



Discussion Paper

Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy



Photo: Roger Gruys

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Context

In 2013, Parks Canada announced its intention to develop an Implementation Strategy for the Maligne Valley. The *Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy* will guide Parks Canada's work in the valley over the next 5 to 10 years. The Strategy will build on direction in the *Jasper National Park Management Plan* (2010) concerning the Maligne Valley. The management plan identifies the main challenges in the valley that need to be addressed and sets out a vision and broad objectives for the future. The *Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy* will take that work one step further, by articulating concrete and detailed actions to realize that vision.

To obtain a more detailed background document about the *Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy*, please e-mail us at: maligne@pc.gc.ca

The development of the Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy will also support the National Conservation Plan, by conserving one of Canada's special places and connecting Canadians to nature.

This *Discussion Paper* describes the main actions that Parks Canada is proposing to implement in the Maligne Valley to:

- maintain or restore ecological integrity (e.g. improving conditions for wildlife)
- enhance visitor experience (e.g. refreshing visitor facilities)
- foster public appreciation and understanding (e.g. providing new interpretive programs)

Parks Canada Mandate



This document is a draft for public review and comment. Parks Canada will consider feedback from the public, Aboriginal groups and key stakeholders when refining the actions presented in this *Discussion Paper*, and evaluating options, alternatives, and potential impacts. Following a public and Aboriginal review period, which will include public meetings and opportunities to comment, we will prepare a final *Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy* for consideration by the Superintendent of Jasper National Park.



Reviewing the Proposed Actions

Although many proposed actions in this document advance more than one aspect of Parks Canada's mandate, they have been organized into the following sections for simplicity's sake:

- Improving Visitor Experience along the Maligne Road and Maligne Lake Day Use Area
- Improving Visitor Experience in Wilderness Areas
- Improving Ecological Integrity
- Strengthening Aboriginal Relationships
- Managing Growth and Development

Each section begins with a summary of the current situation in the Maligne Valley and the main challenges and opportunities identified in the management plan and *Maligne Valley Situation Analysis*. We then describe the actions we are proposing to address the challenges and transform the opportunities into reality.

For more information about the current situation, challenges and opportunities in the Maligne Valley, visit our website at: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ab/jasper/plan/maligne.aspx> or request a copy of the *Maligne Valley Situation Analysis* by e-mailing: maligne@pc.gc.ca

Parks Canada already carries out many different activities in the valley such as, fire management, non-native plant control, highway maintenance, garbage removal and roving interpretive programs. Unless otherwise specified, we will continue that work and add the new actions proposed in this *Discussion Paper* to our workload.



Improving Visitor Experience along the Maligne Valley Road

Current Situation

The Maligne Lake Road is a scenic roadway leading into the heart of the Maligne Valley. There are 8 pull-outs and viewpoints along the road. An estimated 380,000 visitors make the trip up the Maligne Lake Road every year.

Challenges

Many of the valley's facilities and infrastructure, including the road itself, are in poor condition and need to be repaired or rebuilt. The sense of arrival to the valley is poor and signage, including interpretive panels, needs to be updated in many locations. Vegetation along the road has not been cleared in several decades and some viewpoints are obscured by trees.

Some parking lots reach or exceed their capacity at peak times in July and August and the intersection at the Moberly Bridge is often congested in late afternoon during the summer months.





New Actions

We are proposing to **increase investment in six areas along the Maligne Lake Road**, to make the drive a more important part of the Maligne experience and encourage more stopping and exploring along the way. One of these areas, Maligne Canyon, has already received significant investment, but the other five areas need attention. Work at these locations would focus on:

- **Providing the basics** in every area: washrooms, garbage receptacles, adequate parking
- Improving **picnicking facilities**
- Providing **new, short walks or hikes**
- Installing **new interpretive panels** so that visitors can learn more about the valley’s unique characteristics—its mysterious karst system, its wildlife and its colourful human history, including Aboriginal connections

Signal Trailhead has also been identified as a priority for additional investment. Pending the results of a traffic study, Parks Canada is proposing to **expand the parking area** to ease congestion in July and August and to add a basic washroom.

We also looked for opportunities to reduce investment in facilities that are no longer regularly used by visitors. The parking lot for the Watchtower trailhead—a large parking lot that is frequently empty—is one such facility. We are proposing to reduce the size of the parking lot and rehabilitate the area that was paved; this will contribute to shrinking our footprint and restoring wildlife habitat.

Proposed levels of future investment for road-accessible areas in the Maligne Valley

Spend More	Maintain Spending	Spend Less
<p>First Priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maligne Canyon • Medicine Lake North Boat Launch Parking Area and Viewpoint • Maligne Lake Day Use Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Maligne Picnic Area • Beaver Creek Picnic Area and Trailhead • Jeffrey Creek Trailhead • Skyline and Bald Hills trailheads • Other pull-outs and viewpoints (e.g. Arch Pull-out, Big Bend Pull-out) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watchtower Trailhead
<p>Second Priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maligne Canyon Overlook • Upper Maligne Picnic Area • Signal Trailhead Parking Area 		



We would like to make it easier for visitors to plan their trip up the road, to know when they have entered the Maligne Valley, to find their way to opportunities that interest them, and to safely enjoy the valley, by:

- Installing a **welcome sign** at the entrance to the valley and updating **road signage**, especially at the six areas where we will be increasing investment
- Developing a **valley brochure**, highlighting main points-of-interest, similar to the Icefields Parkway brochure
- **Brushing** along the road and at viewpoints to maintain the structural integrity of the road and to make it easier for visitors to anticipate pull-outs and viewpoints
- Developing an **emergency response plan** to ensure that we are ready to manage the effects of a wildfire or debris slide along the road
- Carrying out a **traffic study** to determine the capacity of valley parking lots and areas of congestion

We are also proposing some changes to the **activities, programs and services** that we offer to visitors once they get to the valley. Many of these changes would involve other organizations, such as commercial operators, non-profit groups and Aboriginal communities. This is because delivering activities, services and programs is a group effort. We would like to encourage and collaborate with these groups to develop new visitor products and services.

- **Wildlife viewing** – We are going to provide visitors with more information about wildlife and how to view wildlife safely and respectfully; they will continue to bump into Wildlife Guardians and interpretive rovers along the road and may soon be greeted by Aboriginal Wildlife Guardians.
- **Behind-the scenes tours** – We will occasionally take small groups of visitors on in-depth tours to find out more about some of the unique aspects of the valley. Perhaps they can be a Wildlife Guardian for a day or learn how Parks Canada is conserving and restoring southern mountain caribou herds in Jasper National Park.
- **Aboriginal culture** – We will be exploring the potential for Aboriginal people to share



their stories about the valley or their cultural practices in ways that respect their cultural protocols. We will also look at ways to incorporate Aboriginal languages into new products, such as interpretive signs, brochures or Parks Canada's web-site.

- **New Dark sky viewing programs** – Night sky viewing is growing in popularity and the Maligne Valley offers some of the darkest, clearest skies around.



- **New self-guided products** – We have lots of ideas about new ways to connect visitors with the valley and we know our partners do too. Geo-caching and valley podcasts are just a few examples of new products that could deepen visitor appreciation for this special place.
- **Small group bookings** – We would like to allow visitors to book part of the Maligne Canyon Overlook, an under-used viewpoint near Maligne Canyon, for small group events, such as weddings and family reunions.

Improving Visitor Experience in Wilderness Areas

Current Situation

92% of the Maligne Valley is wilderness, with 99 km of maintained trails, 10 wilderness campgrounds and valuable habitat for a variety of sensitive wildlife species. Parks Canada carefully manages these areas—providing a range of opportunities to enjoy a view of iconic Maligne Lake, to explore the subalpine forests of the valley or its alpine meadows for a few hours or a few days, while ensuring that their wilderness character is unimpaired.

For more information on Visitor Experience in the Maligne Valley, please visit:

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ab/jasper/plan/maligne/experiencevisiteur-visitorexperience.aspx>

Challenges

Although popular wilderness opportunities, such as the Skyline Trail and Maligne Lake campgrounds are priorities for investment, Parks Canada is rationalizing its investments for all wilderness trails and facilities (e.g. wilderness campgrounds) so that it matches the level of service visitors have come to expect and what the Agency can afford.



A good start to improving visitor experience for all wilderness users has been made with the installation of new trailhead kiosks and providing engaging information about wilderness opportunities in print and on-line.

Visitors can already choose from many different wilderness activities, especially in summer, and we would like to maintain the high level of visitor satisfaction. In addition, we would like to update some wilderness facilities and services to make an outing in the Maligne wilderness more appealing to



younger Canadians and families, new Canadians and visitors who are new to exploring wilderness.

New Actions

We would like to make some changes to our **wilderness infrastructure and facilities**, to ensure that they are financially sustainable and contribute to ecological objectives. We are going to spend more money in some wilderness areas, and spend less in others. Over the long-term, this will result in a higher level of service in the most popular wilderness areas of the valley, such as the network of day trails at the north end of Maligne Lake, and the Skyline and Jacques Lake trails. We will no longer maintain Watchtower and Henry McLeod trails; these trails have not been cleared for several years now.

We have already committed to some changes, such as adding a new family-oriented boat-accessible campground on Maligne Lake at Hidden Cove, an initiative that was implemented this summer (2014).

In addition to general improvements to trails and campgrounds along the Skyline, on Maligne and Jacques lakes, we are proposing to:

- Take eight campsites along the Skyline that receive little use currently (at Evelyn Creek and Watchtower) and move them to more popular campgrounds (e.g. Tekarra, Snowbowl, Curator) – this should make it easier for visitors to book campgrounds in the order they prefer
- Decommission obsolete campgrounds (see table below for examples)

Proposed levels of investment for wilderness areas in the Maligne Valley

Spend More	Maintain Spending	Spend Less
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing day hiking trails (e.g. Bald Hills, Opal Hills, Moose Lake Loop, Mary Schaeffer Loop) • Skyline and Jacques Lake trails • Campgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Snowbowl – Curator – Tekarra – Little Shovel – Signal Mountain – Hidden Cove – Fisherman’s Bay – Coronet Creek – Jacques Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat-accessible picnic areas on Maligne Lake • Beaver Lake picnic area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watchtower and Henry McLeod trails Decommission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maligne Pass campgrounds (with the exception of Avalanche Campground) • Watchtower Campground • Evelyn Creek Campground



- Increase fees for overnight use to better reflect the costs of servicing outhouses and maintaining access (subject to fee amendment and approval process)

We are also proposing some changes to wilderness activities and services. Some of these changes can be made by Parks Canada and some will involve other groups who operate in the valley. We would like to:

- Refresh boating options on Maligne Lake—this would involve working with a cross section of commercial operators to offer a greater variety of guided boating activities (e.g. learn-to-paddle programs, specialty interpretive tours, guided overnight trips) or services
- Identify and promote more snowshoeing, winter walking and non-track-set skiing opportunities at the north end of the valley (i.e. around the north end of Medicine Lake and the Maligne Canyon area). We are proposing changes to winter recreational access in some areas of the valley to support caribou recovery. We hope that developing some new opportunities in areas outside of caribou habitat will lessen the impact of these changes on recreational users.





Improving Ecological Integrity

Current Situation

- The Maligne Valley is home to a number of sensitive species, including woodland caribou, grizzly bears, Harlequin Ducks and black swifts.
- The future of woodland caribou is the most pressing resource conservation issue in the Maligne Valley. Of the four herds in the park, the herd that lives in the Maligne Valley is the smallest, with only five animals sighted during population surveys in fall 2013 and one confirmed mortality during winter 2014.
- On June 3, 2014, the final federal *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Southern Mountain population (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in Canada* was released. Parks Canada now has a legal obligation to implement critical habitat protection measures.
- It is estimated that between 5 and 10 grizzly bears use the valley every year.
- The Maligne Valley is a popular destination for wildlife viewing with grizzly bears, black bears, bighorn sheep, moose, deer and, formerly, caribou commonly seen right along the road. Wildlife jams (traffic jams caused when motorists stop to view wildlife along the road) are common in the summer months.

For more information on Ecological Integrity in the Maligne Valley, please visit: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ab/jasper/plan/maligne/ie-ei.aspx> For more information on the federal recovery strategy for southern mountain caribou, please visit: http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=1309

Challenges

Without action, caribou are unlikely to persist in the Maligne Valley. Five threats to caribou have been identified and are the focus of management actions:

- Altered predator/prey dynamics—resulting from high wolf populations brought on by an overabundance of elk in the area.
- Facilitated predator access (e.g. packed winter trails and plowed roads), which has made it easier for wolves to travel into caribou habitat in winter
- Direct human disturbance of caribou (e.g. road mortality, aircraft overflights)
- Loss of caribou habitat, which could result, for example, if a wildfire occurred
- Small population effects (species with small populations are more vulnerable to inbreeding, diseases and catastrophic events)



Grizzly bears need large areas where they can forage and meet other life requirements relatively undisturbed by people. Displacement (when bears leave an area because they have been disturbed by people) and habituation (when bears lose their natural wariness of people) are the main threats to bears in the Maligne Valley. Although the valley is busy during the summer, bears can use high quality habitat at quieter times of the year and in more remote areas of the valley. The ability to move freely between areas of important habitat is critical for the long-term survival of bears and many other species. Several areas, or pinch points, where wildlife movement is constrained by steep terrain, human facilities or activities have been identified.



Traffic jams caused by wildlife viewing can increase the potential for wildlife habituation and make it difficult for visitors at the back of the jam to view animals or get to where they need to go. Parks Canada has park staff dedicated to managing wildlife viewing opportunities and communicates wildlife information in many different ways (e.g. through brochures, on-line), but not all visitors are receiving or heeding this information.

New Actions

Caribou

Two new actions have been proposed to address threats facing caribou in the Maligne Valley. With the release of the final federal *Recovery Strategy for Woodland Caribou, Southern Mountain Populations*, Parks Canada is re-evaluating these actions to ensure they meet the obligations of both the *Recovery Strategy* and critical habitat protection under the *Species at Risk Act*. These actions, in addition to existing initiatives, aim to reduce or eliminate all five threats to caribou. Current actions include road signs in the valley to reduce the risk of collision by reminding visitors to follow the 60 km/h speed limit and fire plans that account for caribou habitat requirements.



In brief, the proposed actions are to:

- **Manage winter recreational access to critical caribou habitat** in the Maligne Valley to make it harder for wolves to travel into critical habitat
- **Consider the Maligne Herd** as a candidate herd for augmentation, bringing in caribou bred in captivity—this will lessen the risk that the entire herd will be impacted by a random event like an avalanche or predation

Further details on these actions will be made available as they are confirmed.

The Parks Canada led *Conservation Strategy for Southern Mountain Caribou in Canada's National Parks* (2011) has guided management decisions in Jasper National Park since its completion in 2011. Under the auspices of the *Conservation Strategy*, Parks Canada finalized decisions regarding winter recreational access to caribou habitat in several areas of Jasper National Park (e.g. Tonquin Valley) in 2013. At the same time, Parks Canada began evaluating similar actions to better protect caribou in the Maligne Valley as part of the Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy.

The 2014 *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Southern Mountain population (Rangifer tarandus caribou) in Canada* (June 2014) identifies activities likely to result in the destruction of critical habitat, including facilitated predator access. Parks Canada is now re-evaluating the actions developed for the Maligne Valley to reduce predator access to ensure they meet our legal obligations under the *Recovery Strategy* and *Species-at-Risk Act*. Details on this action will be made available once this evaluation is complete.

Despite attempts to improve conditions for caribou in the mid-2000's, the Maligne caribou herd has continued to decline. The herd is now so small that it is not expected to survive without the translocation of caribou from an outside source. Herd augmentation has been identified in the federal *Recovery Strategy* as a viable management tool to address the threat of small population size. Parks Canada is working with partners to determine how best to carry out a proposed caribou captive breeding and herd augmentation program. A captive breeding centre will be established at an animal care institution outside of the park, and will provide source animals for Southern Mountain caribou herds that are in need of a boost in numbers. The Maligne Valley would likely be considered for augmentation given the intact habitat, low number of caribou, and the potential to manage threats to the population.





Grizzly Bears

Several actions are proposed to improve the situation for grizzly bears, by lessening displacement of bears from important habitats, making wildlife movement through pinch points easier, and reducing bear habituation and the risk of surprise encounters between bears and people:

- **Adjust trails and wilderness campgrounds** in some areas to reduce the risk of bear-human conflicts (e.g. trail brushing south of Evelyn Creek so that it is less likely that hikers will bump into bears at close quarters, relocating several campsites at Fisherman's Bay away from an area that bears frequently move through).
- Post a **permanent bear warning for Opal Hills** – hikers can ensure their safety and give bears the space they need by carrying bear spray, travelling in groups of four or more, and avoiding the trail in early morning and evening
- **Remove obsolete facilities from pinch points**—the facilities we have identified are Beaver Creek Patrol Cabin, Beaver Creek Public Horse Corrals, Maligne Lake Public Horse Corrals and Parks Canada pasture, and the Scout Camp (adjacent to the Bald Hills road).



Wildlife Viewing

The following actions would make use of existing programs, and new printed materials and signs in the Maligne Valley to deliver better wildlife information to visitors and promote appropriate wildlife viewing behaviours by:

- Incorporating information about **wildlife viewing etiquette** in new interpretive media and orientation materials (e.g. valley brochure).
- Maintaining or expanding the **Wildlife Guardian program** (e.g. lengthening the season, currently from June to August, partnering with an interested Aboriginal community to provide more Wildlife Guardians in the valley)
- Look at **techniques to make the program more effective** (e.g. using a shortwave radio to broadcast wildlife messages to cars as they arrive at wildlife jams).



Strengthening Aboriginal Relationships

Current Situation

Over 20 Aboriginal communities have historic ties to Jasper National Park; some of them also have connections to the Maligne Valley. Several Aboriginal communities have identified cultural areas and activities within the valley, mainly at its north end, and it is likely that Aboriginal people harvested in the area from time to time.

Challenges and Opportunities

Although the story of Samson Beaver and Mary Schaeffer is well-known, our knowledge of past Aboriginal use of the valley is limited. There is an opportunity to celebrate historic ties and, in some cases, reconnect Aboriginal communities with the Maligne Valley, and to collaborate with communities in stewarding the valley and welcoming visitors to a landscape that is part of their heritage and identity.



New Actions

A number of proposed actions have been mentioned in previous sections:

- Exploring opportunities to **share Aboriginal stories or cultural practices** and incorporate **Aboriginal language** into interpretive media
- Partnering with an interested Aboriginal community to enhance delivery of the Wildlife Guardians program.

Additionally, we would also like to **improve our knowledge of traditional use of the valley**. This would involve working with interested communities or organizations to gather more information.



Managing Growth and Development

Current Situation

Many different commercial operators, non-profit organizations and individuals deliver programs and services to promote public appreciation and understanding of the Maligne Valley, and to protect its cultural and natural resources. While Parks Canada provides the majority of facilities and infrastructure in the valley, some organizations, such as Maligne Tours and Hostelling International, provide major visitor facilities as well.

Parks Canada uses a variety of legal and policy instruments to manage commercial and non-commercial facilities and activities in the Maligne Valley, including: the park management plan and land use zoning, leases and licenses, regulations, directives and guidelines, such as the guidelines for the redevelopment of outlying commercial accommodations. We manage large areas of the valley for a spectrum of wilderness experiences requiring minimal or no facilities, and for low to moderate levels of human use, in order to maintain ecological integrity.

Several environmental stewardship initiatives have been implemented in the recent past, such as recycling at the Maligne Lake Day Use Area. Parks Canada's station at Maligne Lake now operates on a sophisticated solar power system, eliminating use of a fossil fuel generator except for emergency back-up.

Challenges and Opportunities

There are many opportunities for Parks Canada and third parties to reduce the environmental impacts of their operations in the valley, expand stewardship initiatives and showcase stewardship efforts to the public.

Maligne Tours approached Parks Canada in 2012 with several ideas for redeveloping their facilities and operations at the north end of Maligne Lake. In early 2013, Parks Canada provided guidance to Maligne Tours to prepare and submit a conceptual redevelopment proposal for consideration, with opportunities for public and Aboriginal review and comment, concurrent with the development of the Maligne Valley Implementation Strategy.

Maligne Tours conducted a program of public and Aboriginal engagement in support of their proposal in fall 2013. Parks Canada announced the results of decision-making about Maligne Tours' conceptual proposal in July 2014.



Parks Canada accepted 13 of the 14 proposal elements, including tent cabins, specialized boat tours, a wildlife-themed children's maze, storytelling programs and exhibits, for further



consideration. Parks Canada determined that the heritage-themed roofed accommodation would not proceed for further consideration.

Should Maligne Tours decide to advance all or some of the approved elements, the elements will enter the development review process, with requirements for design-level plans, environmental assessment, and further opportunities for public and Aboriginal review and comment regarding the environmental assessment. Advancing the concept of tent cabins for more detailed review would require a management plan amendment to allow for release of the necessary lands.

New Actions

Parks Canada is proposing to:

- **Work with Maligne Tours to update their visitor facilities and operations** at Maligne Lake, while ensuring all facilities, activities and services are consistent with Parks Canada's legislative and policy framework, meet objectives or criteria set out in the management plan, complement the valley's wilderness setting and contribute to learning and experiential outcomes.
- Encourage valley operators to **develop environmental stewardship strategies** for their facilities and operations. An environmental stewardship strategy can cover a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, sewage treatment, night-time lighting, noise reduction and solid waste management and identifies actions or strategies to reduce a facility's environmental footprint.
- **Restore a wetland at Beaver Lake.** A small dam was installed decades ago at the outlet of Beaver Lake to raise the water level when the lake was stocked for fishing. Removing the dam would restore the lake levels to their historic condition (a sedge fen surrounding a small pond and creek). This would in turn create more moose, songbird and amphibian habitat, and could improve fish spawning and movement.
- **Expand the recycling program** from the Maligne Lake Day Use Area and Maligne Canyon First Parking Lot to other day use areas in the valley.
- Look at ways to **improve human waste management** in wilderness areas of the valley. There are numerous new technologies that we could investigate, such as urine and black water separation and composting toilets.



Other Potential Future Actions

There are a few other potential actions we might look at in the future, depending on the results of implementation of the actions described in the preceding pages of this discussion paper. Although we are not proposing these actions at this time, we are interested in your feedback about the potential benefits and impacts of these ideas.

Once campsites have been moved from Evelyn Creek and Watchtower campgrounds to Tekarra, Curator and/or Snowbowl, Parks Canada could evaluate the following actions to determine their potential benefits, drawbacks and feasibility:

- **Adding cook or poor weather shelters to campgrounds on the Skyline Trail.**

Weather on the Skyline Trail can be unpredictable. Shelters can increase visitor safety, concentrate visitor impacts and appeal to some of the visitors we are trying to reach.

- **Relocating Snowbowl Campground to a higher, drier area.**

Snowbowl Campground is currently located in a wet, buggy area. Moving it to a higher, drier area could improve the visitor experience and reduce impacts on soil and vegetation.



- **Increasing the number of campsites at Fisherman's Bay and Coronet Creek campgrounds or establishing a fourth boat-accessible campground on the lake.**

Fisherman's Bay and Coronet Creek are both popular campgrounds that are frequently fully booked. Visitors would likely welcome greater accessibility, as long as it does not impact the wilderness experience or ecological integrity.

Several new actions are proposed in this strategy to improve habitat security for grizzly bears and reduce the potential for habituation and bear-human conflict. Two other actions that Parks Canada might consider in future, depending on the results of implementation of the actions proposed on p. 13, are:

- **Explore ways to make human activity more predictable for bears in and around the Maligne Day Use Area.**

We can make human activity more predictable in a number of ways: through design (e.g. adjusting trails, introducing mass transit), education (voluntary timing restrictions) or enforcement (e.g. mandatory seasonal closures).



- **Experiment with thinning small treed areas in two to three locations along the Maligne Lake Road to increase distances between bears and people.**

We would monitor results to determine if this kind of approach is effective in terms of increasing the distance between bears and the road, while improving wildlife viewing opportunities (bears will be easier to see in the thinned areas).