



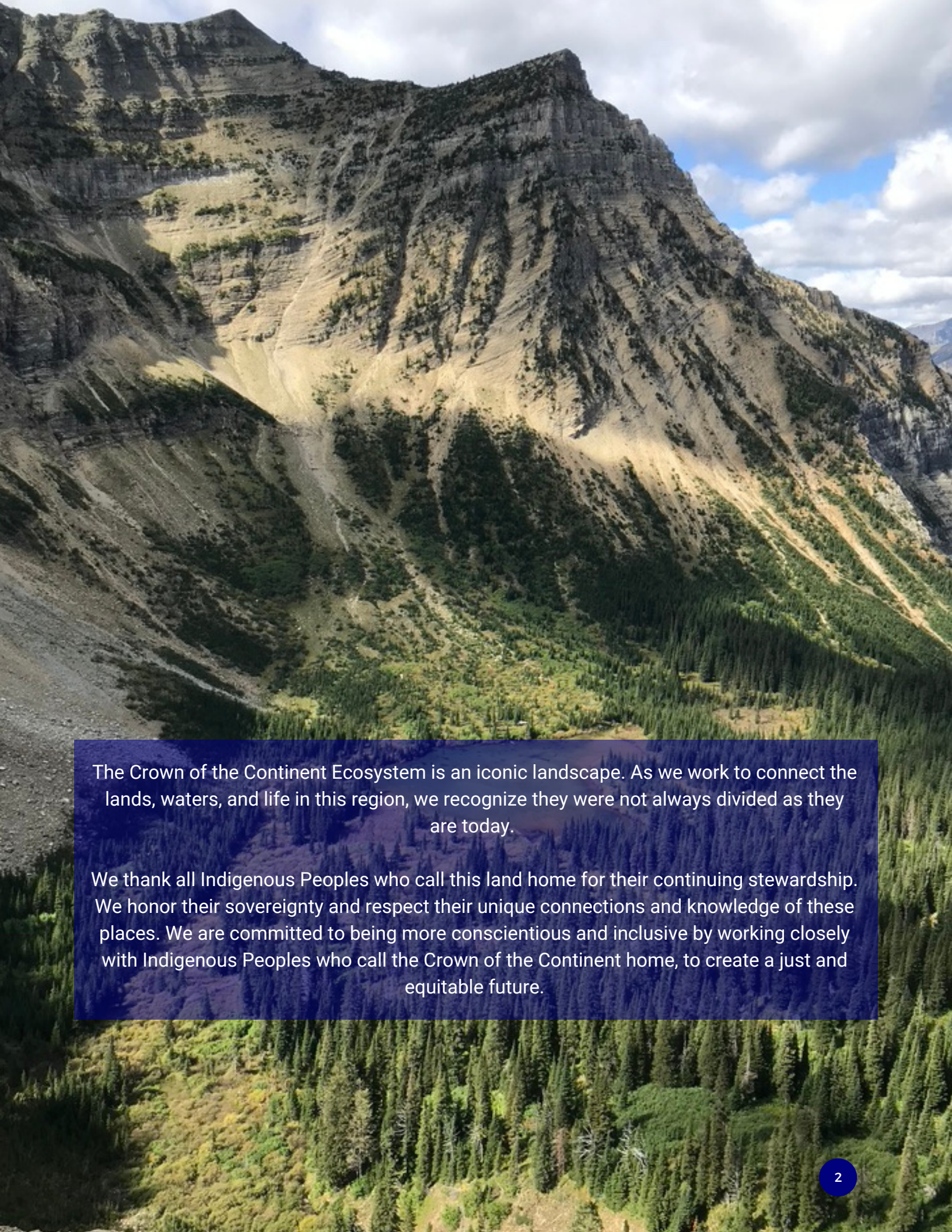
CROWN MANAGERS
PARTNERSHIP PRESENTS

RECREATION IN THE CROWN OF THE CONTINENT: EXPLORING TRENDS AND STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

MARCH 8TH - 11TH, 2022



Forum Report



The Crown of the Continent Ecosystem is an iconic landscape. As we work to connect the lands, waters, and life in this region, we recognize they were not always divided as they are today.

We thank all Indigenous Peoples who call this land home for their continuing stewardship. We honor their sovereignty and respect their unique connections and knowledge of these places. We are committed to being more conscientious and inclusive by working closely with Indigenous Peoples who call the Crown of the Continent home, to create a just and equitable future.

About the Crown Managers Partnership

The Crown Managers Partnership (CMP) is a voluntary group comprised of federal, state, provincial, Tribal, and First Nation land and resource managers and universities in Montana, Alberta, and British Columbia. We recognize that no single agency has the mandate or resources to wholly address common ecological challenges throughout the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem. We therefore work together across borders to tackle shared ecological challenges and priorities.

Poised to embark on our third decade of collaborative stewardship, the CMP continues to foster collective, landscape-scale management guided by science and culture. We are inspired by the understanding that water, fish, and wildlife do not recognize borders, and that shared resources require shared management. Also, that Americans, Canadians, and sovereign Indigenous nations can work together to conserve this shared landscape for generations to come.

2022 Recreation Forum Objectives

- Understand the causes and drivers of changes in recreation trends in the Crown, such as climate change, the pandemic, and new technology.
- Examine the ecological and economic changes that new recreation trends bring to local communities and consider how these changes are perceived and experienced by residents.
- Gain understanding of impacts to cultural resources and learn from Tribes and First Nations on how to best manage culturally significant areas.
- Learn about innovative solutions and ideas to respond to changing use, patterns, and types of recreation.
- Create a learning network, where planners, managers, and researchers from across the Crown can share knowledge and resources with one another.





AGENDA OVERVIEW

MARCH 8TH | DAY 1

Recreational trends across the Crown of the Continent: An Introduction

MARCH 9TH | DAY 2

Impacts – both positive and negative – of changing recreation trends on local residents and Indigenous communities in the Crown

MARCH 10TH | DAY 3

Understanding local economic shifts that accompany new recreational trends and lessons learned/ best practices for more equitable land access.

MARCH 11TH | DAY 4

Strategies for recreation management in the Crown of the Continent

About the Forum

The 2022 Forum, Recreation in the Crown of the Continent, was held virtually over four days from March 8-11, 2022. Over 100 registrants from 50 different organizations attended a variety of presentations, panel discussions and interactive sessions. Attendees zoomed in from across the geographic extent of the Crown and beyond.

Thank you!

Thank you to the CMP's Forum Planning Team for their hard working putting together an excellent line up of speakers, panels, and interactive sessions to share knowledge on recreation in the Crown. This Forum would not have been possible without you.

Thank you, also, to our absolutely fantastic speakers and moderators who shared their time and knowledge with us all.

Thank you to the Miistakis Institute for facilitating the forum.

Lastly, thank you to all the attendees for making the forum dynamic and fun! The word cloud below was generated from all participants entering the place they joined the Forum from.



FORUM PLANNING TEAM

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US Forest Service

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The Wilderness Society

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JENNIFER THOMSEN

University of Montana

KATE WILSON

Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation

DAY 1

MARCH 8

During the first day of the forum, we examined trends in recreational use from the perspective of Tribes and First Nations, land management agencies, commercial outfitters and recreational groups. We explored emerging issues, challenges and opportunities in recreational trends across the Crown that formed the foundation for our discussions in subsequent days of the forum.

Links to each presentation recording can be found at:
www.crownmanagers.org/2022-forum-recreation

Opening of the forum

JOHN MCKENZIE

CMP Co-Chair, Waterton Lakes National Park

More people, generations and management: Forces that will affect Waterton-Glacier's visitation

WAYNE FREIMUND

Utah State University

Limits of Acceptable Change in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

FOREST MOULTON

US Forest Service

PANEL: Overview of Trends, Visitation, and Management Objectives from Land Managers' Perspectives

Moderator: **Jenn Thomsen**, University of Montana

Brad Jones, Alberta Environment & Parks

Locke Marshall, Waterton Lakes National Park

Dan McClure, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

Chris Prew, US Forest Service

Jeremy Sage, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research

Mary Riddle, Glacier National Park (retired)

PANEL: Overview of Trends, Visitation, and Management from Industry & User Perspectives

Moderator: **Mike Muñoz**, CMP Steering Committee Member, US Forest Service

Maggie Carr, Dropstone Outfitting

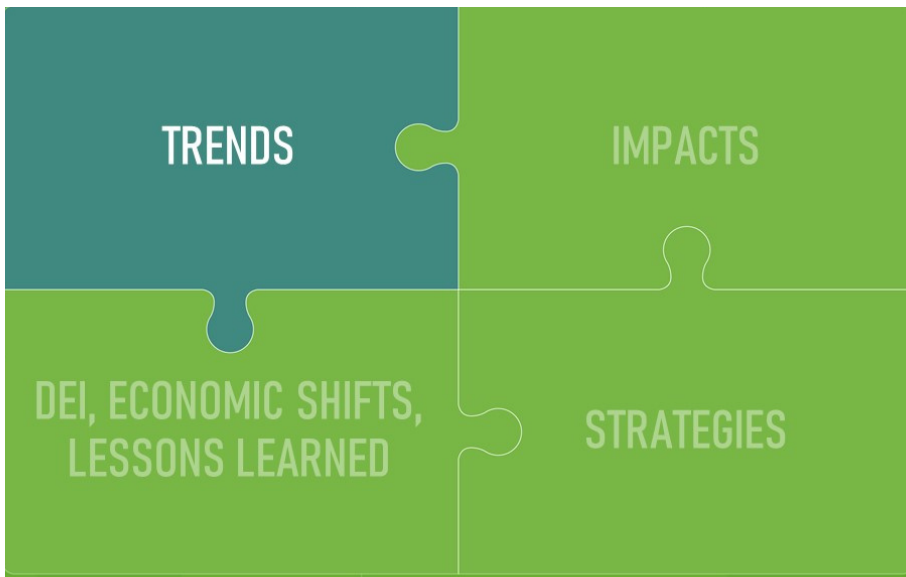
Jason Crawford, Castle Mountain Resort

Amanda Goodhue, United Riders of Crowsnest Club

Brad Harrison, Backcountry Lodges of BC Association

Bill Hodge, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation

Jack Rich, Rich Ranch



Recreational trends in one word is 'more'

Change is the only constant

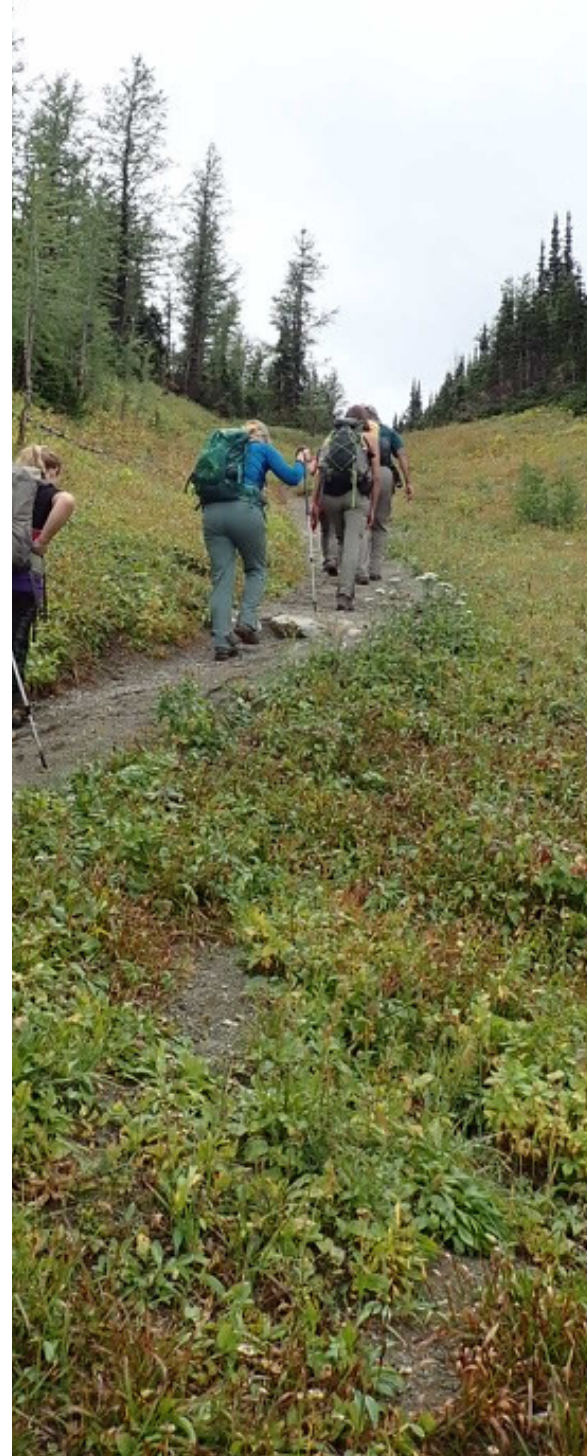
Some places are reaching their "experiential-capacity"

To sum up recreational trends in one word is 'more.' More users, more types of recreation, more technology, more garbage, more traffic, more opportunities to manage recreation thoughtfully.

Speakers reminded us that mixed-use landscapes are complex and tensions can arise, but the primary objective of protected areas/public lands is to protect the resource itself - that's why recreation management is so important.

We heard about the importance of 'framing a new normal' to address different kinds of people seeking different kinds of recreation, resulting in different types of behaviors. There is a need to change the way we manage recreation as recreation itself evolves. A visitor's experience is a driving force, with many places being close to their "experiential-capacity" due to increased use. We were reminded that the great outdoors will only be relevant as long as those accessing it find it relevant. There is also a concern that people are no longer making connections to the land on which they recreate - there is a need to go back to the basics of how to respect and nurture our public lands (e.g. traffic, crowding, litter).

Change is the only constant. How we manage is changing - there is a new era of transportation, communication and lifestyle choice. The way we manage our different recreation areas needs to be considered regionally coupled with appropriate planning.



DAY 2

MARCH 9

On the second day we examined the ecological changes that new recreation trends bring to local communities and considered how these changes are perceived and experienced by residents. We gained an understanding of impacts to cultural resources and learned from Tribes and First Nations on how to best manage culturally significant areas. During our closing panel, we learned how the Crown Managers Partnership conservation priorities (a set of ecological priorities that are shared and agreed upon by agency/government land managers across the Crown) are affected by recreation trends.

Links to each presentation recording can be found at:
www.crownmanagers.org/2022-forum-recreation

Welcome of the Day

LINH HOANG

CMP Co-Chair, US Forest Service

PANEL: Impacts to Cultural Resources

Moderator: **Mike Durglo**, CMP Steering Committee Member,
Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

Mark Bodily, US Forest Service

John Murray, The Blackfoot Nation

Mike Oka, The Blood Tribe

PANEL: Recreation Impact to Ecological Resources

Moderator: **Anne Carlson**, CMP Steering Committee Member, The
Wilderness Society

Terrestrial Invasive Species, **Kelly Cooley**, CoolPro Solutions
Wildlife & Connectivity, **Kaitlyn Gaynor**, University of British Columbia

Native Salmonids, **Craig Johnson**, Alberta Environment and Parks

Fire, **Libby Metcalf**, University of Montana

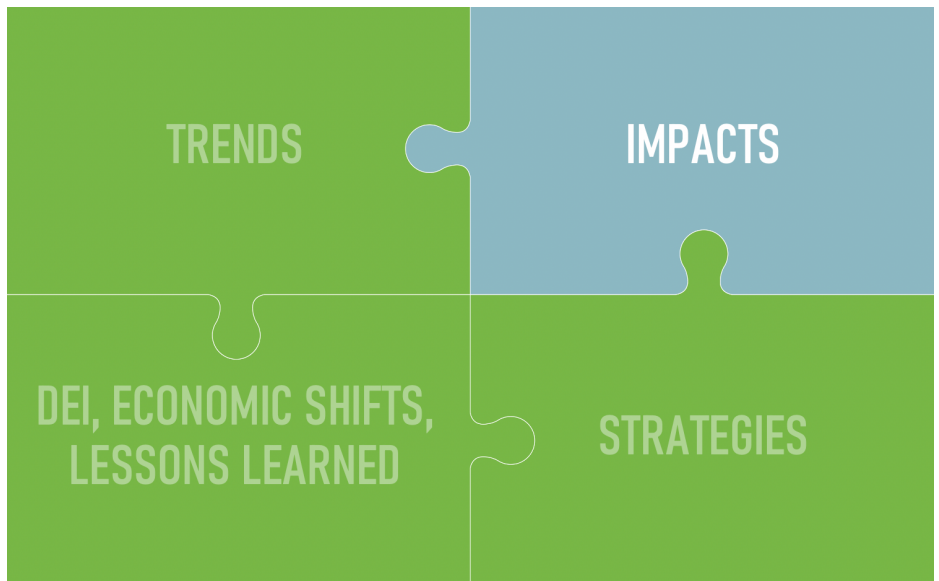
Aquatic Invasive Species, **Nanette Nelson**, Flathead Lake Biological
Station



Tribes and First Nations are the original stewards of the land

Everyone is part of the issue, and everyone is part of the solution

Photo credit: Daily Inter Lake, Sept. 8, 2021



In our cultural resources panel we were reminded that Tribes and First Nations are the original stewards of this land. Each Tribe or First Nation is different, with specialized knowledge and expertise. We learned that language is critical to understanding many Indigenous cultures and language must be included in education and communications materials, along with the messaging of *why* the cultural resource is important. There are cultural resources on the landscape that hold significant value to many Tribes and First Nations and public access to all areas is not appropriate. One key challenge is appropriate consultation with Tribes and First Nations as Indigenous ways of knowing do not fit into western consultation approaches and management planning. When undertaking recreational management planning we must include all Tribes and First Nations at the start of the process, and work with them together to create management plans that consider the ancestors and the future 7 generations - we must consider how to keep spirit-land connections intact.

The second panel explored how recreation impacts ecological resources and how fire impacts recreation. With increased recreation, there are increased impacts to ecological resources, however, there is no "one size fits all" approach to mitigating the compounding recreational impacts to our ecological resources. Each landscape and species must be considered at the individual level and as part of a connected system. Wildfire is a unique ecological consideration as it isn't as greatly impacted by recreation, yet it can have dramatic positive and negative impacts to recreation.

A common theme is the importance of communications at all levels: local, regional and international dialogues. Communications need to come from the top down, regional alignment of messaging, and from the bottom up, meeting people on the landscape, where they are recreating to build positive relationships of mutual respect. We heard clearly that "everyone is part of the issue and everyone is part of the solution."

DAY 3

MARCH 10

On the third day we examined the economic changes that new recreation trends bring to local communities and considered how these changes are perceived and experienced by residents. We also learned how to be more inclusive in the ways that lands and amenities are managed to allow equitable access for all. The final speaker primed us for the final day of the Forum by sharing recreation management lessons learned. A poster session featured the work of experts on the topic of recreation in the Crown. Finally, the day ended with an interactive session where small teams built a recreation network.

Links to each presentation recording can be found at:

www.crownmanagers.org/2022-forum-recreation

Welcome of the Day

SEAN FINN

CMP Steering Committee Member, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Outdoor Recreation: Issues and Innovative Approaches

JACLYN RUSHING

University of Montana

Trends, Opportunities, and Challenges with Outdoor Recreation Economies

MEGAN LAWSON

Headwaters Economics

Recreation in Rural Communities: Connecting Economy and Main Street

STEPHANIE BERTAINA

US Environmental Protection Agency

RAY BROWN

Thompson Falls

Some Lessons Learned in the field of Recreation Management that Apply to the Crown of the Continent

STEVE MCCOOL

US Forest Service

POSTER SESSION

Trends in River Recreation:

Community Role in Stewardship of the Flathead River System

SHEENA PATE

Flathead Rivers Alliance

Building the High Rock Trail

KELLY MCDONALD

The Great Divide Trail Association

Interactive Session: Build a Recreation Network

SARAH ELMELIGI & PEGGY HOLROYD

Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society & Alberta Environment and Parks

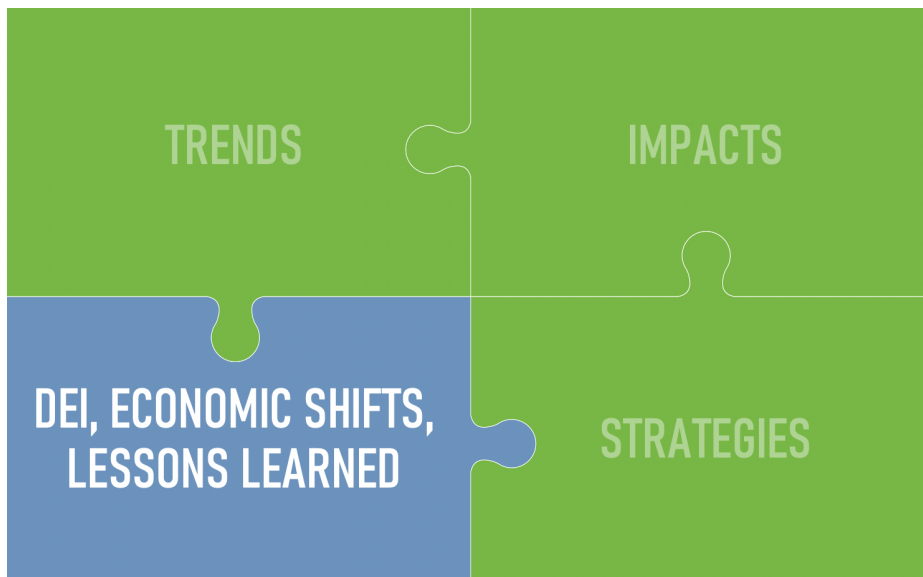
We started day three of the Forum exploring the importance of addressing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in outdoor recreation. There is a movement for DEI in the outdoors, and many great initiatives were highlighted. We learned that we need to be intentional in supporting and identifying new partners as well as intentional in our hiring - diversity is an outcome of intention.

We also discussed outdoor recreation economies. Outdoor recreation economy is more than just tourism. We heard that successful recreation economies need: fiscal policy, appropriate housing, measured infrastructure expansion, including growth for trails, and conservation of ecologically important areas. This does not happen WELL by accident - this was highlighted by a case study on the Recreation Economy for Rural Communities program and it's application in Thompson Falls. We continued to see a key theme, highlighting the importance of engaging and building support with all stakeholders (including the community) early in the recreational and economic planning processes.

We then took a step back to really consider the various level of recreation management: react to what's happening, anticipate what will happen, design/plan for desired experiences, and examine/reflect on fundamental assumptions. When we dive deeper we are able to see we are dealing with a system, we think differently - from developing knowledge to understanding how parts work together and we are able to act holistically.

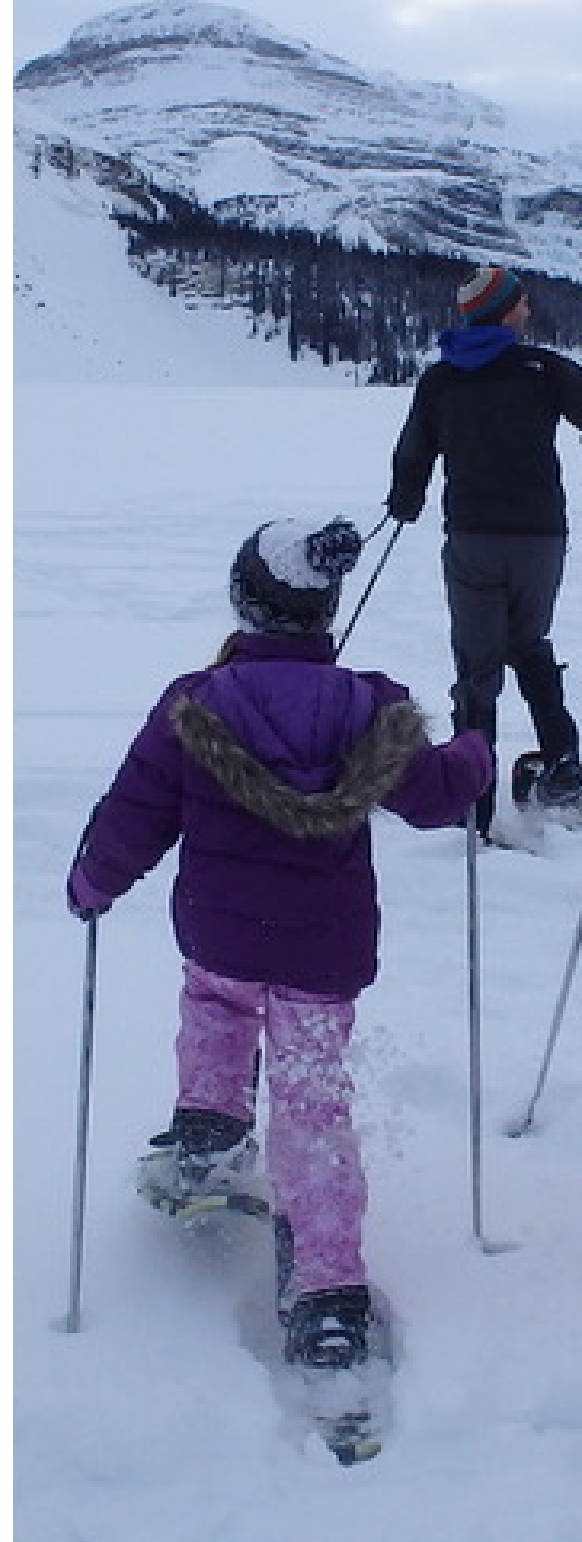
A poster session allowed us to explore the role of community in recreation in the Flathead River system as well as building the High Rock Trail along the Great Divide.

To cap off the day, an interactive session walked 16 participants through a scenario where each team built a recreation network at a local level. This session highlighted the complexity of managing multi-use landscapes.



Inclusion in recreation means that everyone is not just invited to the party but needs to be asked to help plan the party.

Diversity and recreation economies are both outcomes of intention



DAY 4

MARCH 11

On our final day, as we reflected on the ecological, cultural and economic factors of recreation that affect communities and landscapes in the Crown, we shared lessons learned and innovative strategies for sustainable recreation management. The day ended with the second interactive session where all participated in scenario planning of recreation networks.

Links to each presentation recording can be found at:
www.crownmanagers.org/2022-forum-recreation

Welcome of the Day

MIKE MUÑOZ

CMP Steering Committee Member, US Forest Service

Evaluation of the Equity of Reservation Systems on Federal Public Lands

WILL RICE AND JENN THOMSEN

University of Montana

*Engaging mountain visitors in climate change action:
How to talk about climate change with Crown of the Continent visitors*

DR. ELIZABETH HALPENNY

University of Alberta

An Interagency Approach to Visitor Use Management

RACHEL COLLINS

Interagency Visitor Use Management Council

MAUREEN FINNERTY

National Park Service

Glacier Ticketed Entry

PETE WEBSTER

Glacier National Park

Developing and Implementing a Recreation Strategy for the Kootenai Reservoir area in BC

JEFF ZUKIWSKY

Kootenai Recreation Steering Committee

Alberta's Crown Land Vision: building a Trails Act and framework for outdoor recreation

AMANDA HALAWELL

Alberta Environment and Parks

Recreation trends, challenges, and opportunities in the 3 Forks of the Flathead Wild and Scenic River

COLTER PENCE

US Forest Service

Interactive Session: Recreation Scenario Planning

SARAH ELMELIGI

Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society

PEGGY HOLROYD

Alberta Environment & Parks

Closing of the Forum - Thank you

LINH HOANG

CMP Steering Committee Co-chair, US Forest Service

Big data can be used to inform recreation management

There are opportunities to support climate action by visitors to the Crown

Recreation management planning presents challenges and opportunities but there are many tools that can help



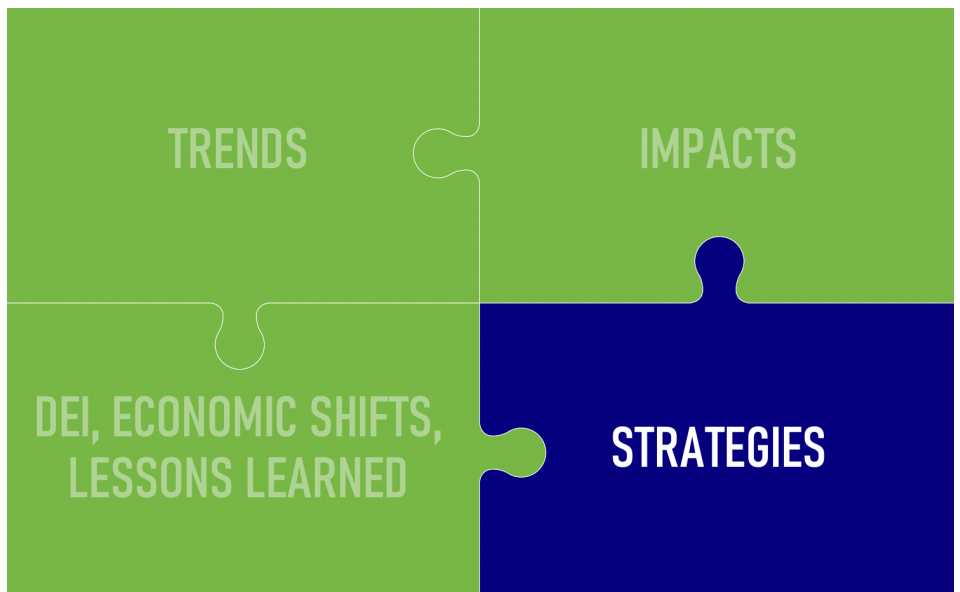
The fourth day was filled with a diversity of presentations and concluded with part two of the interactive recreation planning sessions. We started the day discussing research that shows that more and more people are camping. Camping provides a big economic contribution, it's becoming more ethnically diverse and increasing in popularity, however there are challenges with reservation systems in campgrounds that research has shown to be exclusive.

We heard about explorations of how to engage visitors in climate change action – how to support visitors who are ready to take action – there are lessons for all of us in how to improve messaging.

We learned about the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council's Visitor Use Management Framework and all the different actions that make up that iterative process to enhance visitor use and natural resource protection. We also heard about two different recreation management approaches to address random camping and trail use in both British Columbia and Alberta that have led to recognition of recreation and trails as a valued use of public lands.

We discussed additional strategies for addressing recreation management including ticketed entry in Glacier and have seen how this has shifted visitor temporal use and reduced peak use times and introduced some challenges as well. Linking back to the value of ecological resources, we heard that healthy rivers are also an important part of recreation management and should be preserved and enhanced when possible.

We concluded with the final interactive recreation scenario planning session, which allowed participants to be creative together and explore recreation planning, challenges, opportunities, and trade-offs on a landscape scale, expanding from day three's local scale session.



TRENDS

IMPACTS

DEI, ECONOMIC SHIFTS,
LESSONS LEARNED

STRATEGIES

FORUM

WHAT WE HEARD

Five themes emerged from the forum presentations and discussions. Forum participants generally agreed that these five themes are valuable considerations for Recreation Management now and into the future.

Importance of intentional engagement with Tribes / First Nations

Supporting Indigenous-led recreation is of utmost importance, including intentional engagement in planning processes and respecting the membership's land use and sacred spaces.

Change

Change is happening with respect to recreation - more people, different demographics of people, different behaviours, new types of recreation, and changes in lifestyle choices, all resulting in need for different management and planning approaches. Change is the only constant.

Technology

Technology is a real driving force with both positive and negative impacts. It offers advances for communications (e.g., management of popular destinations) but provides increased access to previously unknown areas. It can also support visitor research with increasing opportunities to use big data.

Communications

Communications must be culturally appropriate, promote appropriate use of lands, and help form place-based connections to the landscape. Communications must happen broadly at the regional or international level as well as locally, meeting and talking to people where they recreate.

Holistic approaches

Management, planning and communications must fundamentally include all stakeholders. It is important to integrate different planning processes - fiscal policy, appropriate housing, measured infrastructure expansion, growth for trails, conservation of ecologically important areas.



RECREATION STRATEGIES FOR THE CROWN

Four key recreation management strategies arose from the forum. These strategies can be applied across the Crown of the Continent, within a manager's own jurisdictions; among some land managers; or as a whole of the CCE. Advancing these strategies will need the leadership and support from multiple stakeholders and managers, as well as sharing resources and opportunities among interested parties.

Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

There is a movement for DEI in recreation. Managers and stakeholders can play a role in advancing this. Diversity is an outcome of intention - we need to be intentional in supporting partners and identifying new partners, and intentional in our hiring. Managers and stakeholders can play a role in establishing relationships with emerging outdoor DEI groups and influencers as well as increase the use of multiple languages in communication materials.

Tactical Opportunities: consider future CMP topic of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on the landscape; Work towards meaningful employment and leadership roles for underrepresented communities within Parks and Public Lands

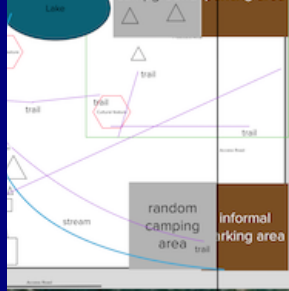
Advancing First Nations and Tribal engagement

Across the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem and within each individual agency/organization there is opportunity to advance First Nations and Tribal engagement in recreation planning. Relationships can be built with Tribes and First Nations in a variety of ways.

Tactical Opportunities:

- Involve all Tribes and First Nations in all stewardship of recreation management activities - each Tribe/First Nation is different and has specialized knowledge and expertise
- Work towards meaningful employment and leadership roles for Tribal/First Nation's members within Parks and Public Lands - this is one of the most important and effective ways to bridge cultures, and it directly benefits all - the organization's culture, the individual hired, the visitors, etc.
- Work with Tribes/First Nations in developing education and communications materials about cultural information including:
 - Site protection and etiquette
 - Educate on *why* specific sites and cultural resources are important
 - Educational materials would reflect Tribal/First Nations perspectives. General education can be done without revealing specific site locations or confidential Tribal/First Nations information.
 - Increase use of Indigenous languages on signage
 - Include Tribal and First Nations conservation messaging in a highly visible part of agency/organization websites
- Consider future CMP forum topic of Advancing First Nations and Tribal engagement

RECREATION STRATEGIES FOR THE CROWN



Advancing partnerships for holistic recreational planning

There is a need for land management agencies to have individual and collective visions/desired future conditions for recreation and recreational development in the Crown. This would result in proactive responses to commercial proposals or current visitation pressures and decisions that lead to desired outcomes already identified. The [Interagency Visitor Use Council](#) has a number of guidebooks to help with this in recreation/trail planning.

Tactical Opportunities:

- Mapping of recreational connectivity, including patterns and displacement
- Mapping of wildlife connectivity and invasive species in relation to recreational mapping
- Share and adopt approaches that are working elsewhere
- Intentionally building economic and community planning alongside recreational planning - for support and sustainability of a successful recreation economy
- Investigate mechanisms to fund land agencies – taxes on certain items/activities. Pay-to-play?
- Explore opportunities to link health funding to outdoor recreation, as seen with the BC Parks Foundation's Parks Rx initiative for health practitioners to prescribe access to the outdoors in the form of a park pass to National Parks

Coordinate consistent messaging

Reflective of the vision, consistent messaging allows for efficiencies and mitigates some of the 'overflow' effect where rules limit users in one area and lead to overflow in another. Consistent messaging will also increase the level of education of new users as they will be exposed to the same conservation/safety messaging multiple times in different locations.

Tactical Opportunities:

- Management organizations reach out to equipment retailers and manufacturers as well as mobile app-makers to convey recreational messaging
- Continue multi-jurisdictional conversations around invasive species management
- Promote the use of existing campaigns where possible, such as the "Play, Clean, Go" campaign for invasive species



INFORMATION NEEDS

Forum participants identified additional information gaps that would assist with recreation management planning.

Wildlife

Monitor direct response of wildlife to recreation to acquire baseline data.

Camping Use Data

Collect information on:

- Campground reservations and how it relates to DEI.
- Uses and trend of campgrounds adjacent to National Parks
- Explore how campground data is used to inform management decisions for camping

Social Science

- National Park Visitor Use - demographics, what apps are they using, what type of recreation are they partaking in, etc. This research can be conducted in a variety of ways including using phone location data or location data from phone Apps (e.g., strava).
- Barriers to certain audiences participating in certain activities, and how to overcome these barriers

Climate Change

- Impacts of climate change on the recreation sector
- Wildfire changes how people use the landscape – it displaces people – this needs to be better understood to understand impacts to recreation.

Interested in learning more about the Crown Managers Partnership?

Recognizing that no single agency has the mandate or resources to address regional environmental issues, the Crown Managers Partnership (CMP) formed in 2001. The CMP is a voluntary partnership amongst federal, state, provincial, Tribal and First Nation agency managers and universities in Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana. We are a community of practitioners that collaborate on common issues, share resources, & exchange knowledge.

Our current shared conservation priorities include five needle pines, fire on the landscape, invasive species, native salmonids, watershed integrity, forest carnivores, and fish and wildlife habitat connectivity. Any experts are welcome to join our working groups - we are a coalition of the willing!

To learn more about the work that we do, check out our [website](#) and our [2021-2025 Strategic Framework!](#)

OUR STEERING COMMITTEE

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Montana DNRC

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