or altered for skiing or other uses.

Un-serviced Terrain may or may not be accessed from existing lifts, however services as described in Serviced Terrain are not provided.

Un-skied Terrain is an area that is Undeveloped and not serviced. Skiing is limited to those activities that typically occur in backcountry areas and involves ski touring, hiking, climbing and personal avalanche safety management.

10 Appendix Three – Terrain Modification Application and Definition

Terrain Modification

This criteria will be used to assess terrain modification proposals (eg. ski terrain, parking lot, reservoir etc) in order to determine whether they are major or minor. Application:

- To be considered a minor change, all the minor criteria must be met.
- Major changes are considered significant. They can only be considered if they are treated as exceptions to the *Ski Area Management Guidelines*. They require a substantial environmental gain in order to be considered.

Terrain Modification	Minor	Major
Magnitude	The alteration of isolated physical features; major features remain	An overall change in grade, slope or configuration of natural terrain; major features are removed
Ecological context	No impact to unique or sensitive features	Alteration of unique or sensitive features
Vegetation Reclamation	Readily reclaimed within a few growing seasons	Reclamation difficult or uncertain within a few growing seasons
Reversibility and duration	Ecological and aesthetic conditions are maintained without future restoration	Involves permanent aesthetic scarring or ecological impairment without future restoration
Visual/experiential impact	Undetectable after reclamation	Readily visible to off-hill park visitors
Sense of place – nature of development	Natural appearance consistent with local terrain variation	Constructed, man-made, artificial in nature

Definitions

Feature is a noticeable form or shape that stands out from the immediate surrounding terrain. Major features are prominent and influence the overall character of the immediate surrounding terrain.

Minor terrain modification is limited to isolated features, does not affect ecosystem composition, structure or function and is readily restored, resulting in changes that are essentially indiscernible to the visitor from features in the natural environment. Basic nature of the terrain remains unchanged. May be supported with removable structures that are designed to limit physical modification to the terrain, particularly in the case of ski ways. e.g. rock removal, edge shaving of portions of the width of a run, levelling of isolated, non-prominent features, ski way decking .

Major terrain modification involves what is essentially permanent change to the physical, ecological or aesthetic configuration of the local landscape over wide spread areas or where reclamation or restoration in the future is difficult, unlikely or uncertain. The basic nature of the terrain is changed. e.g. run grade modification, constructed ski-ways, roads, or cat tracks, retaining walls, berms, platforms, bridges, terrain park features, removal of character defining features, levelling across the entire width of a run, major drainage alterations (eg. water supply reservoir).