



2005 Parks Forum Final Report

*2005 Parks Forum Parks, Landscapes
And Open Spaces: A New Tomorrow*

June 2005



Recreation for Life

ARPA is a provincial charitable not-for profit organization with a voluntary board of directors dedicated to the promotion of recreation and parks and their benefits to the quality of life of all Albertans.

Our Vision...

"A province, and communities within, that embrace and proactively use recreation and parks as essential means for enhancing individual well-being and community vitality, economic sustainability and natural resource protection and conservation."

Our mission...

ARPA strives to build healthy citizens, their communities and their environments throughout Alberta.

For more information on ARPA, our programs or services or the benefits of recreation and parks please visit our website at <http://www.arpaonline.ca>.

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Forum Coordinator

Introduction

ARPA demonstrated proactive leadership in the field of Parks and Outdoor Recreation by successfully facilitating the 2005 Parks Forum in Canmore, Alberta, March 17-19, 2005. The Forum attracted a broad cross section of participants from Alberta's three major park providers (Municipal, Provincial, and National) as well as a variety of key partners, educators and students.

Background and Purpose

In May 2002 one of the "emerging visions" from ARPA's VISION 2015 SYMPOSIUM related to outdoor recreation and parks was "Urban and Rural parks and protected areas fully represent Alberta's natural ecosystem, heritage sites, working landscapes and recreational opportunities." One of the starting points listed as a necessary action to achieve this positive outcome was the "Need to work with partners." Before the 2005 Parks Forum there had been no mechanism in place to bring together parks practitioners in Alberta and their partners from across the province, to share their experience and knowledge.

The concept of a Parks Forum was proposed as just such a mechanism, which could reoccur on a biannual basis, with one or two day workshops during the intervening years, that would focus on one or more parks related topics or issues.

At the July 15, 2004 meeting of the ARPA Executive Committee, a motion was approved to initiate "development and hosting" of the 2005 Parks Forum.

Objectives

Within the context of its broadly encompassing and forward looking theme, PARKS, LANDSCAPES and OPEN SPACES: A NEW TOMORROW, the following four objectives were established to guide planning and organization of the 2005 Parks Forum:

1. Participation from a broad cross section of representatives from municipal, provincial and national parks in Alberta as well as their key partners and stakeholders throughout the province.
2. To develop ideas, concepts and proposals for interaction and collaboration on issues and initiatives of common concern and interest.
3. To provide educational and development opportunities that could include the exchange of views, sharing of experiences and learning of different approaches to planning and managing parks in Alberta.
4. To celebrate parks in Alberta and strategize ways in which they can continue as major contributors to the quality of life for Albertans and their visitors.

Planning and Co-ordination

Planning for the 2005 Parks Forum was led by the Forum Coordinator, ably supported by both a Forum Steering Committee, made up of representatives from municipal, provincial and national parks in Alberta (Appendix A), as well as ARPA staff and contractors.

The work of the Steering Committee, which met three times before the Forum and once after, focused mainly on providing advice and direction on development of program content, speaker selection and scheduling.

ARPA staff supplied on-going assistance in a number of areas including: web page development and maintenance; brochure design and layout; marketing; registration; budget administration and control and; clerical support.

Sponsorship

The search for sponsorship support was led by Mr. Alfred Nikolai of the Recreation For Life Foundation, with support and input provided by the Forum Coordinator and ARPA staff.

An outstanding donation of in kind support was provided by the Equus Consulting Group and a generous “gift in kind” was received from the Great Western Brewery – see Appendix B.

Significant financial and in kind support was also received from Alberta Community Development, Parks and Protected Areas Division and Alberta Economic Development, Tourism and Industry Division.

Sessions and Presentations

Program content for the 2005 Parks Forum was planned and organized to attract a broad cross section and mix of park practitioners from municipal, provincial and national parks in Alberta, as well as key partners, stakeholders, educators and students.

Sessions and presentations were provided within four very general topic areas, namely:

1. Education and Interpretation
2. Heritage Resource Management
3. Operations and Visitor Management
4. Policy and Planning

Ultimately, a total of 29 sessions were offered including: One Opening Keynote Speech; Two Opening Keynote Presentations (Co-Chairs); Four (4) Keynote Addresses; A Plenary Workshop (*see appendix E for Workshop Results*); A Senior Officials (Interactive Plenary) Fireside Chat; 20 Breakout Sessions and; 2 Field Trips. (Appendix C) Many of the presentations are now available on the ARPA web site (www.parks.arpaonline.ca).

Social Events

Two social events were offered including an “Early Bird Meet and Greet”, that was held the night before the formal start of the Forum and a St. Patrick’s Day Social, which took place during the evening of the first day. Both sessions were well attended and appreciated by Forum participants.

Attendance

The 2005 Parks Forum was literally sold out with 152 registered participants representing municipal (37%), provincial (25%) and national parks (10%) in Alberta as well as a variety of key partners, educators and students (28%). Most registrations were handled via the ARPA’s online registration process, while a small number of participants did not formally register (ie. pay) until arriving at the Forum.

Evaluations

A Forum Evaluation form was included in the Site Guide that was distributed to all participants as part of their Registration Package. A total of 53 Evaluation forms were completed and returned. Those who completed the form generally rated their “Overall Experience” as being very positive (Highest possible rating was 3--Average recorded rating was 2.82)

Of the 53 forms returned, 52 indicated that the Forum should re-occur on a regular basis. See Appendix D for a more complete summary of Evaluation ratings.

Summary Comments and Recommendations

Aspects of the 2005 Parks Forum that participants seemed to appreciate and benefit from the most were as follows:

- Program content reflected an excellent mix of topics that dealt with current issues, highly relevant to parks and parks practitioners in Alberta, regardless of the agency or sector they were representing.
- A variety of formats (e.g. keynote speakers, inter-active panel discussions, workshops, case studies, breakout sessions and field trips) was utilized to appeal to a broad range of interests and preferences.
- The Parks Forum presented what was likely a first time opportunity for many of those attending, to interact, network and establish new contacts at an event focused specifically on parks, where park agencies from all three levels of government in Alberta were so strongly represented. Similarly, participants were able to meet and hear from key partners, stakeholders and advocates, all of whom are committed to promoting how and why all types of parks, landscapes and open spaces are essential to the well being of Albertans.
- ARPA, through its leadership and support for the 2005 Parks Forum significantly enhanced its credibility and profile within the “parks community” in Alberta and clearly demonstrated its commitment to follow through on many of its own strategic directions such as: leadership and advocacy; partnerships and alliances; information and networking and; perhaps most importantly, education and professional development.
- The intention of the 2005 Parks Forum was that it could be the first of such events held on a biannual basis, interspersed with workshops that would focus on one or more parks related issues. Based on the obvious success of the inaugural Parks Forum, it is recommended that ARPA confirm its intent to proceed with that course of action and initiate the planning activities necessary to ensure delivery of a successful “Parks Workshop” in 2006.

Appendix A : 2005 Parks Forum Steering Committee

Dan Chambers - Forum Coordinator

Danae Kortmann-Watts - City of Edmonton Parks

Ian Waugh - Alberta Parks and Protected Areas

(Ian also served as the Forum Master of Ceremonies)

Corina Dixon - City of Red Deer Parks

Don Polinski - Strathcona County Parks

Todd Reichardt - City of Calgary Parks

Kathy Rettie - Parks Canada (Banff)

Robert Sheldon - Parks Canada (Elk Island National Park)

Appendix B: Sponsorship Summary

Emerald Sponsor

Equus Consulting Group - Gift in Kind

Session Sponsors

Parks Foundation of Calgary

Alberta Conservation Association

Campers Village

Haul All Equipment Systems

Lee Dawn Holdings Limited

Strathcona Wilderness Centre

Waste Management of Canada

Great Western Brewery - Gift in Kind

Alberta Government Support

Alberta Community Development, Parks and Protected Areas Division

Alberta Economic Development, Tourism and Industry Division

Appendix C: 2005 Parks Forum - Presentations And Sessions

Keynote Presentations

Opening Keynote - Fay Orr, Deputy Minister, Alberta Community Development

Parks In Transition: The Emergence of the Modern Paradigm for Protected Areas - Dr. Guy Swinnerton (Honorary Co-Chair)

Enhancing Access to Park and Recreation Services: What Can We Learn from Leisure Constraints Research? - Dr. Ed Jackson (Honorary Co-Chair)

Trends Affecting Tourism in Protected Areas - Dr. Paul Eagles (University of Waterloo)

Where Have We Come From, Where Are We Going, and Why? - Larry Simpson (Nature Conservancy Canada)

Alberta's Second Century Project - Barry Worbets (Canada West Foundation)

Parks, Landscapes and Open Spaces: The Rural Agenda - Doug Griffiths (MLA Battle River-Wainwright)

Plenary Workshop

Parks, Landscapes and Open Spaces: A New Tomorrow

Bill McMillan (Equus Consulting Group)

Senior Officials Fireside Chat

Panel Members: John Kristensen (Alberta Parks and Protected Areas); Barry Worbets (Canada West Foundation); Dr. Guy Swinnerton (Honorary Co-Chair); Bill Fisher (Parks Canada); Larry Simpson (Nature Conservancy Canada) and; Lyall Brenneis (City of Edmonton Parks).

Break Out Sessions

The Future of Weed Control in Turf & Urban Forestry and Integrated Pest Management - J. Ross and S. Wilkins

Alberta's Capital Region River Valley- Creating A Living Legacy for Generations to Come - B. Wilson

Collaborative Regional Tourism Planning - K. Bocking

The Importance of Parks and Protected Areas In A Changing Alberta Landscape - P. Lee

Park Visitor Conflict Management - D. Lafreniere

Parks and the Creative Class - S. Jones

Wetland Education Partnership - J. Brunen, K. Booth, Sid Andrews

Using GIS to Understand Trail Access and Recreation Impacts on Grizzly Bears - S. Donelon, S. Jevous

Planning and Management of Contractor Businesses in Parks and Protected Areas (Workshop) - P. Eagles

Urban Parks Management Plans - L. Brenneis, D. Lafreniere

The Natural Step to a Sustainable Canmore - B. Robinson

Getting More Green: Partnership Approaches for Protecting and Stewarding Natural Urban Green Space - S. Chisolm

The Alberta Water Strategy: Challenges, Implications and Opportunities for Parks and Recreation in Alberta - B. Yee

Law Enforcement in Parks and Protected Areas- Trends and Issues - K. Edwards, D. Hanna

Beaverhills Moraine Partnership- A Roadway to Regional Success - G. Lawrence

Developing and Marketing Learning and Enrichment Travel Programs - P. Veinotte, B. Russell-Towe

Connecting Science with Conservation- The Alberta Natural Heritage Information Centre - L. Allen

Great Expectations: Public Involvement and Appropriate Activities in Parks and Protected Areas - R. Proven

Education and Interpretation for Protected Areas- Trends for the 21st Century - J. Robertson, I. Waugh, S. Wolff

People and Parks: A Visitor Approach to Measuring Park Management - D. Carr, K. Rae

Field Trips

Wildlife Corridors and Monitoring - Parks Canada

Mountain Pine Beetle Control and Management - Parks Canada

Appendix D: Forum Evaluations Summary

All Ratings Listed from a Possible Maximum of 3.00

Program

Co-Chair Addresses	2.70
Keynote Speakers	2.63
Session Speakers	2.79
Plenary Workshop	2.69
Field Trips	2.92
Social Program	2.48

Facility

Session Rooms	2.42
Hotel Rooms	2.36
Meals and Refreshment Breaks	2.44

Parks and Protected Areas

FORUM 2005: A NEW TOMORROW

Vision Workshop – OptionFinder® Results

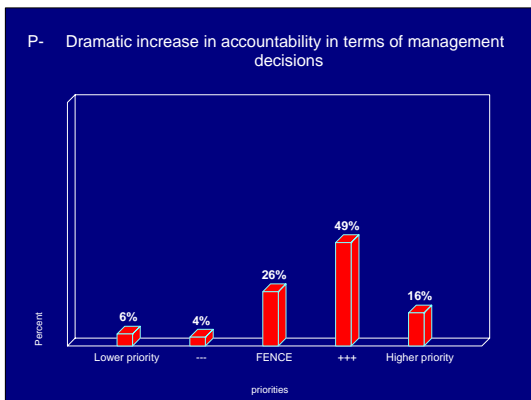
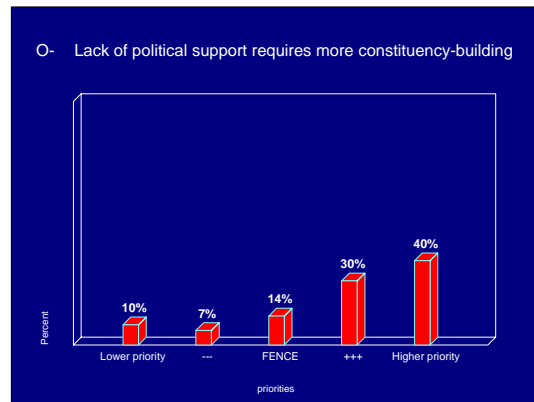
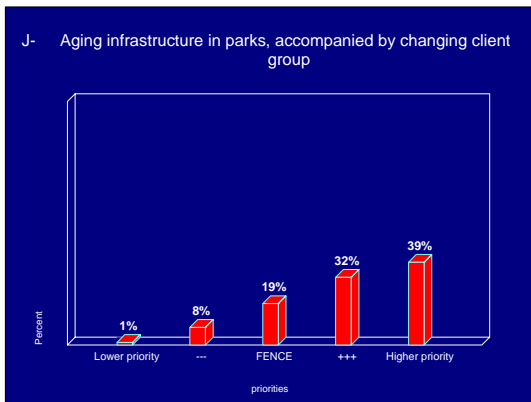
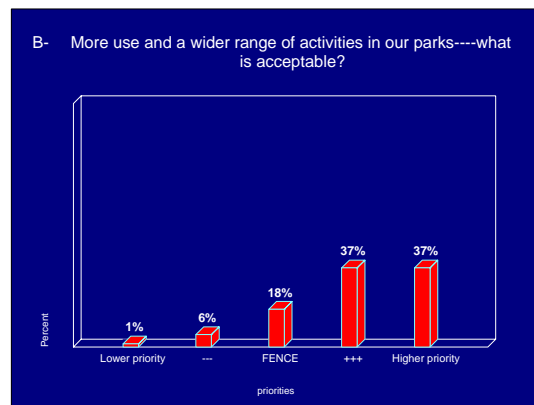
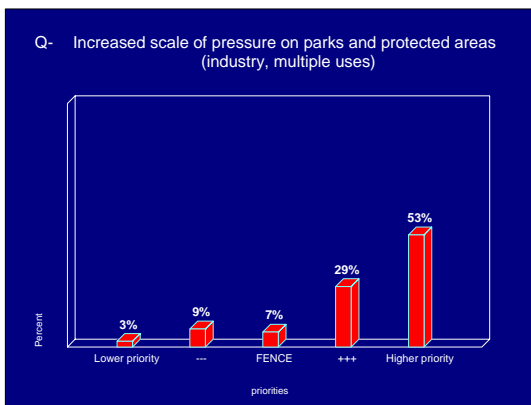
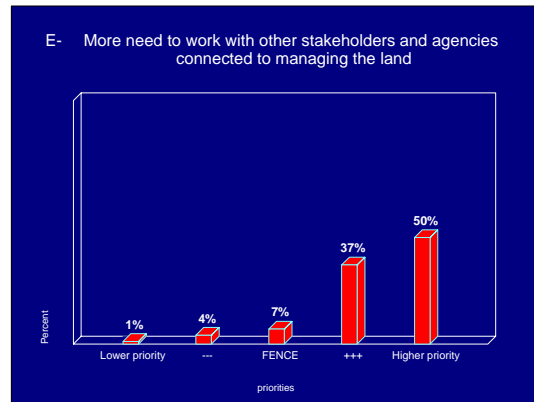
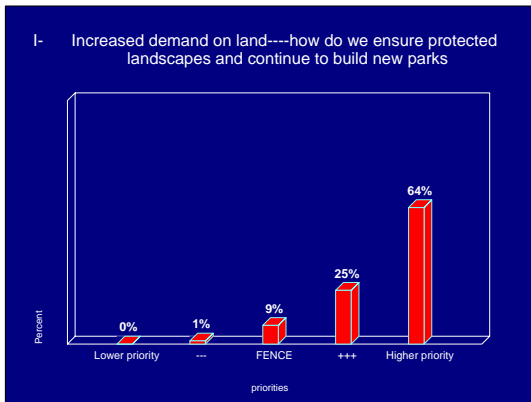
Bill McMillan, Equus Consulting Group Inc.

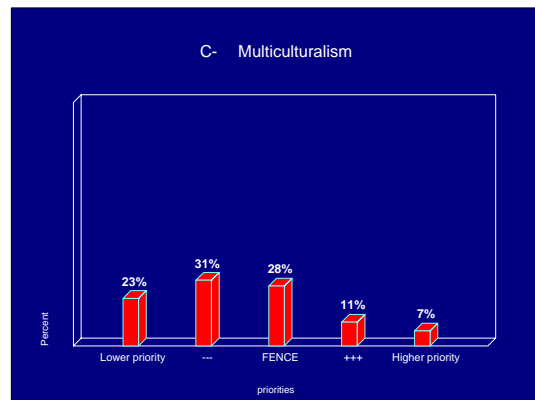
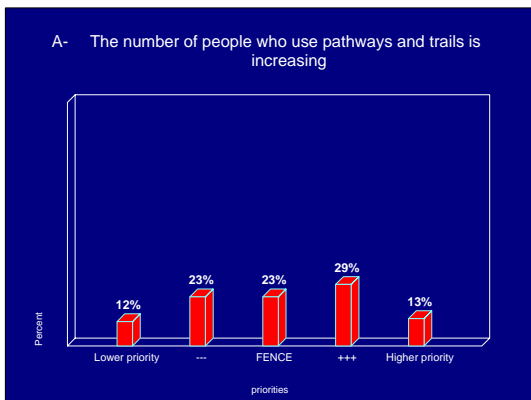
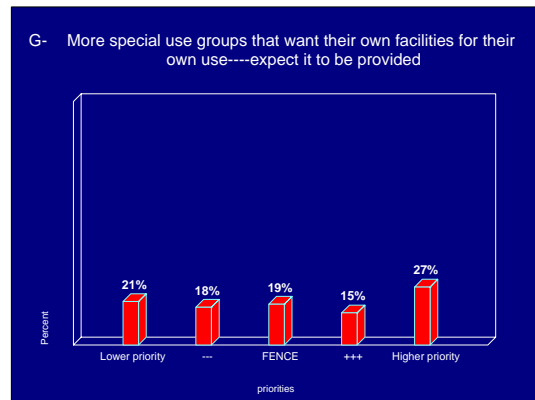
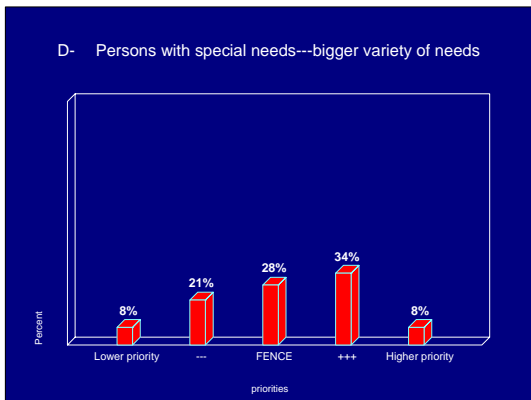
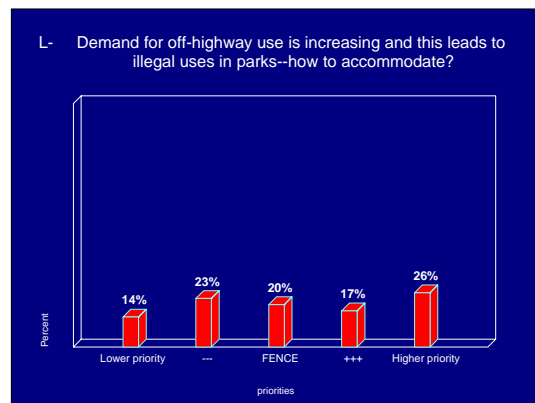
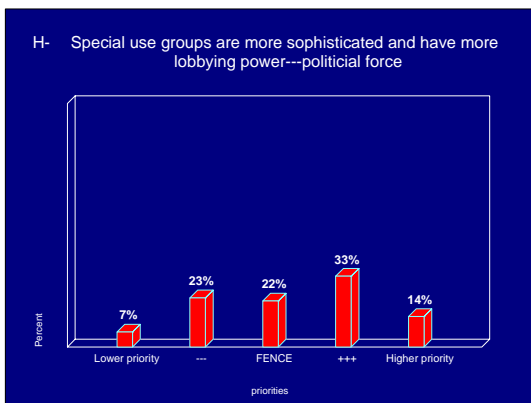
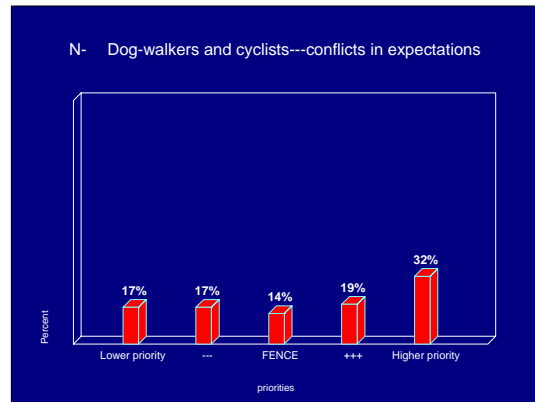
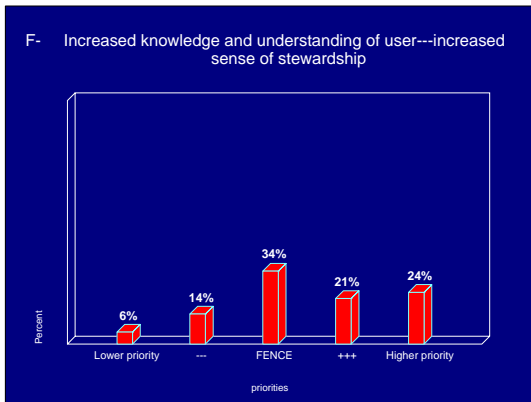
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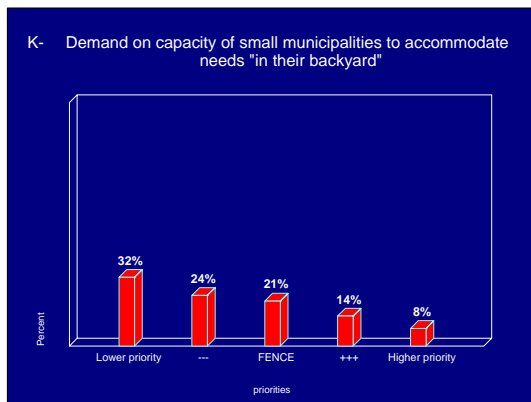
This was an open plenary session that allowed everyone to respond to questions about the future of parks and protected area management in Alberta. Bill McMillan led the session and raised the questions to the group. Responses were recorded as they were raised, and the group rated the responses, using OptionFinder®, an electronic decision support system using nearly 80 keypads available in the room (at each table, some participants responded to each question).

The attached graphs describe the ideas raised, and the group's rating of each idea, within three areas

1. **Trends Affecting Park Management:** This is not a complete list. The list was produced through a relatively quick scan of the plenary group, with a limited opportunity to raise ideas for consideration.
2. **Questions We Want Answers to:** This list was again based random interviews of people in the plenary.
3. **Most Valuable Changes:** Participants worked at roundtable discussions to identify their ideas. A selection of the best ideas were then reported and recorded. The graphs show the group's response to the ideas raised.

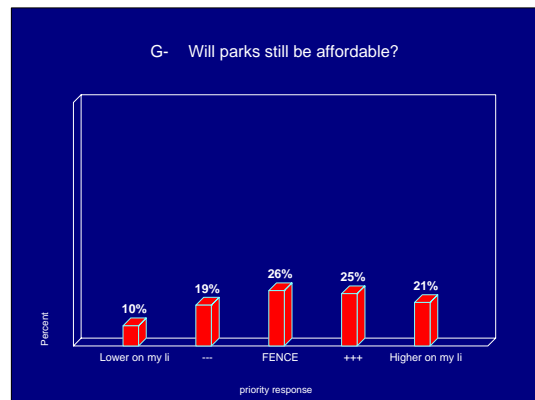
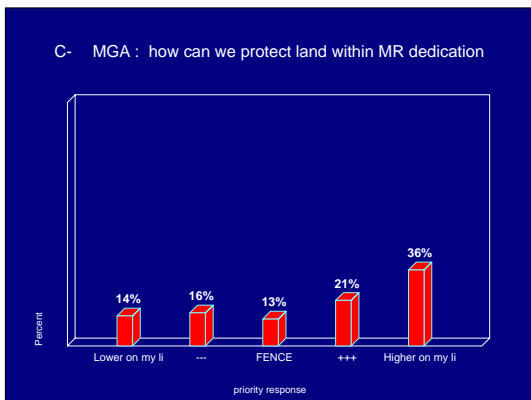
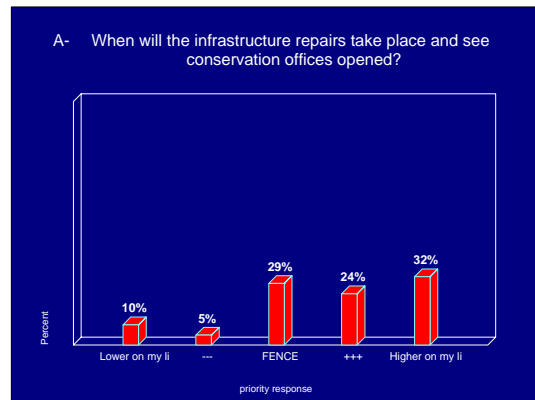
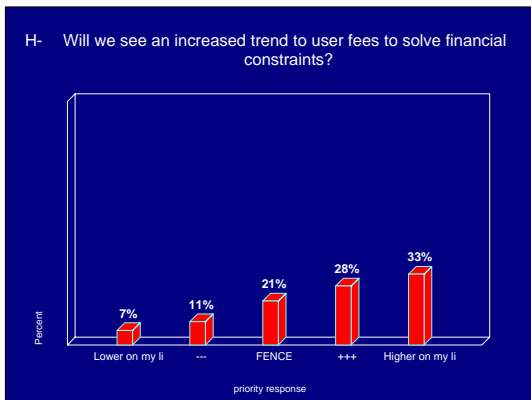
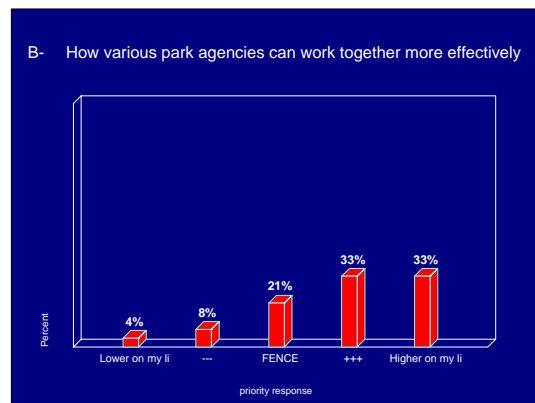
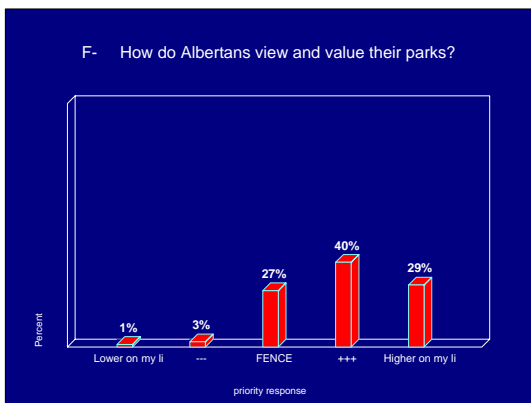
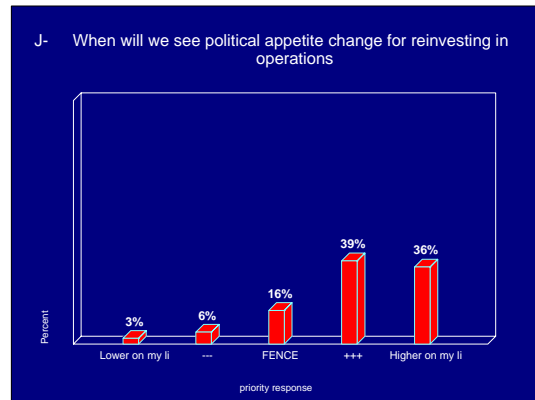
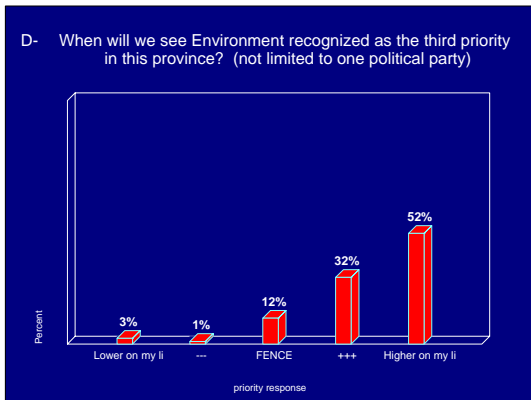




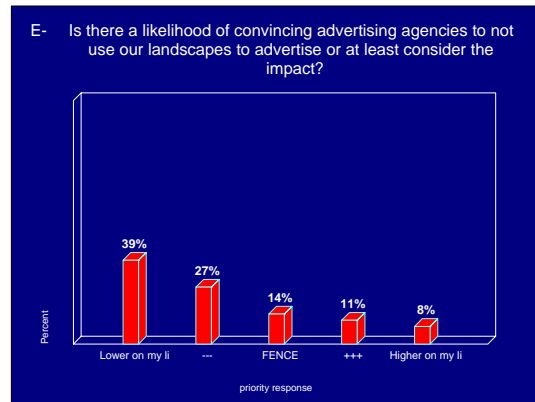
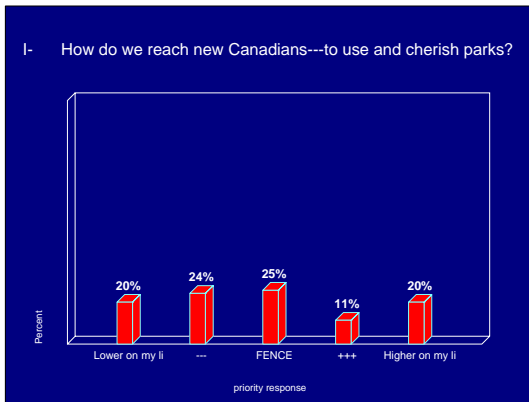


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Item	Scale	N	Abs	Avg	Div	Frequency of Responses														
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
priorities Criterion																				
I-Increased demand on land----how do we ensure protected landscapes and continue to build new parks	5	67	0	4.5	13		0	1	6	17	43									
E-More need to work with other stakeholders and agencies connected to managing the land	5	70	0	4.3	20		1	3	5	26	35									
Q-Increased scale of pressure on parks and protected areas (industry, multiple uses)	5	70	0	4.2	29		2	6	5	20	37									
B-More use and a wider range of activities in our parks----what is acceptable?	5	67	0	4.0	23		1	4	12	25	25									
J-Aging infrastructure in parks, accompanied by changing client group	5	72	0	4.0	26		1	6	14	23	28									
O-Lack of political support requires more constituency-building	5	73	0	3.8	41		7	5	10	22	29									
P-Dramatic increase in accountability in terms of management decisions	5	70	0	3.6	24		4	3	18	34	11									
M-Visitors are demanding a higher quality of experience (entire experience)	5	73	0	3.5	32		6	6	20	27	14									
F-Increased knowledge and understanding of user---increased sense of stewardship	5	70	0	3.4	34		4	10	24	15	17									
N-Dog-walkers and cyclists---conflicts in expectations	5	69	0	3.3	56		12	12	10	13	22									
H-Special use groups are more sophisticated and have more lobbying power---political force	5	69	0	3.2	34		5	16	15	23	10									
L-Demand for off-highway use is increasing and this leads to illegal uses in parks--how to accommodate?	5	70	0	3.2	49		10	16	14	12	18									
D-Persons with special needs---bigger variety of needs	5	71	0	3.1	30		6	15	20	24	6									
G-More special use groups that want their own facilities for their own use---expect it to be provided	5	73	0	3.1	56		15	13	14	11	20									
A-The number of people who use pathways and trails is increasing	5	69	0	3.1	37		8	16	16	20	9									
C-Multiculturalism	5	71	0	2.5	34		16	22	20	8	5									
K-Demand on capacity of small municipalities to accommodate needs "in their backyard"	5	71	0	2.4	42		23	17	15	10	6									

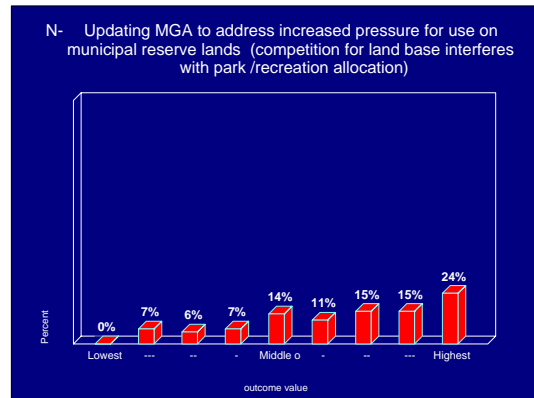
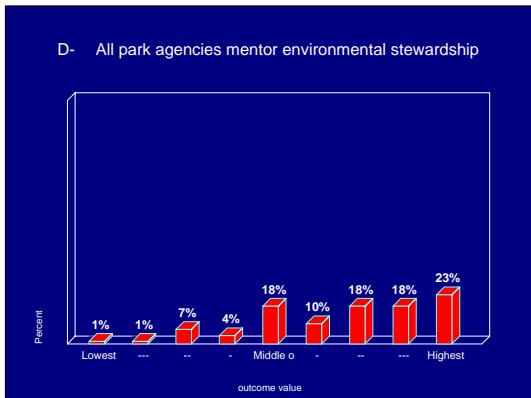
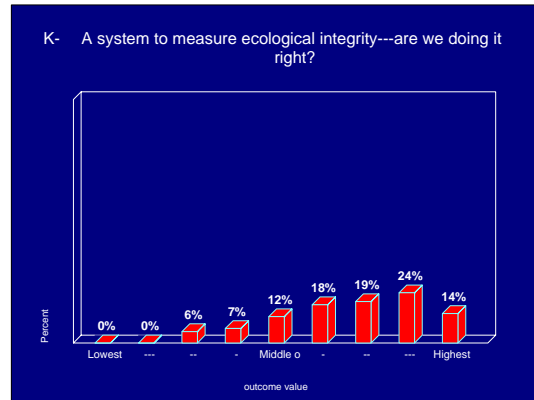
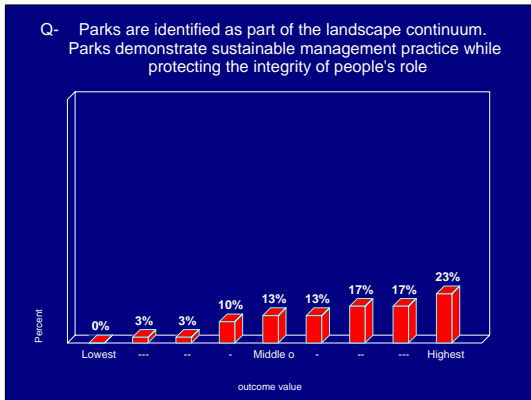
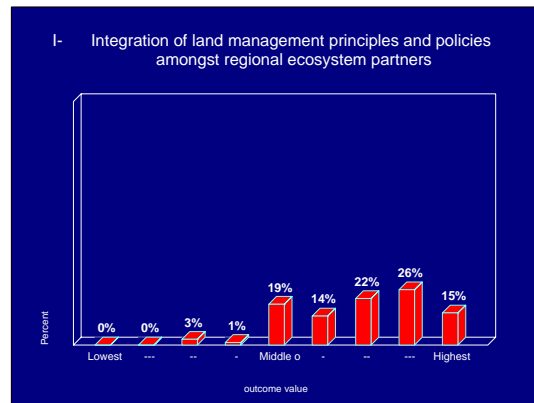
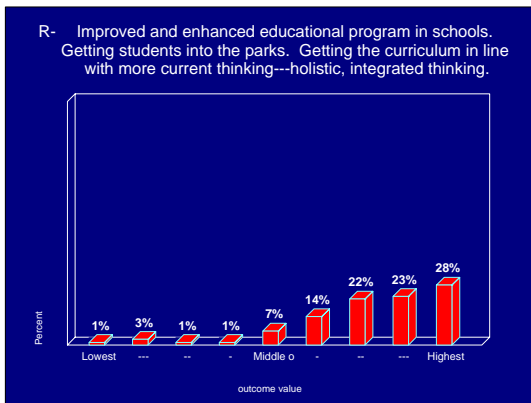
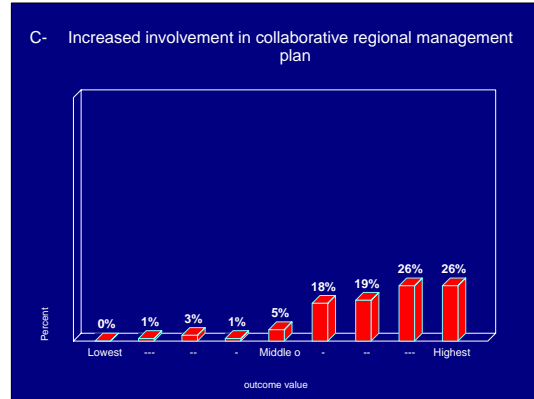
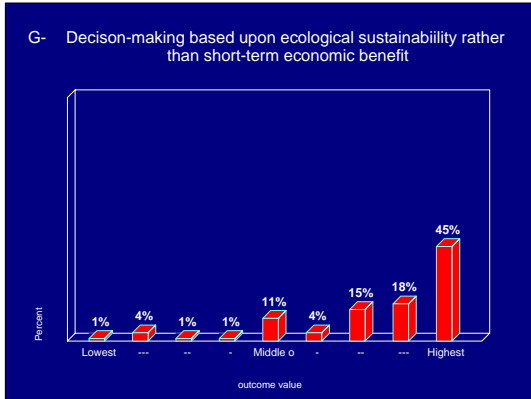


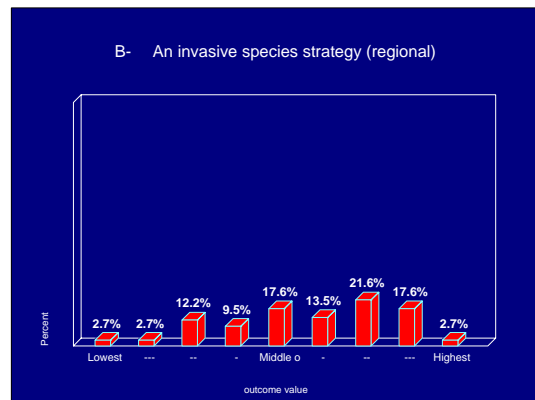
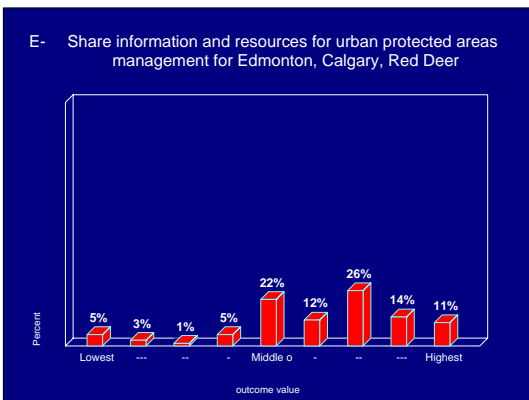
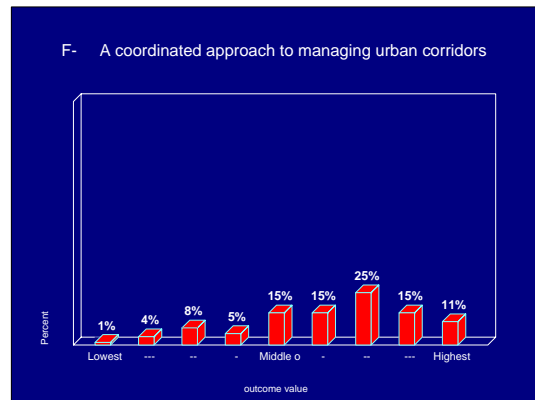
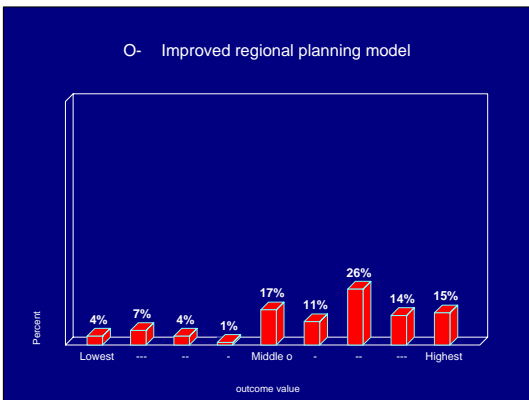
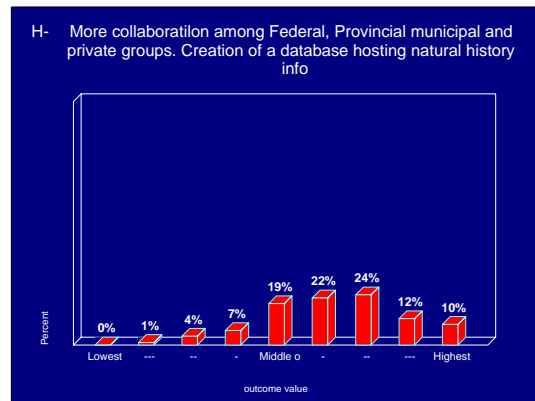
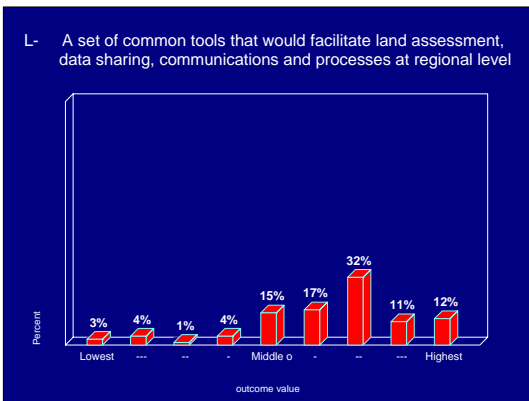
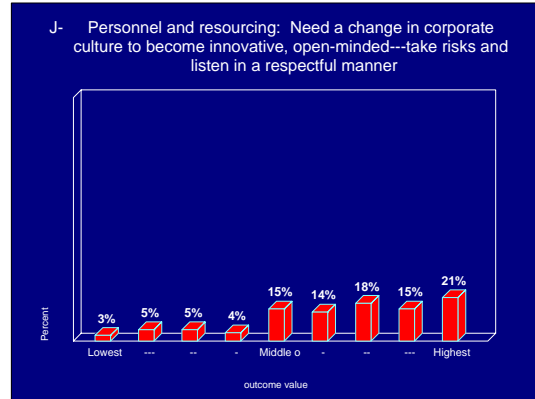
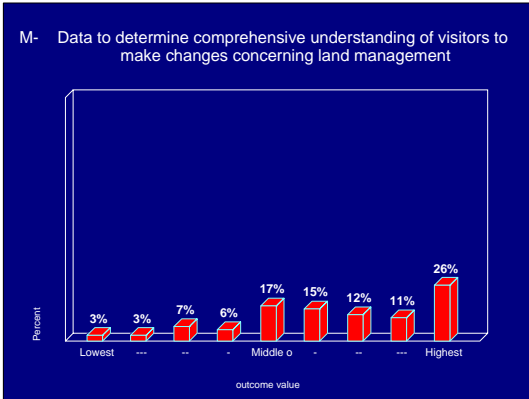
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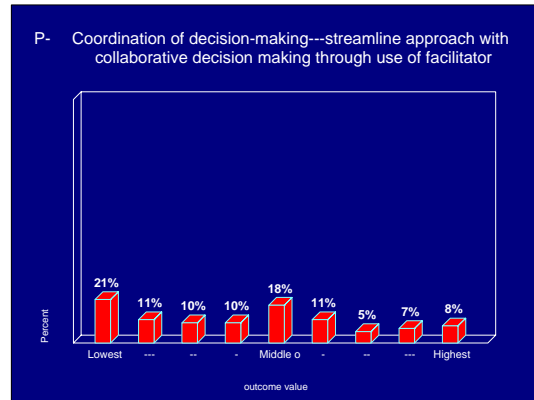
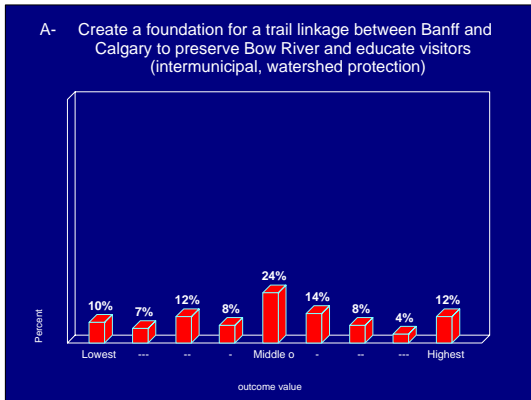
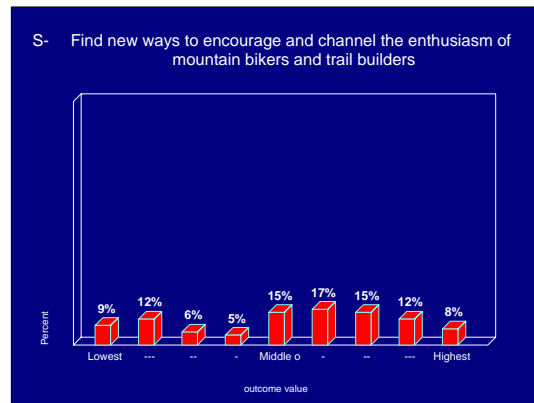
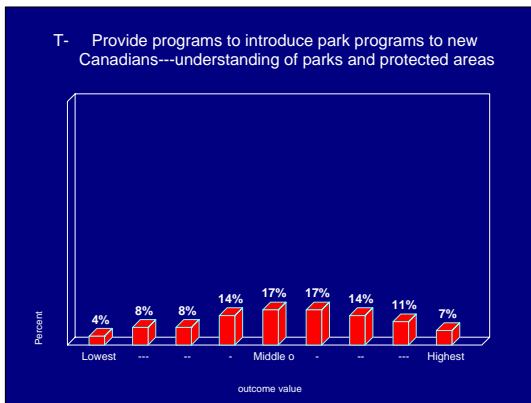
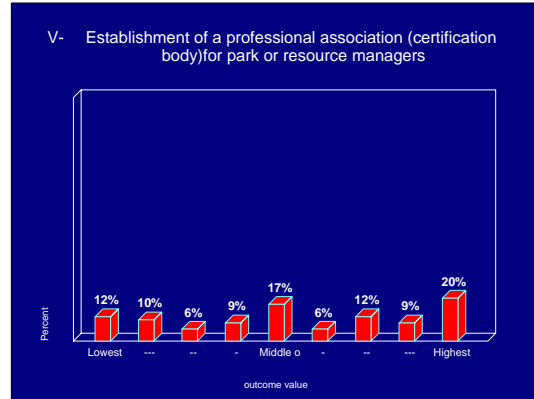
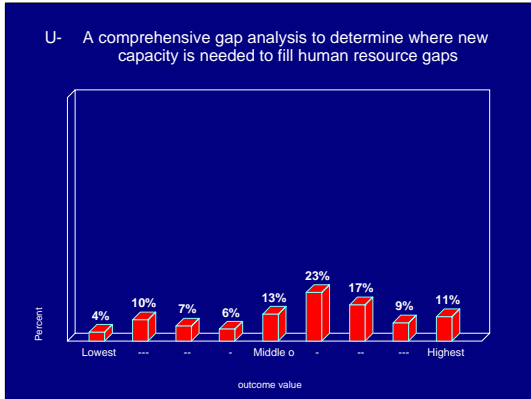


Data set:1

Item	Scale	N	Abs	Avg	Div	Frequency of Responses														
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
priority response Criterion																				
D-When will we see Environment recognized as the third priority in this province? (not limited to one political party)	5	73	0	4.3	22		2	1	9	23	38									
J-When will we see political appetite change for reinvesting in operations	5	69	0	4.0	25		2	4	11	27	25									
F-How do Albertans view and value their parks?	5	75	0	3.9	20		1	2	20	30	22									
B-How various park agencies can work together more effectively	5	72	0	3.8	31		3	6	15	24	24									
H-Will we see an increased trend to user fees to solve financial constraints?	5	72	0	3.7	38		5	8	15	20	24									
A-When will the infrastructure repairs take place and see conservation offices opened?	5	62	0	3.6	39		6	3	18	15	20									
C-MGA : how can we protect land within MR dedication	5	70	0	3.5	53		10	11	9	15	25									
G-Will parks still be affordable?	5	73	0	3.3	39		7	14	19	18	15									
I-How do we reach new Canadians---to use and cherish parks?	5	71	0	2.9	48		14	17	18	8	14									
E-Is there a likelihood of convincing advertising agencies to not use our landscapes to advertise or at least consider the impact?	5	71	0	2.2	42		28	19	10	8	6									







Data set:1

Item	Scale	N	Abs	Avg	Div	Frequency of Responses														
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
outcome value Criterion																				
G-Decision-making based upon ecological sustainability rather than short-term economic benefit	9	74	0	7.4	26		1	3	1	1	8	3	11	13	33					
C-Increased involvement in collaborative regional management plan	9	73	0	7.3	16		0	1	2	1	4	13	14	19	19					
R-Improved and enhanced educational program in schools. Getting students into the parks. Getting the curriculum in line with more current thinking---holistic, integrated thinking.	9	74	0	7.2	20		1	2	1	1	5	10	16	17	21					
I-Integration of land management principles and policies amongst regional ecosystem partners	9	73	0	6.9	14		0	0	2	1	14	10	16	19	11					
Q-Parks are identified as part of the landscape continuum. Parks demonstrate sustainable management practice while protecting the integrity of people's role	9	69	0	6.7	23		0	2	2	7	9	9	12	12	16					
K-A system to measure ecological integrity---are we doing it right?	9	72	0	6.7	18		0	0	4	5	9	13	14	17	10					
D-All park agencies mentor environmental stewardship	9	73	0	6.6	26		1	1	5	3	13	7	13	13	17					
N-Updating MGA to address increased pressure for use on municipal reserve lands (competition for land base interferes with park /recreation allocation)	9	71	0	6.5	30		0	5	4	5	10	8	11	11	17					
M-Data to determine comprehensive understanding of visitors to make changes concerning land management	9	72	0	6.4	31		2	2	5	4	12	11	9	8	19					
J-Personnel and resourcing: Need a change in corporate culture to become innovative, open-minded---take risks and listen in a respectful manner	9	73	0	6.3	31		2	4	4	3	11	10	13	11	15					
L-A set of common tools that would facilitate land assessment, data sharing, communications and processes at regional level	9	72	0	6.3	22		2	3	1	3	11	12	23	8	9					
H-More collaboratilon among Federal, Provincial municipal and private groups. Creation of a database hosting natural history info	9	72	0	6.3	16		0	1	3	5	14	16	17	9	7					
O-Improved regional planning model	9	72	0	6.2	31		3	5	3	1	12	8	19	10	11					
F-A coordinated approach to managing urban corridors	9	73	0	6.1	25		1	3	6	4	11	11	18	11	8					
E-Share information and resources for urban protected areas management for Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer	9	73	0	6.1	26		4	2	1	4	16	9	19	10	8					
B-An invasive species strategy (regional)	9	74	0	5.7	24		2	2	9	7	13	10	16	13	2					
U-A comprehensive gap analysis to determine where new capacity is needed to fill human resource gaps	9	70	0	5.6	32		3	7	5	4	9	16	12	6	8					
V-Establishment of a professional association (certification body)for park or resource managers	9	69	0	5.4	47		8	7	4	6	12	4	8	6	14					
T-Provide programs to introduce park programs to new Canadians---understanding of parks and protected areas	9	72	0	5.3	29		3	6	6	10	12	12	10	8	5					
S-Find new ways to encourage and channel the enthusiasm of mountain bikers and trail builders	9	65	0	5.2	37		6	8	4	3	10	11	10	8	5					
A-Create a foundation for a trail linkage between Banff and Calgary to preserve Bow River and educate visitors (intermunicipal, watershed protection)	9	72	0	5.0	35		7	5	9	6	17	10	6	3	9					
P-Coordination of decision-making---streamline approach with collaborative decision making through use of facilitator	9	73	0	4.3	41		15	8	7	7	13	8	4	5	6					