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## Phase 2

# Working Towards the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

A Workbook to Share Your Views on the  
Regional Advisory Council's Advice to the  
Government of Alberta for the South  
*Saskatchewan Regional Plan*



**Government  
of Alberta** ■

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# Introduction

Alberta's Land-use Framework, released in December 2008, sets out a new approach to managing the province's land and natural resources to achieve Alberta's long-term economic, environmental and social goals.

The Land-use Framework establishes three desired outcomes for our province:

- a healthy economy supported by our land and natural resources;
- healthy ecosystems and environment; and
- people-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities.

These outcomes recognize that Alberta's economic, environmental and social goals are highly integrated. How we choose to pursue one set of goals ultimately affects the others. This has an impact on how Alberta manages its land and natural resources.

The *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*, proclaimed in October 2009, creates the legal authority to implement the Land-use Framework. The Act provides for the development of a regional plan for each of Alberta's seven regions. One of these regions is the South Saskatchewan Region<sup>1</sup>.

## The Purpose Of A Regional Plan

A regional plan is intended to set a vision of how a region should look over several decades. Each regional plan will consider a planning horizon of at least 50 years, and will be reviewed every five years to ensure it is effective.

Regional plans are not intended to describe how your neighbourhood will look in the future, or set rules about your local property. Municipal governments continue to be responsible for local land-use planning through municipal plans and land-use bylaws.

Regional plans will set the overall objectives for a region. They will identify areas with high value for conservation, agriculture, recreation or industrial development to better co-ordinate activity on the landscape. In making these choices, regional plans will consider how to balance Albertan's economic, environmental and social values.

Regional plans will also consider how activities in one region may impact other regions. For example, airsheds and watersheds often cross regional boundaries, as do many transportation and utility corridors.

Although a regional plan will not ordinarily direct uses on lands under federal jurisdiction, it will consider their long-term needs and how they may impact objectives in the region.

<sup>1</sup> The South Saskatchewan Region is located in the southern-most part of Alberta bounded by the borders of Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Montana.

## Developing The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

The Government of Alberta is working towards the development of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

In May 2009, the government established a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) to provide advice, insight and perspective on current and future land-use activities and challenges in the region. The RAC was comprised of members with a cross-section of expertise and experience in the South Saskatchewan Region.

Now that the RAC has submitted its advice<sup>2</sup> to the Alberta government, we have reached an important milestone. The next step is for the Government of Alberta to develop a draft regional plan for the South Saskatchewan Region. This will be informed by the RAC's advice, cross-ministry knowledge and the views of residents, businesses, communities and other governments that have a stake in the region and its future.

The RAC was asked to provide advice in five key areas:

- Vision,
- Healthy economy,
- Healthy ecosystems and environment,
- Healthy community, and
- Land-use classification.

## An Opportunity To Share Your Views

Millions of people now live and work in Alberta, increasing the level of activity on the land. Regional planning is about managing our land and natural resources so that we can balance these many activities while achieving our desired economic, environmental and social goals. To do this, we need to make tough choices and set priorities for the landscape.

The RAC has provided advice about land uses in the South Saskatchewan Region, including recommendations on how to balance these uses and where choices are required. This workbook is intended to get feedback on the RAC's advice as presented in its document, the ***South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council's Advice to the Government of Alberta for the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan***<sup>3</sup>. Throughout this workbook, we will refer to the RAC's advice document as "RAC Advice". Please refer to that document when guided to do so.

**To help inform the government's development of a draft regional plan, you are encouraged to review ALL of the RAC's advice and provide comment in this workbook.**

This workbook focuses on the five key areas for which the Alberta government sought the RAC's advice. Each section of the workbook gives an overview of the advice requested from the RAC, highlights some of its learnings and summarizes its

<sup>2</sup> Although there was not consensus by the Regional Advisory Council on all recommendations contained in its advice to government, all recommendations reflect the majority of members' views.

<sup>3</sup> The Government of Alberta's views and intentions may not necessarily coincide with the recommendations of the South Saskatchewan Regional Advisory Council.

recommendations to government. Your input on these recommendations is essential as the government works to develop a draft regional plan. This workbook is designed to help you share your views on these important matters.

No questions are mandatory so you need only complete the questions that you wish to answer.

**This workbook can be completed online at [www.landuse.alberta.ca](http://www.landuse.alberta.ca)**

To submit print versions of the completed workbook mail the workbook to:

SSRP Phase 2 Workbook  
Land Use Secretariat  
9th Floor, 10035 – 108 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3E2

The workbook may also be submitted at any local Government of Alberta office.

The deadline for submission of this workbook is December 19, 2011.

# Section 1: Regional Vision and Strategic Land-use Principles

(RAC Advice pgs. 1-8)

## Advice Requested of the RAC

The RAC was asked to develop a vision describing the desired future of the region. The vision must support the outcomes and principles of the Land-use Framework.

The Calgary Metropolitan Plan will be incorporated into the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan when it is approved.

## Regional Advisory Council's Recommended Vision For The Region

The South Saskatchewan Region is located in the southern-most part of Alberta, bounded by the borders of Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Montana. It is home to approximately 45 per cent of the province's population and contains Alberta's largest city, Calgary. The region includes seven First Nations communities, which were established through the treaty process in 1877 under Treaty Seven.

The region is incredibly diverse and its landscapes include grassland, parkland, foothills and Rocky Mountains. Historic landscape change has been significant in the region, which was largely driven by agricultural expansion with the settlement of the province in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Two-thirds of the region's native grasslands have since been converted to other land covers, and much of the forested land cover has also been transformed.

The region includes the Bow, Oldman, South Saskatchewan and Milk river basins. Water is a key challenge in the region. Although the South Saskatchewan is the most populated of the seven land-use regions, it has comparatively fewer water resources.

Much of southern Alberta depends on the ecological integrity of the Eastern Slopes for its water supply. The Eastern Slopes are currently zoned for protection, wildlife habitat and multiple uses, including oil and gas operations, grazing and forestry. They are also important recreation and tourism areas for Albertans. Growing country residential development along the Eastern Slopes, however, is resulting in land-use conflicts and challenges.

The RAC proposes the following vision statement (RAC Advice pg. 7) for the South Saskatchewan Region. It describes a desired future in 50 years.

*Southern Alberta is a diverse, healthy, vibrant and prosperous region where the natural beauty of the mountains, foothills, farmlands and the subtle beauty of the prairies are managed and celebrated so that future generations remain connected to the land and its history. The region prizes its natural and economic capital, and uses an integrated approach to effectively manage social, economic and environmental interaction. The*



*principles of personal freedom, responsibility and property rights are respected, while the quality and ecological integrity of the landscape is sustained through the use of traditional aboriginal and community knowledge, sound science, innovative thinking and accommodation of rights and interests of all Albertans.*

This vision describes what the RAC sees for the region in the long-term. It will serve as a guide for future decisions that are made about the region's land and natural resources.

Share Your Views

1. How strongly do you agree with the proposed vision for the South Saskatchewan Region?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. In describing a vision for the region, the RAC has tried to achieve a balance among economic, environmental and social values. What do you think about the amount of emphasis given to each of these values in the proposed vision?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Economic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. How would you improve the content of the proposed vision for the region? Consider the values and issues addressed, and any that may be missing.

## Regional Advisory Council's Recommended Strategic Land-use Principles to Guide Land-use Decisions

(RAC Advice pgs. 7-8)

It is recognized that certain values in the region are irreplaceable and should be protected for the future. All of the South Saskatchewan Region should be used by people for their economic interests and their enjoyment. However, these activities can only be maximized by sensible policies that are mindful and respectful of environmental issues and by effective enforcement. The RAC recommended that the following eight strategic land-use principles<sup>4</sup> should be considered:

- **Plan for water.** It is essential to determine the feasibility of all water conservation, supply and storage options. Because the supply and quality of water is so important, demand is likely to increase, and supply may be challenged in the region under any scenario. Headwater and source water protection and the need to manage land use to sustain water production and water quantity and quality are critically important.
- **Respecting private land ownership.** The Government of Alberta must be guided by the principle of respecting private property rights. To acknowledge this, regional planning identifies common outcomes for private and public lands and offers implementation tools for both.
- **Developing conservation and stewardship tools.** Conservation and stewardship tools are critical to the success of future land-use planning in the region. It is imperative that the Government of Alberta develop an enhanced suite of conservation and stewardship tools (e.g., economic and market-based incentives, conservation easements, transferable development credits, mitigation banking, etc.). New tools, when developed, must be easily accessible, well understood and applicable.
- **Accommodating multiple users.** The South Saskatchewan Region has a history of multiple users sharing the landscape. The focus for planning should not be primarily on “if” but on “how” and under “what” conditions an activity can be allowed on the land base. Conservation<sup>5</sup> and sustainable development can co-exist, and land-use planning needs to be based on triple bottom line<sup>6</sup> principles and the use of market-based conservation tools.
- **Integrated planning.** Land-use planning needs to progress to outcomes based on integrated local and regional planning that uses triple bottom line principles, incorporates multiple objectives, multiple stakeholders and involves market-based conservation and stewardship tools. Consideration should be given to reducing planning overlaps and redundancies while respecting the rights of affected jurisdictions in a collaborative approach to land-use decisions.

<sup>4</sup> Principle – A basic or shared value that guides the direction of policy formulation.

<sup>5</sup> Conservation – The responsible preservation, management and care of our land and of our natural and cultural resources.

<sup>6</sup> Triple bottom line – Refers to the goal of the Land-use Framework to sustain our growing economy, but balance this with Albertans' social and environmental goals.

- **Regulatory streamlining and efficiency.** The SSRP should lead other government initiatives to promote regulatory streamlining, harmonization and reduce levels of bureaucracy. Policies need to be integrated between departments and ministries. Regulations should be made more efficient by providing clear policy direction on key issues. Clear policy is also necessary for empowering local and provincial decision-making to achieve sustainable development outcomes.
- **First Nations' issues.** First Nations' land-use issues need to be dealt with in a clear, government-led process.
- **Economic opportunity.** The success of the region will be dependent on the economic opportunities available in the region. This plan would provide more certainty and clarity regarding constraints to development.

4. How strongly do you agree with RAC's recommended land-use principles?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1. Plan for water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Respecting private land ownership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Developing conservation and stewardship tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Accommodating multiple users	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Integrated planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Regulatory streamlining and efficiency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Addressing First Nations' land-use issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Economic opportunity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Please share any additional comments regarding RAC's strategic land-use principles.

## Section 2: Healthy Economy

(RAC Advice pgs. 9-21)

### Advice Requested of the RAC

The RAC was asked to consider the balance between society, development and the environment as it developed its advice, and to consider the relationships between population growth, water supply, economic growth and land conservation.

The RAC was to evaluate development scenarios for the region, taking into account development objectives for each of the various sectors (agriculture, energy, forestry and recreation and tourism). These development objectives were to be evaluated with regard to water and land-use efficiency objectives, along with other desired economic, environmental and social objectives for the region. Agriculture, energy, forestry and recreation and tourism sectors were included, with the aim for all industries to be successful.

### Agriculture

(RAC Advice pg. 9-11)

RAC identified the following as key issues for the agriculture industry:

- Access to water and irrigation in the South Saskatchewan Region is critical to the future growth of agricultural and agricultural-related industries. This should be balanced with increased water demand from other sectors, along with evolving societal expectations for watershed productivity and conservation.
- In some areas, the fragmentation and conversion of agricultural land may limit future agriculture opportunities.
- There is a need to foster investment associated with agricultural diversification and value adding in the region.
- Market-based approaches are needed to promote agricultural sustainability.

### Agricultural Areas

- Approximately 67 per cent of the region's land area is agricultural land, the majority of which is privately owned.
- Agricultural land use includes crop production (40 per cent) and grazing (27 per cent).
- The region contains the majority of irrigated land in the country.
- Native rangeland used for grazing is important for biodiversity and to support species at risk.

## Share Your Views

6. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support the agriculture industry. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Support the diversification and sustainable growth of the agriculture industry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Encourage investment, entrepreneurship and competitiveness by ensuring the agricultural industry is supported by an efficient and transparent regulatory environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3A Support irrigation expansion within districts as an important economic driver for rural communities with a portion of the water saved through improved publicly funded water-use efficiency measures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3B Explore options with the water holder to secure a portion of the irrigation water efficiency gains to help meet in-stream conservation needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Support irrigation infrastructure improvements to help realize gains in water use efficiency to meet <i>Water for Life</i> conservation and efficiency goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Identify and develop water storage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
6	Encourage agriculture production and value adding as a priority use for water saved by the licensee through irrigation efficiency measures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Encourage and support rural municipalities to minimize the extent of agricultural land conversion and fragmentation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Require and support municipalities to report on the extent of agricultural land fragmentation and conversion on a five year basis, using metrics developed by the government to ensure consistency across the province.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Explore financial incentives and market opportunities for ecological goods and services <sup>7</sup> that advance the SSRP objectives and that go over and above what is required by basic agriculture management obligations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>7</sup> Ecological goods and services – Economic and social benefits resulting from the natural processes of a healthy environment and biodiversity. These are available to all of society and are essential to sustaining a healthy and prosperous way of life. They include groundwater recharge, flood and erosion control, wildlife habitat, productive soils, carbon dioxide sequestration and abundant clean air and water.

7. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on agriculture.

Energy

(RAC Advice pgs. 12-13)

The RAC identified the following as key issues for the energy industry:

- Over the long-term, the economic success of the energy industry in the region depends on technological innovations and their commercialization for resource development, production and processing.
- Maintaining a positive investment climate is critical to the energy sector's success.
- Growth of all energy sub-sectors is crucial for the regional economy. Growth of renewable energy sub-sectors will help diversify regional and provincial sources of supply, and provide benefits for local communities. However, this does not necessarily imply that the Government of Alberta should subsidize energy diversification.

Share Your Views

8. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support the energy industry. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Develop policies that promote new investment in energy development in the region.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Ensure regulatory processes for energy development consider cumulative environmental effects.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
3	Advance renewable energy development in the region to diversify energy production and stimulate rural Alberta economies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Explore opportunities for increased use of the region's coal deposits, such as clean coal technology. Facilitate research and trials of clean coal developments including coal gasification.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Explore financial incentives and market opportunities for ecological goods and services that advance SSRP objectives and go over and above what is required by basic energy management obligations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on energy.



## Forestry

(RAC Advice pgs. 14-16)

The RAC identified the following as key issues for the forestry industry:

- Forestry needs to be viewed beyond the traditional aspect of fibre supply. It is a means to achieve other objectives such as wildlife habitat management, forest fuel management and water yield augmentation through vegetation management (i.e., snow pack retention).
- Loss of productive and accessible forested land base.
- Lack of investment in value added industries.
- Regulatory process needs reduction/streamlining.
- Public transportation infrastructure necessary to the forest industry requires better jurisdictional co-ordination.

### Share Your Views

10. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support the forestry industry. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Look for opportunities to use forestry as a tool to maintain or enhance ecological goods and services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Incorporate the use of natural disturbance planning <sup>8</sup> into regional land-use planning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Support the research, marketing and commercialization of products made from raw forest materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Develop processes, systems and tools to manage the forest land base in a more holistic way, for example through the use of mitigation banking <sup>9</sup> and market-based tools.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Forestry

- Approximately six per cent of the region is in the mixed-use forestry area and is mostly covered by forests.
- These areas are important to water security, biodiversity and vegetation management.
- Development of economic resources will be co-ordinated to reduce conflicts with other values.

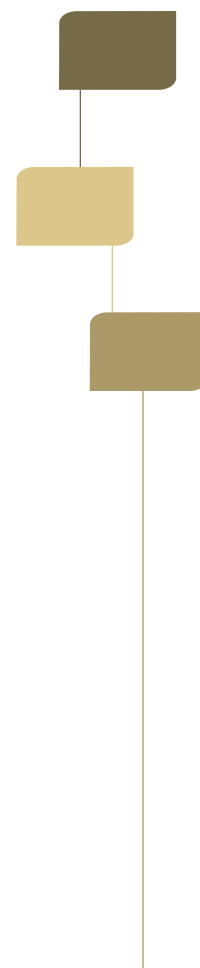
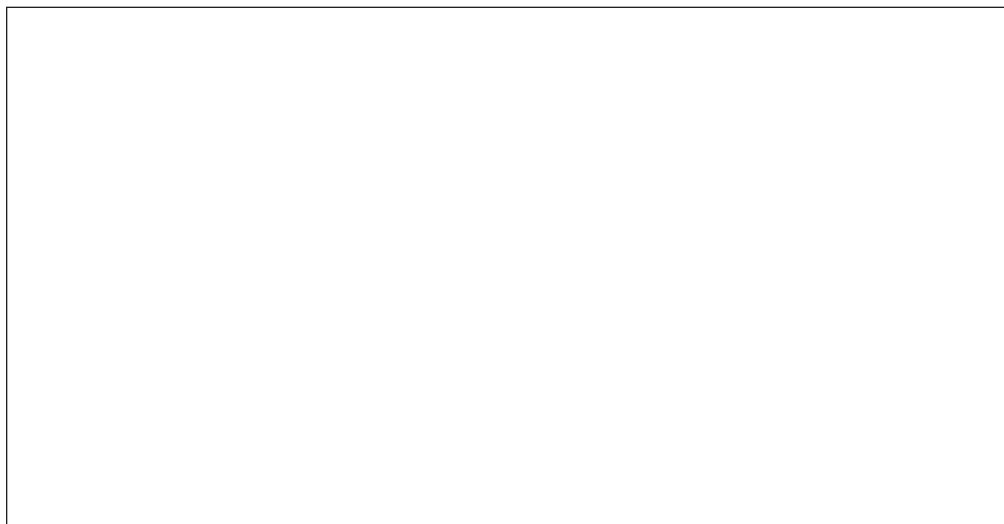
<sup>8</sup> Natural disturbance – Any event such as fire, wind, disease, insects, ice, flood or landslide that disrupts the vegetation and abiotic environment in an area.

<sup>9</sup> Mitigation banking – A mitigation bank includes wetland, stream or habitat conservation areas that have been restored, established or (in certain circumstances) preserved for the purpose of providing compensation to offset expected adverse impacts to similar nearby ecosystems. A mitigation bank may be created when a government agency, corporation, non-profit organization or other entity undertakes these activities under a formal agreement with a regulatory agency.

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
5	Implement an integrated planning process that reduces redundancy and incorporates the management of forestry with water production, biodiversity, recreation and tourism, and energy production. • Support land and resource management approaches and programs like integrated land management (ILM) <sup>10</sup> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Improve existing public transportation infrastructure that currently limits or constrains forestry and the trade of forest-related products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Explore financial incentives and market opportunities for ecological goods and services that advance SSRP objectives and go over and above what is required by basic forestry management obligations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>10</sup> Integrated land management (ILM) - the strategic, planned approach to managing and reducing human-caused footprint on public land. ILM is not a plan or a process. ILM is a way of doing business and a way of thinking, by sharing the land and working together so that land users can reduce their impact on the land.

11. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on forestry.



## Recreation and Tourism

(RAC Advice pgs. 17-18)

The RAC identified the following as key issues for the recreation and tourism industries:

- Without a secure and stable land base, the recreation and tourism industries lack the competitiveness and security to attract investment and spending. Without this, the industries will not be able to realize their full potential to diversify the South Saskatchewan Region and local economies, in addition to meeting growing recreational demands.
- Public land is limited in the region. With the growth in population, there is potential for suitable privately owned land (with approval of the landowner and other approvals) to provide a range of recreation and tourism opportunities, while supplementing landowner incomes.
- Areas capable of becoming provincial iconic tourism destinations<sup>11</sup> lack the critical mass of tourism attractions, amenities, accommodations, activities and quality access.

### Share Your Views

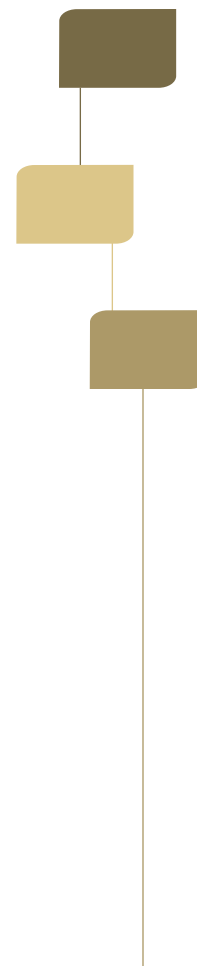
12. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support the recreation and tourism industry. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Identify tourism nodes and establish tourism development plans within recreation/ tourism areas and market these nodes to tourism developers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Increase the competitiveness and security of the tourism and recreation industries by providing long-term tenures within identified recreation and tourism areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>11</sup> Iconic tourism destination – A provincially unique and awe-inspiring area that has the potential to attract significant visitors and gain national and international recognition. An iconic tourism destination contains a critical mass of tourism accommodations, attractions, activities and amenities.

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
3	<p>Identify and develop new areas capable of becoming iconic tourism destinations. Areas that should be considered include the Castle, Crowsnest Pass, Kananaskis and the portion of the Canadian Badlands in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and manage the Castle and Crowsnest Pass as iconic nature-based tourism destinations. Effectively manage the Castle without necessarily designating it as a provincial park.</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Develop a better understanding of the recreation and tourism opportunities on private lands as well as its associated challenges and barriers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on recreation and tourism.



## Economic Growth and Value Added Industries

(RAC Advice pgs. 19-20)

The RAC identified the following as a key issue related to economic growth and value added industries:

- Economic growth and prosperity cannot be taken for granted. The economy must be allowed to be productive and responsive to change. This entails constantly innovating to create and enhance value and supply chains. To be innovative, we must have the right business climate built around fair, effective and efficient regulation, developing human capacity, quality of life, supportive infrastructure, access to capital markets and a balanced fiscal system. Respect for private property rights and entrepreneurial spirit are also key elements for economic success. This means:
  - a market-based economy is fundamental to a prosperous Alberta;
  - enhancing productivity grows wealth. Competitive and innovative markets are a basis for productive enhancement;
  - a main role for government is to enable a competitive marketplace environment through support for innovation, education, infrastructure and efficient and effective regulation;
  - economic growth and diversification require an ample supply of creative, talented and skilled labour. A globalized information and knowledge economy thrives where there is an adequate pool of human capital; and
  - the southern Alberta economy will diversify through sector growth and value added development that supports increased population and employment opportunities across industry sectors. The economic mix of the South Saskatchewan Region will continue to evolve.

## Share Your Views

14. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support the economic growth and value added industries. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Improve the physical infrastructure that supports research and development, and education and training.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	A government priority should be to streamline business regulatory processes to make them more efficient and effective. Government regulation must be fair, straightforward and stable to encourage investment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	To the extent possible, allow for the best economic use of land and other natural resources while accounting for the region's dynamic social, environmental and economic pressures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Encourage the service and small business sectors that contribute to the comparative and competitive strengths of southern Alberta.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Support the development of new and expanded regional and inter-regional supply chains to allow both the mature and emerging sectors to take advantage of provincial and export opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
6	Improve and expand the development of communications tools and infrastructure into rural areas so that people have the freedom to choose where they live and do business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Support industry innovations that reduce water use, land disturbance and carbon footprint, and that work towards a zero-waste goal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Enable policies that support market-driven decisions for ecological goods and services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on growth and value added industries.



# Infrastructure

(RAC Advice pgs. 20-21)

The RAC identified the following key issue related to infrastructure:

- Shifting regional demographics, lifestyles, economic developments and technologies will require more adaptable and responsive transportation networks and systems. As part of a larger, integrated transportation system that serves broader provincial, national and international needs, regional highways may from time-to-time need to be upgraded, interchanges constructed, urban congestion points by-passed and new ways of moving people, goods and services found.

## Share Your Views

16. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support infrastructure. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Plan infrastructure for the future by considering changes in technology, population centres, energy sources and transportation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Plan, design and build corridors and infrastructure to minimize land fragmentation, and to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts on highly significant historic resources, wildlife and critical habitat, endangered and native species, wildlife movement and migratory routes and critical water areas (e.g., source water <sup>12</sup> headwaters, riparian areas).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Adopt design and construction techniques that will promote economic growth while protecting valued resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>12</sup> Source water – Raw/untreated water received for treatment to provide potable water to municipal, industrial or private users. Sources may include high quality groundwater, groundwater under the influence of surface water and surface water from a lake, stream, river or watercourse.

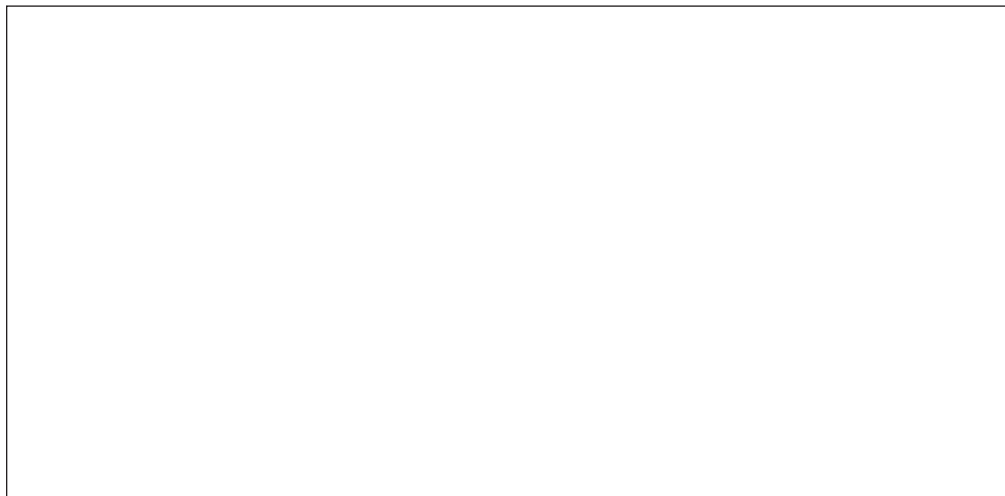
		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
4	Approach transportation development within a cumulative environmental effects perspective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Co-ordinate transportation services in order to meet regional needs. Public and private transportation providers and stakeholders must work together to ensure regional transportation needs can be met in a safe, integrated effective and cost-efficient manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Best efforts should be made to support non-motorized transportation corridors (e.g., bike paths) along highways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Future utility and facility infrastructure needs of urban centres must be anticipated, planned for and adequately funded. This includes right of ways for electricity generation, transmission and distribution facilities, oil and gas pipelines, new regional water and wastewater treatment, and recreational areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Manage existing water storage infrastructure to optimize water release, withdrawal timing and water quality. Additionally, strategic water storage opportunities should be identified and developed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. The RAC recommended multi-use corridors<sup>13</sup> consider the following. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	The economic benefits and costs of developing multi-use corridors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Multi-use corridors should be located east, not west, of Highway 2.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3a	Site multi-use corridor segments within the region to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routes connect regions and have the potential to be part of a provincially continuous system.</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3b	Site multi-use corridor segments within the region to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routes provide access to other markets and support economic competitiveness and growth.</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3c	Site multi-use corridor segments within the region to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routes with the least costs in terms of ecological disturbance.</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3d	Site multi-use corridor segments within the region to meet the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider creative development options when looking at areas with important social and ecological values (e.g., burying power and telephone lines).</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>13</sup> Multi-use corridor – A multi-use corridor is a dedicated land area that co-locates transportation and utility infrastructure.

18. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on infrastructure and multi-use corridors.



# Section 3: Healthy Ecosystem and Environment

(RAC Advice pgs. 22-38)

## Advice Requested of the RAC

The RAC was asked to consider the balance between society, development and the environment as it developed its advice, and to consider the relationships between population growth, water supply, economic growth and land conservation.

The RAC was asked to evaluate development and conservation objectives for the various sectors with regard to water and land-use efficiency objectives and develop options for improving source water protection and aquatic biodiversity (e.g., environmental setbacks, wetland protection or restoration, rehabilitation of degraded sources) and other management means to protect watershed integrity.

The RAC identified the following key issues related to healthy ecosystems and the environment:

- There is a great concern about the region's water resources. Diminishing water supply and quality is the most central issue facing the region and province today. The government must implement new and more effective measures to manage the region's water supply and quality; and to enforce protective regulations.
- Source water is critical to the sustainability of water supply and the health of aquatic ecosystems. Development and extreme natural events, such as drought, wildfire, disease and insect outbreaks affect the region's headwaters<sup>14</sup> and the sustainability of water quality and quantity.
- Proper planning, design and management supports management of source water, wetlands<sup>15</sup> and riparian areas and the services they provide. Management of these resources would be improved with consistent mapping and information, and with a consistent wetland classification system.
- Water scarcity is another issue. Pressure on limited water resources is increasing and water allocation limits have been reached or exceeded in most of the region's water basins. Compounding the scarcity issue are the effects of climate variability (i.e., drought).

<sup>14</sup> Headwaters – The source for a stream, located in the upper tributaries of a drainage basin.

<sup>15</sup> Wetlands – Land saturated with water long enough to promote wetland or aquatic processes as indicated by the poorly drained soils, vegetation and biological activity that is adapted to a wet environment.

## Water Management

(RAC Advice pgs. 22-28)

### Share Your Views

19. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support water management. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Take measures to ensure source water quality and quantity are sustained in co-ordination with measures taken concerning groundwater, riparian <sup>16</sup> areas, wetlands, aquatic biodiversity <sup>17</sup> and headwaters. The priority is to ensure areas that are currently in a desired condition are kept that way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Using a risk management approach, identify and facilitate the implementation of practices that reduce point and non-point sources of water pollution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Help meet the provincial <i>Water for Life</i> target of a minimum of 30 per cent for water conservation, efficiency and productivity by requiring mandatory metering of water-use licensees in the South	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>16</sup> Riparian areas – The area along streams, lakes and wetlands where water and land interact. These areas support plants and animals, and protect aquatic ecosystems by filtering out sediments and nutrients originating from upland areas.

<sup>17</sup> Biodiversity – The assortment of life on earth, such as: the variety of genetic materials in all living things; the variety of species on earth; and the different kinds of living communities and the environments in which they occur.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Saskatchewan Region.					
Implementation strategies could include universal water measuring, auditing of water users, etc., focusing initially on the seven major water users in the province <sup>18</sup> .					
4 Facilitate the co-operative development of watershed management plans and support their implementation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Develop a mechanism for regular monitoring, reporting and public engagement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Explore opportunities to develop and apply market mechanisms to support watershed management objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Enhance the development of water allocation transfer mechanisms to facilitate short- and long-term transfers and assignment of water in water-stressed basins.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 The Government of Alberta meets with First Nations to address water issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>18</sup> Seven major water-using sectors – Chemical and petroleum, forestry, irrigation, mining/oil sands, municipal, oil and gas and power generation.

## Headwaters

(RAC Advice pg. 25)

The RAC identified the following key issue related to headwaters:

- Watershed integrity<sup>19</sup> and the sustainable supply of good quantity and quality water from headwater land is at risk from human development activities and the effects of extreme natural events such as wildfire, disease and insect outbreaks.

### Share Your Views

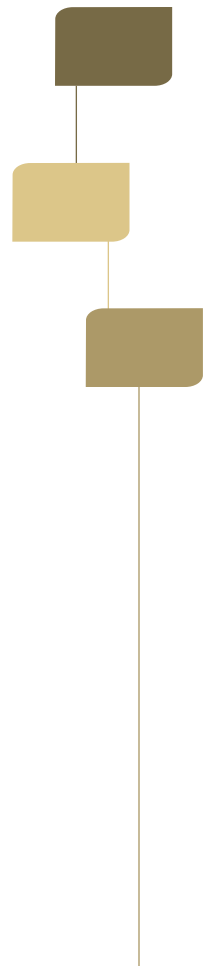
20. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support headwaters protection. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Manage land in the headwaters (e.g., Eastern Slopes and Cypress Hills areas) so that maintaining watershed integrity is given the highest priority by considering the impacts of land disturbance in management decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Manage the cumulative effects of activities in headwaters so the volume and timing of water quantity and water quality is maintained or enhanced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Require best management practices by land users in headwater areas, and expand ongoing public engagement and education programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>19</sup> Watershed integrity – The quantity and quality of the water a watershed produces relative to natural conditions and climate variability; a measure of the degree of natural ecological structure and function within a watershed.



		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
4	Integrate planning for access and resource management in headwater areas with watershed management plans, objectives and values, and ensure effective enforcement. Watershed planning and advisory councils and watershed stewardship groups should be actively involved in developing and implementing watershed plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Wetlands

(RAC Advice pgs. 25-26)

The RAC identified the following key issue related to wetlands:

- Potential future losses of wetland area function due to increasing development could impede assurance of good water quality and quantity, flood mitigation, shoreline stability, water storage, wildlife value and aquifer recharge. Wetlands are essential for biodiversity.

### Share Your Views

21. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support wetlands management. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	The government needs to continue with the development and approval of a new provincial wetlands policy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Create strong economic incentives for wetland restoration, maintenance or development as part of a broader program to develop an ecological goods and services revenue stream.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
3	Develop and encourage practices that restore native plant and animal communities by reducing the occurrence and spread of invasive, non-native species.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Develop and implement best management practices to ensure that land uses immediately adjacent to wetlands keep wetlands in good health.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Increase the level of education and outreach, and provide stewardship opportunities to inform stakeholders of the importance of wetlands and best management practices to protect them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Improve our mapping and knowledge of wetland areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Simplify the provincial wetland classification system and develop a tool to guide the assessment of wetland value (economic, social and ecological). This tool should consider wetland function as a critical component of value, and should help minimize the loss of higher value wetlands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Identify and adopt regional and sub-regional targets for wetland conservation and restoration in provincially-approved watershed management plans through consultation with stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Riparian Areas

(RAC Advice pg. 26)

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to riparian areas:

- Significant loss of healthy riparian areas in the South Saskatchewan Region has impeded the ability of riparian areas to help assure good water quality and quantity, flood mitigation, shoreline stability, water storage and aquifer recharge. Riparian area health is also essential for biodiversity and supports recreational opportunities. Riparian areas are under pressure from development in the region. More systematic management, maintenance and restoration of existing riparian areas is required if further losses are to be avoided.
- There is a lack of information about riparian areas and their conditions.
- There is a need for conservation tools, incentives and improved stewardship.

## Share Your Views

22. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support riparian areas. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Develop new regional riparian area management policies and strategies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Maintain and, to the greatest degree possible, restore riparian function. Filling in the flood plains is not an acceptable practice.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Encourage improved stewardship by increasing education and outreach, and providing stewardship opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Develop and encourage practices that restore native plant and animal communities by reducing the spread of noxious and restrictive species.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
5	Evaluate and improve existing regional co-ordination efforts among government, private organizations and individuals for ensuring protection and maintenance of riparian function.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Improve our mapping and knowledge of riparian areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Include riparian restoration or retention as part of a broader program to develop an ecological goods and services revenue stream.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Groundwater

(RAC Advice pg. 26)

RAC identified the following key issue related to groundwater:

- Increasing development and groundwater use pose a risk to the sustainability of groundwater supply. Improved knowledge will be required on the location, extent, quality and sustainable yield of aquifers in southern Alberta to inform the design and implementation of management strategies.

### Share Your Views

23. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support groundwater management. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I	Vulnerable aquifers <sup>20</sup> should be protected from potential contamination and overuse by requiring development proposals to assess potential	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>20</sup> An aggregate vulnerability approach will be used, which is defined as the additional risk to intrinsic aquifer vulnerability associated with proposed and existing land development.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
impacts and provide management plans to ensure groundwater protection.					
2 Develop a regional groundwater management framework to ensure aquifers are protected and groundwater/surface water interaction and integrity are sustained across the region.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Municipalities using groundwater sources should develop wellhead protection area plans in collaboration with stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on water management.

## Biodiversity

(RAC Advice pg. 29-37)

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to managing biodiversity:

- Biodiversity is vital to healthy ecosystems and the provision of ecological goods and services. Approximately 80 per cent of the species at risk in the province are found in the South Saskatchewan Region.
- The cumulative effects of development on native<sup>21</sup> biodiversity cannot be adequately understood and managed through the existing development approvals process that deals with applications on a singular, disposition-by-disposition basis.
- Pressure on wetlands and riparian areas from increasing urbanization, industrial development, clearing and drainage is causing declines in the quality of aquatic environments and associated biodiversity in parts of the South Saskatchewan Region.
- Regional biodiversity cannot be conserved solely through the contributions of Crown lands. The co-operation of private landowners is vitally important. Private land contributes to the conservation of biodiversity when landowners choose to employ management practices and approaches that support regional biodiversity objectives. The development of conservation and stewardship tools that encourage voluntary biodiversity stewardship are needed.
- Lands owned by the Government of Alberta contribute greatly to biodiversity in the South Saskatchewan Region. Recognizing that they are only part of the solution, public lands provide the most cost-effective opportunities for conservation. However, greater alignment of land-use decisions and practices with regional biodiversity objectives is needed. On public lands, biodiversity objectives may be achieved both voluntarily as well as through regulatory and permitting processes.
- The long-term sustainability of native grasslands (on public lands) is being affected by conversion and development pressures by other land uses.
- Forests (on public lands) are under increasing pressure from a number of land uses. There is a need to ensure that the biodiversity sustained by natural forest vegetation patterns and ecological processes is maintained while, at the same time, allowing for other land uses.

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<sup>21</sup> Native – an assemblage of plants in a specific place or region that has adapted to environmental and biological conditions. Native vegetation is typically dominated by native plant species, but may include non-native plants or naturalized plants. Vegetation may be classified by type based on characteristics such as dominant plant communities or dominant plant species. Some native vegetation assemblages, such as annual grassland, may contain significant numbers of introduced plant species that have adapted to local conditions.

## Share Your Views

25. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to support biodiversity. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	The Government of Alberta should complete the development of a regional biodiversity management framework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Respect private property rights by developing a suite of conservation and stewardship tools (e.g., economic and market-based incentives, conservation easements, transferable development credits, mitigation banking and paid access for hunting) that can be voluntarily used by landowners and disposition holders to help sustain biodiversity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Identify an integrated network of public and private lands that contribute to conservation of biodiversity (conservation areas). On public lands, establish conservation management areas that represent important natural features, patterns and processes, and habitats.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Conserve critical habitats for species of concern.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Develop and promote practices that reduce the spread of invasive non-native species and, where feasible, restore native plant and animal communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
6	The Government of Alberta needs to create a new species target database using an integrated management approach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Conserve important wetland and riparian areas for their biodiversity, water security features and recreation/tourism values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Where feasible, and in priority order, avoid, minimize or mitigate the conversion of native grasslands on public lands. Promote their restoration through the use of conservation and stewardship tools, incentives and other stewardship approaches.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Establish a network of conservation management areas on public lands that represent all the natural features, patterns and processes of each natural region and capture important natural features and habitats.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Manage for the natural range of variability of age classes, species composition and spatial patterns of vegetation communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Natural and managed disturbances (e.g., wildfire, prescribed burns, timber harvesting and grazing) are used to help manage vegetation, sustain biodiversity, manage risk from uncontrolled wildfire and disease, and to enhance the provision of ecological goods and services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
12 Native grasslands are conserved by controlling tree and shrub encroachment and surface disturbance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13 The loss of ecosystem health and function from human disturbance, invasive species and contamination is minimized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14 Science-based targets are established for the retention of native land by landscape type and thresholds for the disturbance/ fragmentation of native landscapes <sup>22</sup> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15 Landscapes where function, patch size and connectivity have been significantly diminished, and where fragmentation exceeds thresholds under the regional biodiversity framework, are reclaimed and restored where practical.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16 Apply an integrated land management approach when planning recreation, tourism, access, forestry, grazing, watershed, etc. to minimize losses of native vegetation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17 Local governments, First Nations, industry, non-government organizations and the public work together to co-ordinate activities and reduce fragmentation caused by roads, access and facilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>22</sup> Native landscape – A landscape that contains an assemblage of plants and plant communities that are indigenous to a particular location.

26. Identify your top five priorities (by number) from the list above.

First	
Second	
Third	
Fourth	
Fifth	

27. The RAC recommended a suite of actions on best management practices for reducing human footprint. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Expand stakeholder engagement across all sectors regarding the effectiveness of current land-use practices and the development of new best management practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Gather information on best management practices and, where gaps in knowledge exist, promote the development of leading-edge best management practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Inform users about existing and emerging best management practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Require co-operative integrated land management planning practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5a	Actively manage existing and future human disturbances. Work with local governments, First Nations, industry and other stakeholders to:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinate activities and reduce fragmentation caused by roads and other linear disturbances.</li> </ul>					
5b Actively manage existing and future human disturbances. Work with local governments, First Nations, industry and other stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggregate land uses where feasible.</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Apply rigorous inventorying, monitoring and assessments to gauge progress with the direction provided in the SSRP.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Minimize impacts to land in specified localities surrounding designated/ candidate historical sites to protect associated cultural features that contribute to the heritage value of those sites, including their view sheds, through best management practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on biodiversity.

## Air Quality

(RAC Advice pg. 38)

The RAC identified the following as a key issue related to air quality:

- Air quality was not perceived to be a great concern for the region—with the exception of the Calgary metropolitan area.

### Share Your Views

29. The RAC recommended the following actions to support air quality. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Develop an air quality framework for airshed zones in the region.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Monitor air quality.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Where monitoring shows it is necessary, establish air management plans.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's recommendations on improving air quality.

# Section 4: Healthy Communities

(RAC Advice pgs. 39-46)

## Advice Requested of the RAC

The RAC was asked to provide advice regarding new development needs and healthy community objectives in the region. This would involve examining the alignment of sustainable community policies, including the effective use of water and land.

The RAC was asked to consider impacts to aboriginal communities as well as treaty and other constitutional rights exercised by members of those communities.

The RAC was asked to identify the location of high-value recreation and tourism lands in the region and advise on approaches to maintain the recreation and tourism integrity of these lands.

## Healthy Communities

(RAC Advice pgs. 39-41)

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to healthy communities:

- There is a lack of sufficient resources, local capacity or inconsistent application of the available suite of land-use planning tools, concepts and best practices. Not all municipalities have the resources or capacity to explore/implement these land-use tools. Also, no one planning tool, concept or best practice can be universally applied to all communities.
- Current responses to social development needs are incremental and challenged by uneven population growth rates.
- Communities lack the resources to use forecasting tools to assess future community development needs.
- Sedentary lifestyles and associated health issues are on the rise in Alberta. In addition, demands for recreation opportunities closer to home are growing.
- Municipalities are asked to implement provincial and regional policy directions, but often lack the capacity to do so.

## Share Your Views

31. The RAC recommended a suite of actions to healthy communities. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Raise awareness of the best practices, concepts and tools available for land-use planning and assist communities to apply them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Develop a more collaborative mechanism for communities to partner with the public and private sectors to meet social needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Promote collaboration and co-operation among municipalities to accommodate future populations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Forecast and plan for the development needs and implementation programs and services that meet these needs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Provide accessible and affordable recreation facilities, parks and open spaces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Local government and land managers explore partnership opportunities to revitalize, develop and enhance parks, open spaces and recreation within and in close proximity to municipalities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

32. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on healthy communities.



## Aboriginal Peoples and First Nations Communities

(RAC Advice pg. 42)

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to aboriginal peoples and First Nations communities:

- Aboriginal participation in the regional economy should be encouraged.
- Planning processes to consider implications on aboriginal peoples should be developed.
- Aboriginal traditional land-use rights should be considered when managing wildlife and natural resources.
- Aboriginal traditional land use and knowledge should be valued during natural resource planning and management activities.

## Share Your Views

33. The RAC recommended a suite of actions regarding aboriginal peoples and First Nations communities. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1 Identify barriers to aboriginal peoples' inclusion into the economy and work with aboriginal peoples and organizations to develop strategies to ensure greater inclusion into the provincial economy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 Work with aboriginal peoples and government to develop formal roles and responsibilities for aboriginal peoples in land-use planning and environmental assessment and monitoring.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 Work with aboriginal peoples and governments to co-ordinate planning processes and to improve the quality of information used to make planning decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Consider the special/ unique circumstances of aboriginal peoples and governments in planning and funding allocations for physical and social infrastructure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Assess the state of knowledge of fish and wildlife resources and effectively manage allocations that affect aboriginal peoples' rights and interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
6	Encourage aboriginal peoples to share traditional land-use knowledge for the purposes of land management and planning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Use aboriginal traditional knowledge to enhance the understanding of cumulative effects and develop appropriate mitigation/minimization strategies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on aboriginal peoples and First Nations communities.

## Recreation and Tourism

(RAC Advice pgs. 43-46)

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to recreation and tourism:

- Recreation planning, supply and management are failing to meet current and future demands.
- The funding, development and delivery of recreation and tourism opportunities on public lands is limited by a lack of policy, funding shortages and limited infrastructure.
- A significant portion of the region's existing recreation and tourism infrastructure is aging, outdated, non-inclusive and unable to meet current or future visitation levels and expectations.
- New and enhanced tourism and recreation products and facilities near population centres are required to: enhance visitation from local, domestic and international markets; and meet current and growing demands.
- The private and not-for-profit sectors need to be supported in taking a leadership role in developing new—and upgrading existing—recreation and tourism infrastructure.
- The region's important scenic resources have received limited planning and consideration and are being degraded or lost in some locations.

### Share Your Views

35. The RAC recommended a suite of actions regarding high value recreation and tourism areas and managing recreation on public lands. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Develop a better understanding of recreation and tourism preferences and the region's supply of recreation and tourism features and opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Identify and maintain suitable lands for recreation and tourism. Establish policies (management intents) for these areas which identify appropriate recreation and tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

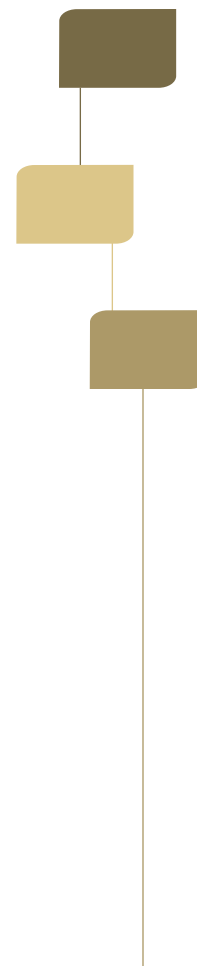
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
activities and facilities, as well as the requirements for mitigating or eliminating conflicts associated with other land-use activities.					
3 Where appropriate, recreation and tourism opportunities should be retained in areas outside of lands designated for recreation and tourism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Develop an integrated access management plan for the entire Eastern Slopes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 Enhance education and outreach programs and information about the region's recreation opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 Develop an all-season land- and water-based regional trail system that links communities, neighbourhoods and destinations with the region's parks and other recreation and tourism areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 Develop and deliver recreation opportunities through public, private and recreational community partnerships.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 Create a supportive and enabling policy environment that encourages the recreation community and private sector to develop and deliver recreation opportunities on public and private lands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
8	Develop and implement a user-pay system(s) to assist with funding the development and management of necessary recreation planning, management and infrastructure. Explore market mechanisms and ecological goods and services with users and benefiting user groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Enhance and ensure timely, fair and firm enforcement of rules and regulations for recreating on public lands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10a	Unmanaged recreation activities that do not demonstrate stewardship and respect for the natural environment, other values and land uses should not be permitted on public lands. • Motorized recreation, including rallies and races, should not be permitted on public lands unless authorized on designated trails, routes and areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10b	Unmanaged recreation activities that do not demonstrate stewardship and respect for the natural environment, other values and land uses should not be permitted on public lands. • Motorized activities should not be permitted in riparian areas or wetlands, and mud bogging should be prohibited on public lands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
10c Unmanaged recreation activities that do not demonstrate stewardship and respect for the natural environment, other values and land uses should not be permitted on public lands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Unmanaged camping should not be permitted on public lands unless authorized in designated areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

36. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on high value recreation and tourism areas and managing recreation on public lands.



37. The RAC recommended a suite of actions regarding maintaining the integrity of high value recreation and tourism areas and infrastructure enhancements. How strongly do you agree with each proposal?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Enhance the regional network of provincial and municipal parks and open spaces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Maintain and enhance public access to recreational water bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Encourage and enhance appropriate public access to scenic areas, corridors, viewpoints and attractive landscapes while minimizing and mitigating, where possible, the impacts on wildlife habitat and mitigation routes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Enhance recreation and tourism infrastructure to meet growing and changing demands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Expand the capacity and services at existing recreation and tourism destinations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Seek opportunities through partnerships to enhance existing infrastructure (e.g., roads, sewer and water) in current parks and recreation attractions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Implement strategies to promote visitation to under-utilized recreation and tourism infrastructure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Promote and encourage the provision of accessible and inclusive recreation infrastructure opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
9	Work with the private, not for profit and public sectors to expand the supply and diversity of the recreation opportunities and tourism products where they are currently lacking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Develop new services and un-serviced designated camping opportunities in the Eastern Slopes and eastern areas of the region.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

38. Please share any additional comments regarding the RAC's advice on maintaining the integrity of high value recreation and tourism areas and infrastructure enhancement.

## Section 5: Land-use Direction and Management Intent

(RAC Advice pgs. 47-63)

The RAC has proposed five new land-use classifications<sup>23</sup> that identify priorities to help guide future land-use decisions in the region. These are designed to provide greater certainty to Albertans, governments and industry about how lands will be managed, and how and where we will grow.

“In all cases, land-use decisions must meet water security objectives”  
(RAC Advice pg.52)

The South Saskatchewan Region has a rich mix of land uses and economic activities. Almost all areas in the region have more than one land use. The following is the land-use classification scheme, followed by more detailed descriptions and management intent for each class:

- A. Agriculture
  - A1. Cultivated lands
  - A2. Native rangeland/grazing lands (private and public lands)
- B. Candidate conservation management areas on public lands
- C. Mixed use – forest on public lands
- D. Population centres
- E. Recreation/tourism on public lands

These land-use classifications will provide greater clarity around how and where industry should and should not develop.

The land-use classifications will provide management intents for these lands, and identify other compatible activities. For example, agriculture areas could also be used for recreation, tourism or natural gas extraction. Each classification will have an established management intent, which will guide decisions about how land in that classification is used.

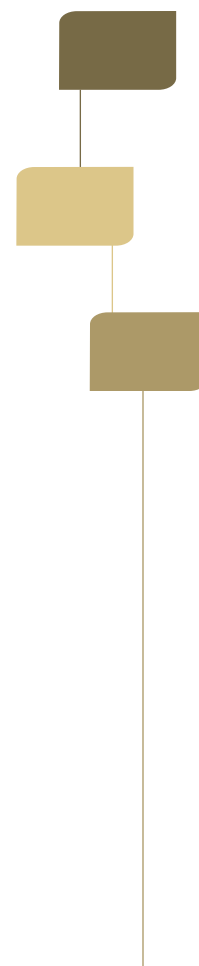
These land-use classifications will provide greater clarity around how and where various industry should and should not develop.

The land-use classifications will provide management intents for these lands and also identify other compatible activities. For example, agricultural areas could also be used for recreation, tourism or natural gas extraction. Each classification will have an established management intent, which will guide decisions about how land in that classification is used.

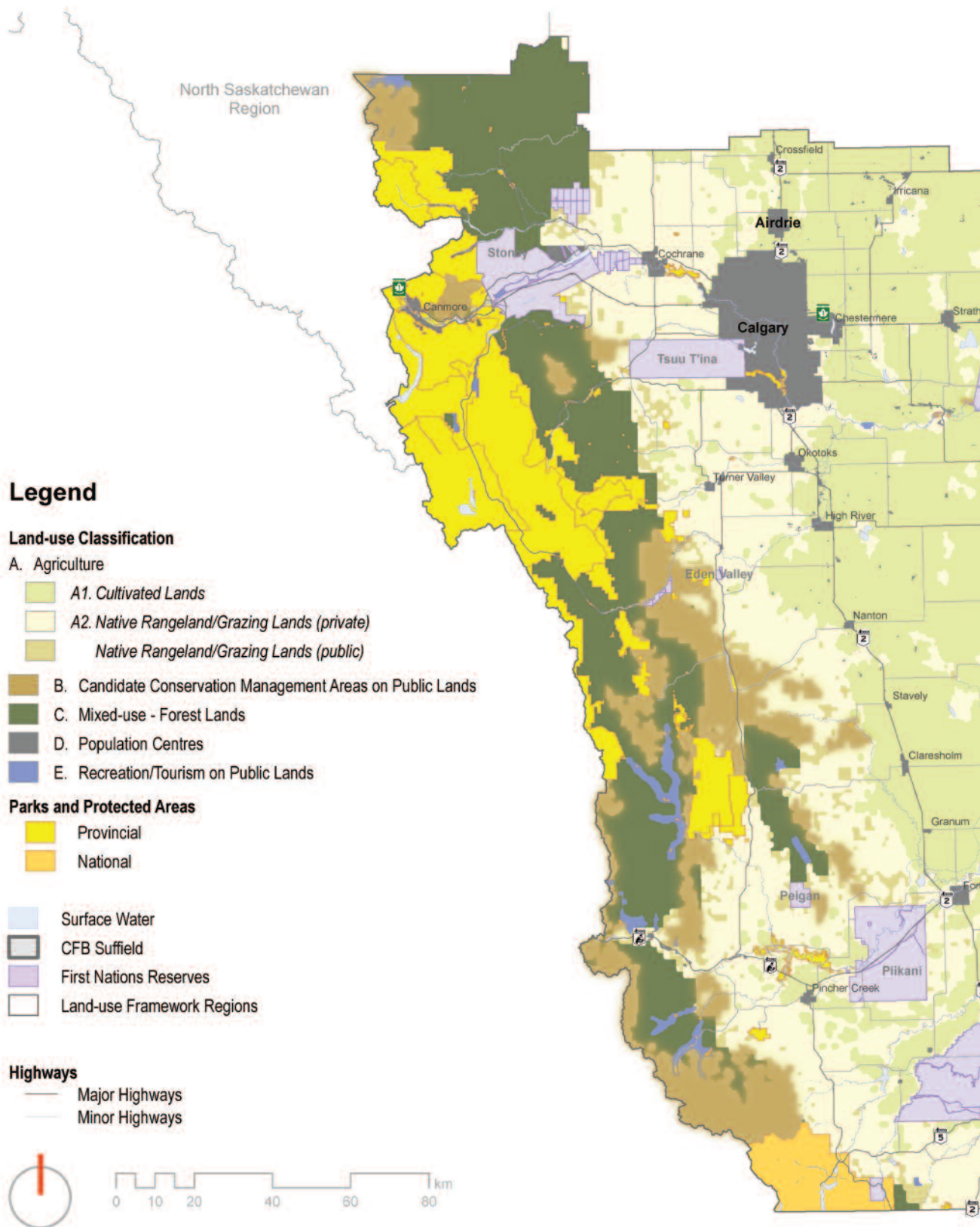
<sup>23</sup> These land-use classifications apply only to those lands under provincial and municipal control. Any lands that fall under federal control, including Department of National Defence installations and First Nations reserves are not subject to these land-use classifications and will be managed separately. In addition, Métis Settlements do not fall under these land-use classifications.

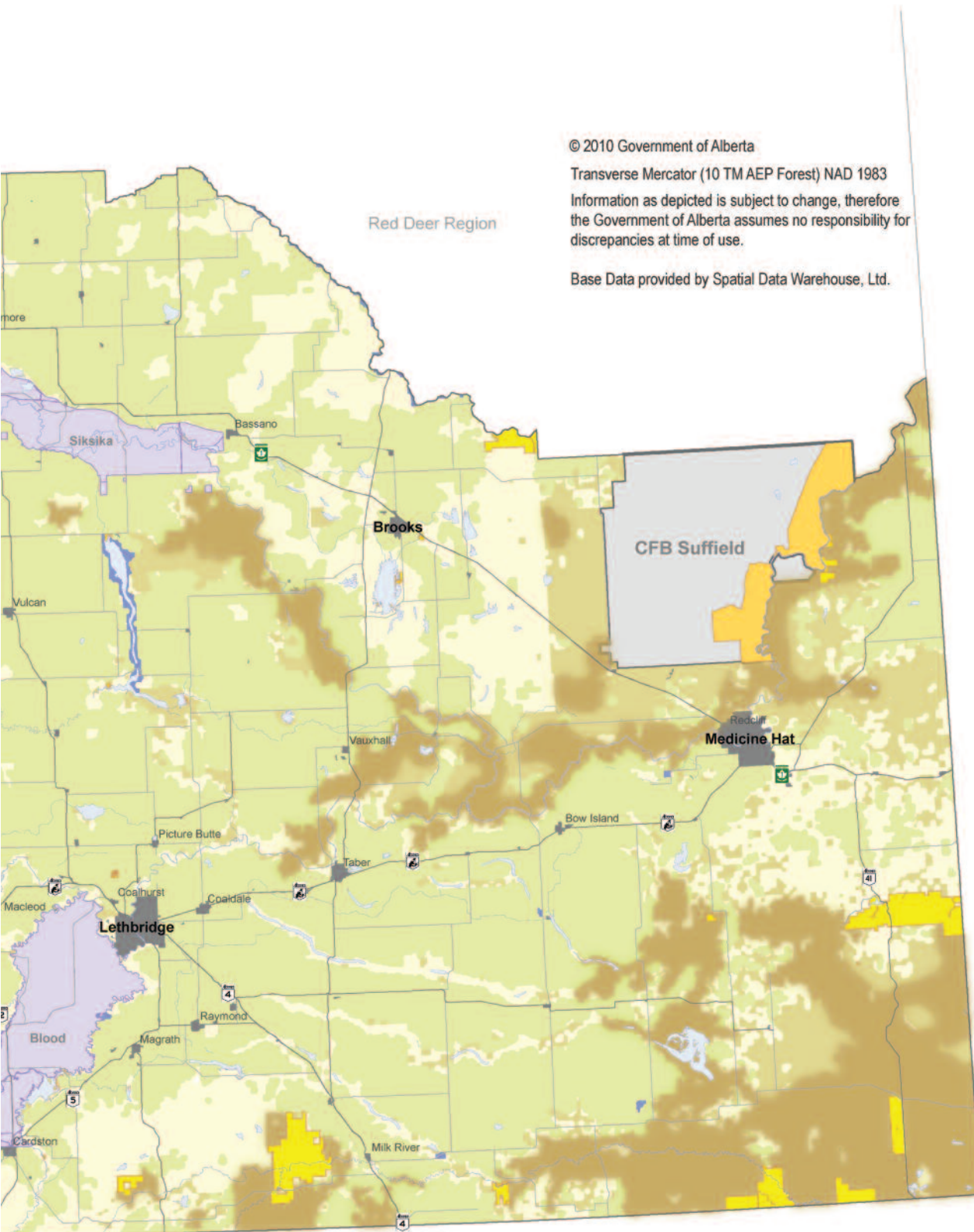


Land-use classification		Management intent for these lands	Other compatible uses	
Agriculture	Cultivated lands (RAC Advice pg. 48)	Retain arable land for productive use and improve agricultural infrastructure. Minimize farmland conversion and fragmentation.	Resource development, country residential, recreation and tourism.	
	Native rangeland (RAC Advice pg. 49)	Retain land for livestock grazing, provision of biodiversity and security of water quality/quantity. Minimize rangeland loss and fragmentation.	Private lands	Resource development, country residential, recreation and tourism.
			Public lands	Resource development, recreation and tourism.
Conservation – on public lands (RAC Advice pg. 51)		Ecosystem integrity, conservation and historical significance.	Aboriginal and non-aboriginal traditional uses, primitive recreation and tourism, livestock grazing, managed industrial activity based upon maximum allowed disturbance.	
Mixed-use – forests on public lands (RAC Advice pg. 56)		Natural resource extraction managed to ensure water security, landscape connectivity and biodiversity; and to respect integrity of cultural resources and aboriginal traditional uses.	Recreation and tourism.	
Population centres (RAC Advice pg. 57)		Residential, commercial and light industrial development supporting uses (e.g., parks, civic uses); complete and connected communities; and sustainable communities.	Compatible agriculture and natural resource extraction.	
Recreation and tourism – on public lands (RAC Advice pgs. 58-59)		Recreation and tourism, traditional uses, ecological conservation.	Other land uses if recreation and tourism values can be maintained.	



## RAC Land-use Classification Map





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Transverse Mercator (10 TMAEP Forest) NAD 1983

Information as depicted is subject to change, therefore the Government of Alberta assumes no responsibility for discrepancies at time of use.

Base Data provided by Spatial Data Warehouse, Ltd.

## Share Your Views

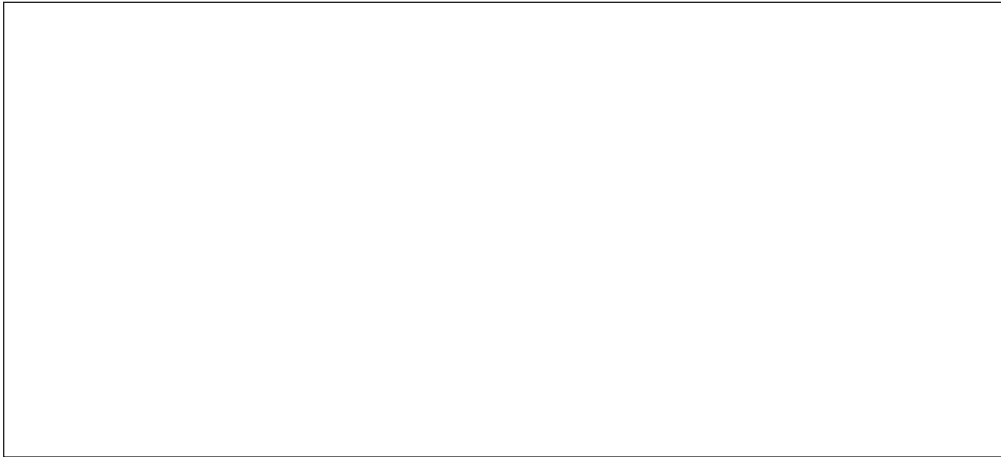
39. How appropriate are the management intents for each land-use classification?

	Too Broad	Appropriate	Too Narrow
Cultivated lands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Native rangeland – public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Native rangeland – private	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conservation – on public lands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mixed-use forest – on public lands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Population centres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation and tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

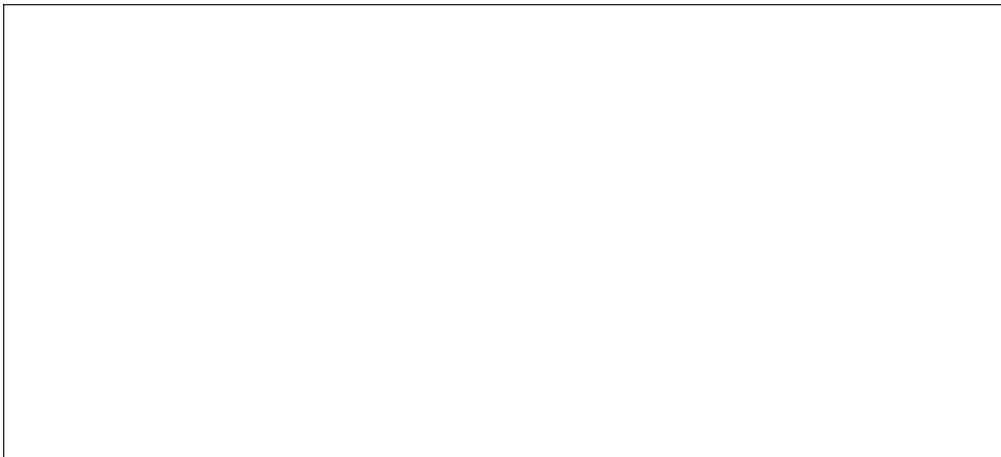
40. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed management intent for cultivated lands.

41. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed management intent for public native rangeland.

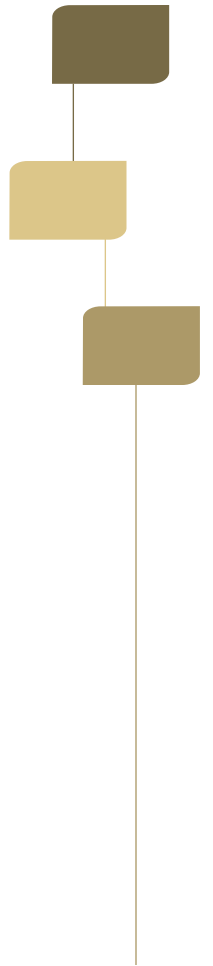
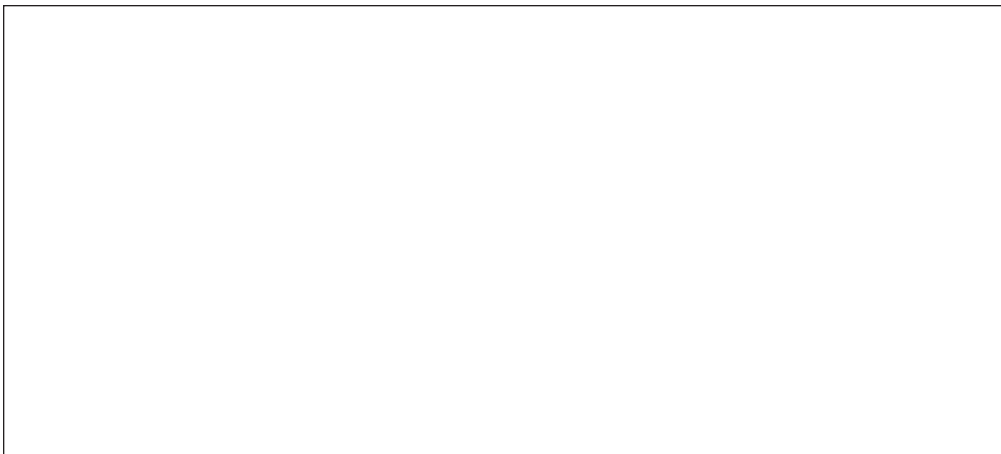
42. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed management intent for private native rangeland.



43. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed management intent for mixed-use – forest on public lands.



44. Please share any additional comments regarding the management intent for population centres.



## Conservation Areas on Public Lands

(RAC Advice pgs. 51-56)

### Advice Requested of the RAC

Observing key criteria for conservation lands, The RAC was asked to advise which lands in the region could meet these criteria, while considering development implications.

Key planning considerations for valued landscapes and the maintenance of biodiversity in the region include:

- Valued landscapes that provide important goods and services are conserved or restored;
- Valued landscapes and resources are efficiently and responsibly used to provide a sustainable stream of goods and services; and
- The quality and diversity of the land base and biodiversity are maintained.

Key criteria for identifying, conserving and restoring the network of valued landscapes and elements in the South Saskatchewan Region include:

- Areas that permit the function of ecological processes in the production of goods and services (e.g., riparian zones, prairies, forests, agricultural lands);
- Areas that support the desired biological diversity in the region (e.g., landforms, species, vegetation), including critical wildlife habitat and areas that enable movement of wildlife populations;
- Landscapes that provide visual and cultural integrity;
- Areas of sufficient size;
- Areas providing landscape connectivity;
- Areas providing recreation and tourism opportunities;
- Areas with little or no industrial activity; and
- Areas that support aboriginal traditional use.

The RAC identified the following as key issues related to conservation areas:

- Management of conservation areas is vital in ensuring water and ecological outcomes. Inherent in this management is the concept not of “if” or “who” has access and activity rights in these areas, but “how” access and activities can occur—while ensuring the specified water quantity and quality and ecological outcomes—thus supporting the social and economic attributes of the areas.
- Identification of conservation management areas is a complex process and requires extensive scientific analysis, expert input and consultation with First Nations and other stakeholders who would be directly affected by designating an area. The RAC has initiated the process by identifying areas based on the information and knowledge available during its deliberations, and expects further refinement of the areas will be required through the regional plan development and site specific planning.

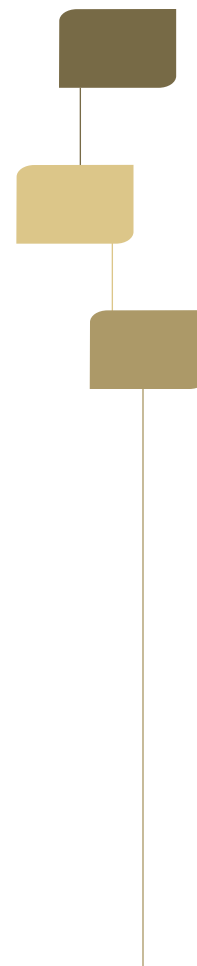


## What is Recommended

- Potential areas of high conservation values will be selected and managed to ensure specified water management ecological outcomes. These areas will be established as to boundaries and finalized once further evaluation occurs to confirm their selection.
- For each of these, mandatory integrated conservation management plans (ICMPs) must be developed within three years. Those ICMPs would be developed in co-operation with those stakeholders who will be affected by the plan, and in consultation with First Nations, a broad range of stakeholders, local constituents and interested members of the public.
- The ICMPs would recognize and integrate any existing plans such as watershed management plans, resource management plans, access management plans and regional frameworks. Once area boundaries are finalized and the ICMPs are in place, the areas could be officially declared and the plans made operational.

### Conservation Areas

- Currently about six per cent of the region's land area is managed under conservation designations (e.g., legislated parks and protected areas).
- All on publicly owned lands.
- Management intent: maintain ecological systems and processes, including biodiversity.
- Primary uses: ecosystem integrity and conservation.
- Also valued for primitive recreation and aboriginal traditional use.



## Share Your Views

45. The RAC has recommended a management strategy for conservation areas.  
How strongly do you agree with this recommendation?

Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

46. The RAC has recommended a suite of permitted uses in conservation areas on public lands. How strongly do you agree with each recommendation?

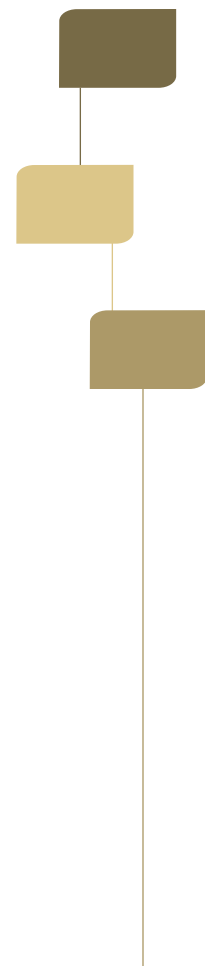
		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Permanent industrial, residential, commercial or intensive recreation/ tourism surface development only if the activity does not significantly impact water security and ecological outcomes defined for the specific area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Existing tenures and freehold rights will be managed.  • Approvals for surface access for energy of mineral development (e.g., seismic programs or well sites) will be issued to enable the development of existing Crown mineral tenures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	New Crown mineral tenures that maintain water security and desired ecological outcomes.  • Surface access will be held to a higher standard.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Forest harvesting – modified practices to achieve desired environmental outcomes.  • To manage threats due to fire or disease, practices will emulate natural disturbance. Practices could include timber harvesting, prescribed burning and grazing and FireSmart <sup>24</sup> strategies will be utilized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<sup>24</sup> FireSmart - a proactive prevention program utilized by Sustainable Resource Development since the 1990's to mitigate wildfire impacts while embracing the ecological role of wildfire. FireSmart helps protect homes and communities from the threat of wildfire. Using fire-resistant materials on buildings and following simple landscaping practices will help create a FireSmart community.



		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
5	Recreation and tourism activities (primitive and backcountry) – wilderness hiking, hunting, fishing and low-impact camping.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Aboriginal traditional uses including subsistence gathering, hunting and fishing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Public motorized access, where permitted, limited to designated trails, routes, roads and staging areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Multi-use corridors, only where an alternative option does not exist.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Grazing will continue to be permitted in these areas when a current range management plan is in place.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

47. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed land-use in conservation areas.



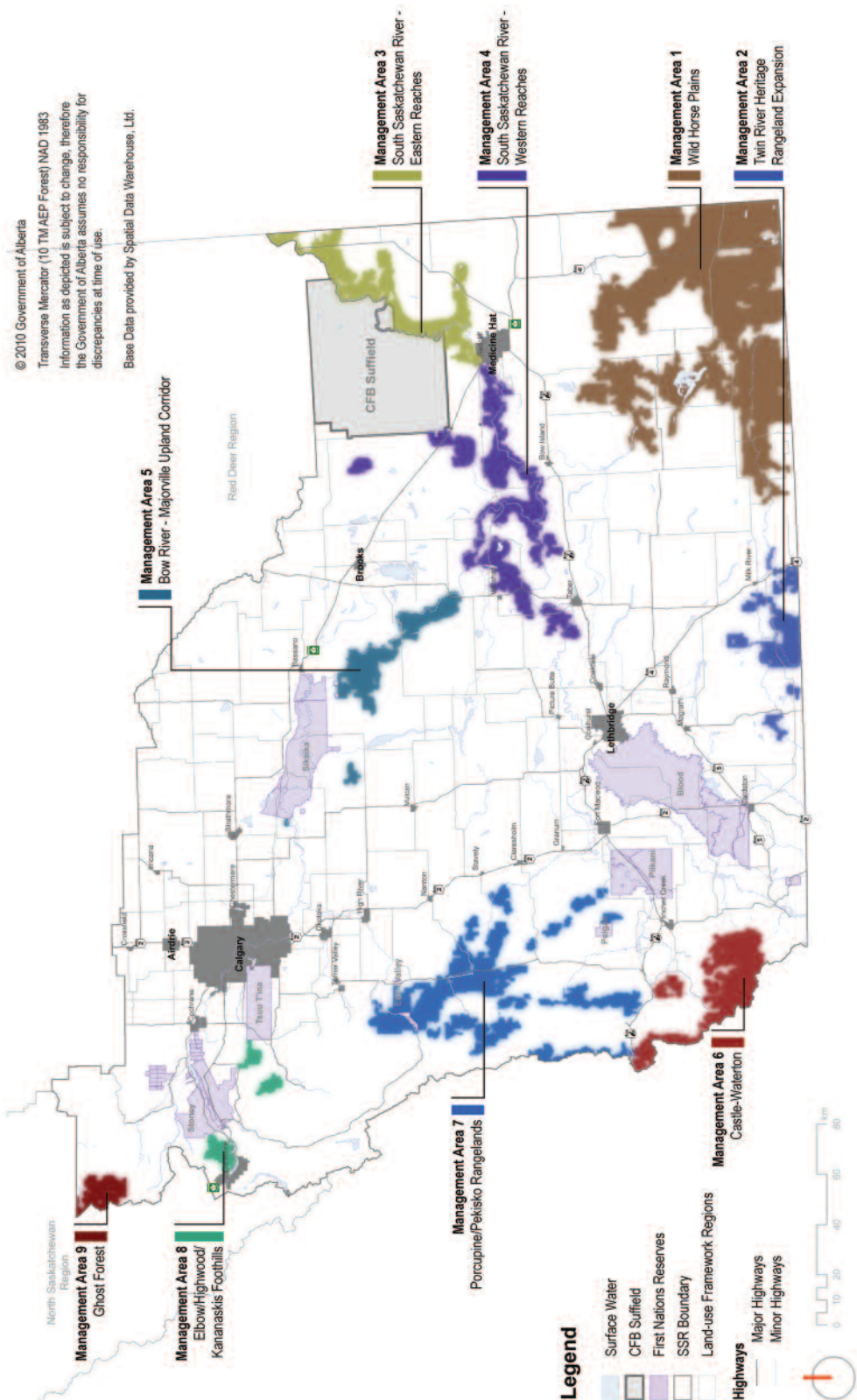
## **Lands which have high conservation values**

(RAC Advice pgs. 52-56)

The RAC identified a number of public lands that could contribute to increasing the amount of conservation on the region's land base. Additional private lands were identified that have high conservation values and the RAC encourages the government to develop conservation and stewardship tools that would assist the landowner to voluntarily, or with an incentive, conserve these lands.

- The nine candidate conservation management areas on the following map have been preliminarily identified on public lands.

# RAC Candidate Conservation Management Areas on Public Lands



48. The RAC has identified nine areas to be considered as candidates for conservation areas. Rate the importance of each of the candidate conservation lands. You only need to prioritize the ones you would like to see become conservation areas.

The RAC recommended the following candidate conservation areas		High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority
1	The Wildhorse Plains (RAC Advice pg. 52)			
2	Twin River Heritage Rangeland Expansion (RAC Advice pg. 53)			
3	South Saskatchewan River – Eastern Reaches (RAC Advice pg. 53)			
4	South Saskatchewan River – Western Reaches (RAC Advice pg. 54)			
5	Bow River – Majorville Upland Corridor (RAC Advice pg. 54)			
6	Castle-Waterton (RAC Advice pg. 55)			
7	Porcupine/Pekiso Rangelands (RAC Advice pg. 55)			
8	Elbow/Highland/Kananaskis Foothills (RAC Advice pg. 55)			
9	Ghost Forest (RAC Advice pg. 56)			

49. Is there an area you would like to see conserved that has not been proposed by the RAC? If so, explain why. Identify up to three additional areas.

Area	Reason

50. Please share any additional comments regarding land conservation in the region.



## Recreation and Tourism Areas

(RAC Advice pgs. 58-59)

### Advice Requested of the RAC

The RAC was asked to:

- Identify options for the location of high-value recreation and tourism lands in the region, and advise on approaches to maintain the recreation and tourism integrity of these lands;
- Examine the suitability of recreational activities and tourism developments in the region. Identify necessary recreation and tourism enhancements—including a particular focus on trails and campgrounds—as a way of meeting growing and changing demand; and
- Provide advice on approaches to manage recreational use of public lands effectively.

### What is Recommended

Recreation and tourism areas contain regionally and provincially significant recreation and tourism features. These lands are important for developing the potential of the region's tourism industry, and in meeting current and future recreation demands.

Recreation and tourism values on private lands can contribute greatly to providing recreation and tourism opportunities. Private landowners should be encouraged to offer a range of recreation and tourism developments in key locations for economic purposes.

Recreation and tourism areas on public lands will be managed to ensure recreation and tourism values (features, settings and scenic quality) are maintained to achieve desired regional recreation and tourism outcomes.

Unmanaged recreation activities that do not demonstrate stewardship and respect for the natural environment, other values and land uses should not be permitted in these areas. Where possible, nodal infrastructure including campgrounds and other facilities will be sited to help accommodate demands for recreation on public lands currently met through unmanaged activities.

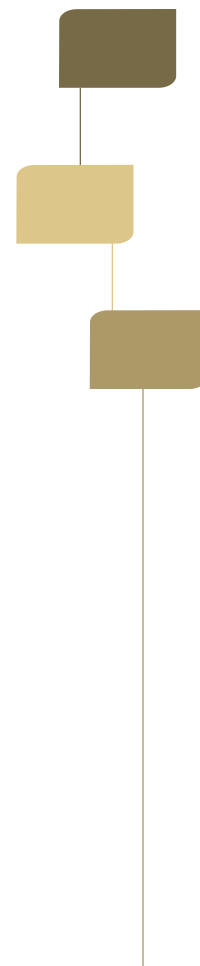
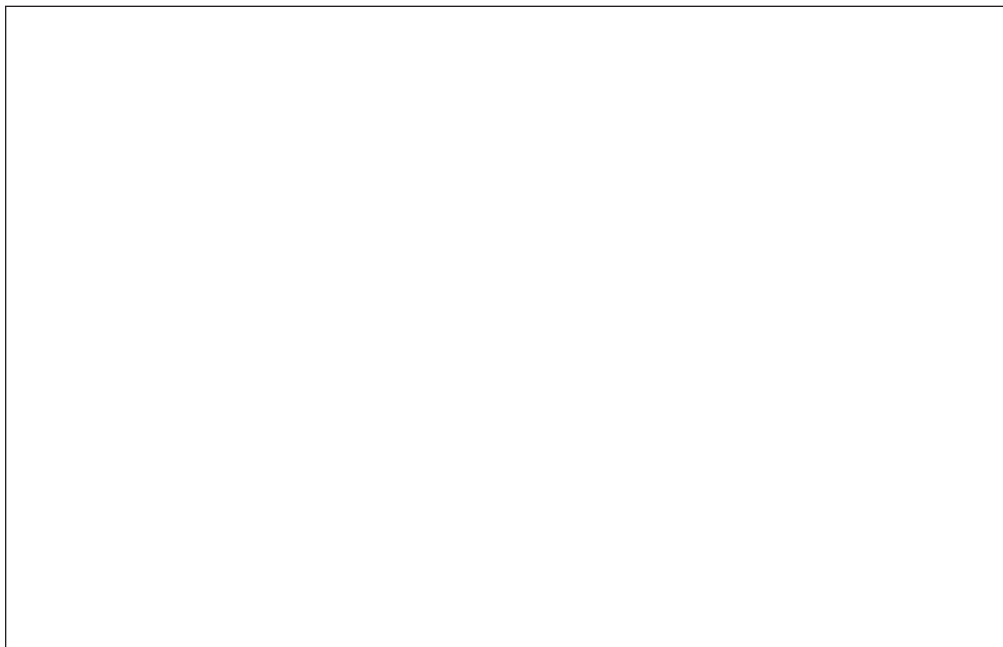
Specific tourism and recreation management and development plans will be developed for each area.

### Share Your Views

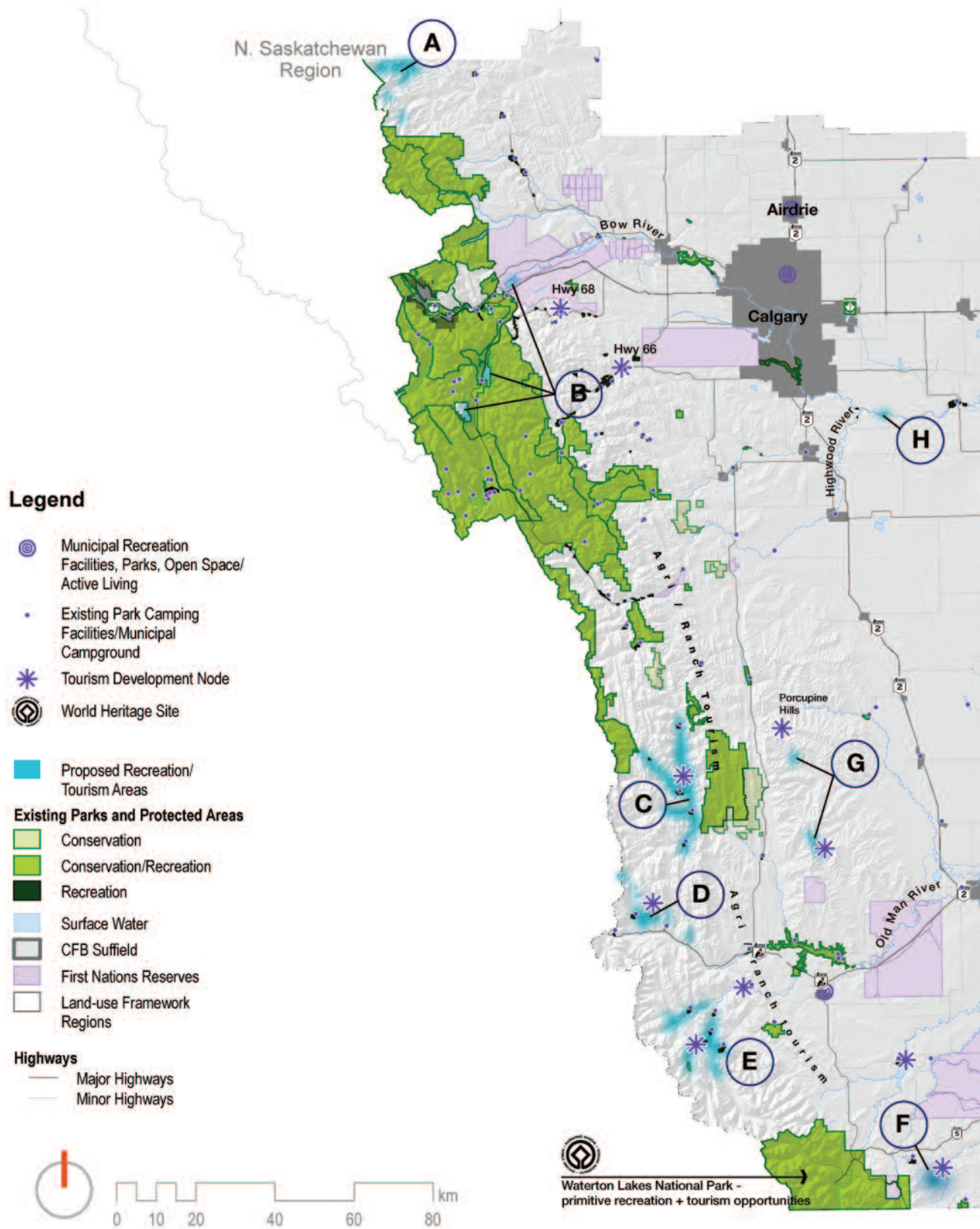
51. The RAC has recommended a suite of permitted uses in recreation and tourism areas on public lands. How strongly do you agree with each recommendation?

	Permitted Activities in Recreation and Tourism Areas on Public Lands	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Development of other resource-based industries may be permitted as long as the recreation/tourism values are maintained.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Development of areas with high scenic value is to be carried out in a manner that maintains scenic values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Recreation and tourism activities and developments are to be actively managed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Natural disturbance or the emulation of natural disturbance to achieve environmental, social and economic objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

52. Please share any additional comments regarding the proposed land use in recreation and tourism areas.



## Tourism and Recreation Concept Map



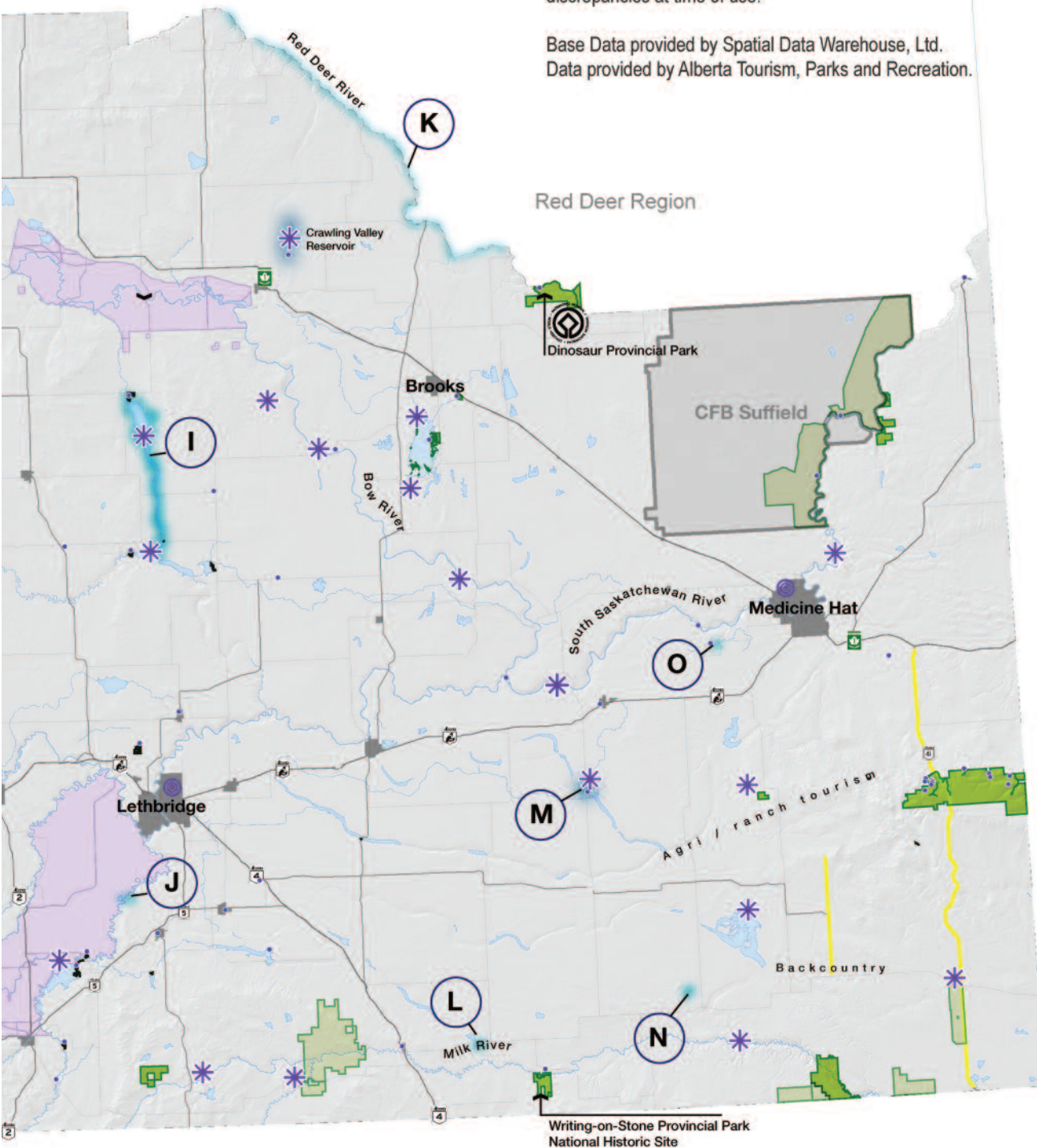


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Transverse Mercator (10 TMAEP Forest) NAD 1983

Information as depicted is subject to change, therefore the Government of Alberta assumes no responsibility for discrepancies at time of use.

Base Data provided by Spatial Data Warehouse, Ltd.  
Data provided by Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation.



## Lands which have high recreation and tourism values

(Refer to map on previous page)

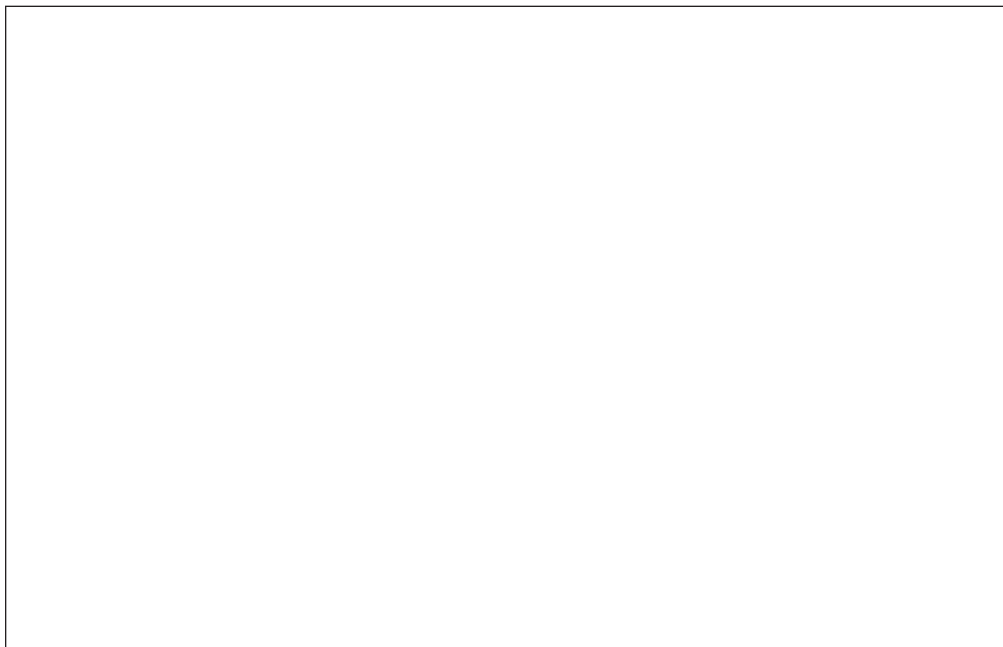
53. The RAC has proposed a number of lands for designation as recreation and tourism areas. Rate the importance of each area as a recreation and tourism resource. You only need to rate the ones you would like.

Proposed Recreation and Tourism Areas	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority
A Dormer-Sheep-Ghost			
B Kananaskis-Bow River			
C Livingstone-Upper Oldman			
D Allison-Chinook			
E Castle-Carbondale			
F Poll Haven			
G Porcupine Hills			
H Highwood River			
I McGregor Lake			
J St. Mary River			
K Red Deer River-Finnegan Ferry			
L Milk River-Verdigris Coulee			
M Forty Mile Coulee			
N Gahern			
O Sauder Reservoir			

54. Is there an area you would like to see as a recreation and tourism area that has not been proposed by the RAC? If so, explain why. Identify up to three additional areas.

Area	Reason

55. Do you have any other comments regarding the RAC's recommendations on recreation and tourism?





## Section 6: Next Steps

Thank you for sharing your views.

Your input on the advice and recommendations of the RAC are vital for shaping the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. A summary of the results of this workbook and the consultation process will be made available through the Land-use Framework website at [www.landuse.alberta.ca](http://www.landuse.alberta.ca). Additional information on the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and its progress can also be found on the Land-use Framework website.

Informed by the input and feedback of Albertans, the Government of Alberta will develop a draft regional plan for the South Saskatchewan Region. The draft plan will be presented to Albertans in 2012 for feedback before a final regional plan is completed.

56. Please share any additional comments you may have regarding the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan.

57. Where is your primary residence?

Alberta, in the South Saskatchewan Region	Alberta, outside of the South Saskatchewan Region	Canada, in a province other than Alberta	Outside of Canada
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

58. What are the first three characters of your postal code?

\_\_\_\_\_ Live outside of Canada \_\_\_\_\_

59. Do you participate in recreation and tourism experiences within the South Saskatchewan Region?

Yes	No
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

60. Do you currently work within the South Saskatchewan Region?

Yes	No
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

61. Are you employed by or associated with any of the following?

Check all that apply:

Public sector (federal/provincial/municipal government)	<input type="radio"/>
Industry (energy, forestry, agriculture, tourism and others)	<input type="radio"/>
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	<input type="radio"/>
An aboriginal community	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>

62. To which age group do you belong?

17 or under	<input type="radio"/>
18 - 34	<input type="radio"/>
35 - 49	<input type="radio"/>
50 - 64	<input type="radio"/>
65 or greater	<input type="radio"/>

63. Would like to be added to the SSRP mailing list? If so, please enter your email address below. Your email address will not be used to identify your responses to any of the workbook questions.

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The collection of this personal information is authorized under section 33© of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the privacy provisions of that act will protect your information. Your personal information is being collected to allow the Land Use Secretariat to provide you with additional information about the Land-use Framework initiative. If you have any questions about the collection or use of this information, please contact the Consultation Co-ordinator, Land Use Secretariat, 10035 - 108 St. Edmonton AB T5J 3E1 or by phone at 780-644-7974.

Thank you for sharing your views by completing this workbook.

To submit print versions of the completed workbook mail the workbook to:

**SSRP Phase 2 Workbook**  
**Land Use Secretariat**  
**9th Floor, 10035 – 108 Street**  
**Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3E2**

The workbook may also be submitted at any local Government of Alberta office.

The deadline for submission of this workbook is December 19, 2011.