

Chapter 17

Visitor Services Program Statements and Implementation



for Crimson Lake Provincial Park

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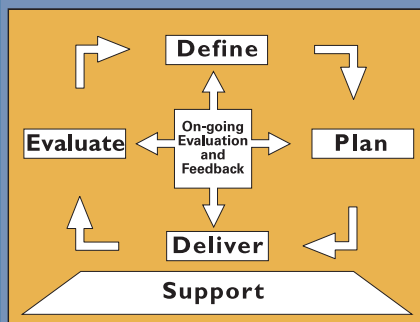
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The ANZECC Best Practice Model

In 1999, the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) released *Best Practice in Park Interpretation and Education*. This report contained a model developed based on an intensive study of best practice in 35 state and federal agencies (including several Canadian agencies) that deliver interpretation and education services. The model illustrates current best practices in organizing, managing, and delivering interpretation and education services.



Best practice can be divided into five areas: Define, Plan, Deliver, Evaluate and Support.

Define

This stage focuses on the interpretation objectives and services of the organization. They are clearly defined and linked to legislative requirements, mission statement, and broader agency objectives.

Plan

Here foundation elements from the define stage are translated into strategic planning for interpretation and education services. Markets are researched and considered, and messages, key audiences, performance standards, and options for service delivery are developed.

Deliver

Here, managers ensure that front line staff, friends groups, and other service providers understand all relevant agency objectives, targets, and performance standards from the previous stage. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

Evaluate

Here interpretation services are monitored, measured, evaluated, and improved. The contributions that services make towards achieving agency goals are assessed for effectiveness.

Support

Support includes financial systems, technology, equipment, human resources, and deployment of staff. Core skills are identified, trained for, and maintained at all interpretation and education service levels.

Based on: *Best Practice in Park Interpretation and Education, A Report to the ANZECC Working Group on National Park and Protected Area Management*
 Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria; April 1999, www.environment.gov.au/parks/publications/best-practice/interpretation/index.html

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the processes and procedures of delivering Visitor Services at Crimson Lake Provincial Park and includes recommendations for implementation over the next five years. It focuses on ten areas of core competency.

Core Competencies

Core Competencies are the collective knowledge and skills needed by Visitor Service Staff to successfully do their jobs. They include the areas of operation and service in which the Visitor Services program should excel.

The areas of core competency identified in this chapter include:

1. Research
2. Information Orientation
3. Assisting Park Management
4. Interpretation
5. Education
6. Stewardship Involvement
7. Recreation Programming
8. Collaboration and Partnership
9. Tourism
10. Marketing

For each core competency, the following areas are examined and discussed:

Outputs

These are the key products and services related to each core competency.

Critical Success Factors

These are the structures, materials, processes, procedure and/or staff capacity (knowledge, skills) that must be in place for an output to be achievable.

Key Performance Indicators

These are observable outcomes of the outputs. They will help Visitor Services staff define and measure progress toward delivering the outputs identified within each core competency.

Tables

Tables throughout this chapter identify the outputs, critical success factors and key performance indicators for each core competency.

Best Practice

Each core competency is discussed in detail under the five areas identified in the ANZECC Best Practice Model (see Sidebar on the facing page).

Best practices within each core competency are described under the following headings:

Define

- outputs
- critical success factors
- the key performance indicators
- objectives

Plan

- target participants
- themes

Deliver

- key locations
- optimal methods and media

Evaluate

- what to evaluate
- when to do it

Support

- capital costs
- operational costs
- operational support
- revenue generation

Implementation Recommendations

Recommendations for action over the next five years are included at the end of each core competency section.

These recommendations can be used by Visitor Services staff as a checklist identifying areas of effort.

Key Constraint

Lack of staff in the David Thompson Corridor is the main limiting factor for what can be done in Visitor Services Program over the next five years. In some cases core tasks can only be achieved with addition of full time staff (e.g., developing relationships and collaborations with local First Nations communities and deploying LEET tourism programming).

Detailed Review of Core Competencies

1. Research

Introduction

Research is an important area of work for Visitor Services staff at Crimson Lake. Chapter 15: Features Analysis identifies key areas for further research including:

- support gathering new knowledge about the natural and cultural history of Crimson Lake Provincial Park
- designing and implementing a system for monitoring and analysis of visitor activities, interests and preferred locations in the park and throughout the David Thompson Corridor
- initiate, support and enable research on effective techniques in personal and non-personal heritage interpretation especially for multiple repeat visitors
- support and enable ongoing research on effective environmental education techniques and evaluation tools
 - including monitoring and applying current best practices

Crimson Lake Provincial Park has the potential to be a valuable laboratory for research on the effects and effectiveness of interpretation and education in outdoor settings on park user activities, behaviours, and attitudes.

Park staff will be able to apply the results of this formal research to develop new, effective interpretation and education programming.

Visitor Services staff will not have the time and expertise to conduct much of this research. Instead, one of the areas of work for Visitor Services staff will be the encouragement and enabling of appropriate research by academic and expert groups on sites within Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

This core competency area may be difficult to initiate and maintain. A key question will be whether or not Crimson Lake Provincial Park is attractive to researchers as a study site. This may require direct contact with local colleges and universities to identify specific researchers and their needs.

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should understand the basic processes and techniques in research on biology, ecology, archeology, formal and informal education, cognition and social sciences. They must be able to recognize good and poor practice.

Define

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.1 on the following page.

Objectives

Research on the Park's Natural and Cultural History

1. To encourage, enable and oversee appropriate research on:
 - natural and cultural history of Crimson Lake Provincial Park
 - values, behaviours and motivation of park visitorsby academics, professional associations and knowledgeable amateurs.
2. To encourage and enable the translation of new technical knowledge about Crimson Lake Provincial Park into easily understood jargon-free language and formats that are accessible, interesting and relevant to regular park users and other stakeholders.
3. To catalogue and make available this new information to park users when appropriate.

Research on the Effectiveness of Personal and Non-Personal Visitor Services Methods and Media

For Public Programming

1. To encourage and enable academic research on:
 - new media and methods
 - new, evaluation methods to determine the effectiveness for public programming

For School Programming

1. To encourage and enable academic research on effective environmental education approaches, methods and media.
2. To develop, catalogue and make available existing and new methods for effectively and efficiently evaluating the effectiveness of environmental teaching approaches, methods and media.

Table 17.1 Research: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Natural and Cultural History Research			
Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	In place ✓ = yes, X = no
			Status (2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular expert and citizen contributions and updates to the park's natural and cultural history knowledge base relevant new information is incorporated into interpretation and information/orientation offerings by Alberta Parks staff and partners 	<p>Established relationships with researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review site Feature Inventory (Background Paper 3) and Features Analysis (Chapter 11) and note gaps in knowledge about the park's natural and cultural features identify academic and contract researchers in the fields of biology, ecology, botany, zoology, geology and anthropology that are active in Alberta who's research could fill in gaps contact leading researchers to discuss possibilities of working together to fill these information gaps lecture hall, outdoor amphitheatre on or off-site park website and Facebook site 	X
	<p>Venues for public presentation of research findings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lecture hall, outdoor amphitheatre on or off-site 	X current
	<p>A Hard Copy Library to store hard copies of documents and maps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a hard copy library stores copies of older files and reports that were produced before the digital age may also include hard copy versions of digital files, especially large scale maps for display and for use by workgroups in the field ideally original hard copy files will not leave the library, copies will be used by staff to avoid loss or misfiling of rare originals 	X some hard copy documents
	<p>A Digital Library to store electronic copies of documents and maps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a digital library server enabling staff to add metadata to enable easy search and retrieval of digital files and documents files to be accessible on staff office computers over office intranet and remotely by staff stationed at Crimson Lake Provincial Park also includes ebooks, digital maps and podcasts existing hard copy files to be digitized (scanned, metadata attached and filed on library server) 	X
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continued development of good relations with professional researchers and citizen science partners the ecological reserve becomes a preferred research local for ecologists and anthropologists academic, professional and citizen science research regularly takes place in the ecological reserve in topic areas identified in the reserve's management plan all relevant research projects and reports and regular scholarly contributions to the park's library new data is easily accessible to Alberta Parks staff and new findings are incorporated into Visitor Services programming as soon as possible Alberta Parks staff and partners regularly deliver public presentations on research conducted in the park in the park and at other venues in Rocky Mountain House and Red Deer Alberta Park staff regularly post new findings of researchers on Alberta Parks website and Facebook pages these site have a growing number of hits including questions and discussions about these findings 	

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Table 17.1 Research: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators ...continued
 Research on Current and Future Visitors to the Park

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up-to-date information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visitor numbers throughout the year - locations visited - duration of visit • detailed visitor profiles highlighting motivation, interests, prior knowledge, preferred activities, etc. 	An park-wide visitor monitoring system	Collect daily, weekly and monthly use statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trail counters located at strategic points to count use of each trail in the park • traffic counters located to count use of day-use parking, boat launch, and cottage road • software and protocols to record and analyze visitation on a daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal basis 	partially in place	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development and regular deployment of the questionnaire and analysis of site visitor data • all new relevant research projects and reports catalogued and stored in the to the ecological reserve's digital library • incorporation of findings to develop effective visitor-focused Visitor Services programming • increased levels of participation in Visitor Services programs at Kthe park • programs meet the needs of audiences identified in visitor analysis
	A system for developing detailed user profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visitor questionnaire developed specifically to identify activities, motivations, knowledge, and attitudes of reserve visitors delivered on a five year cycle • a system for reviewing and scientifically analyzing the information gathered 		X	
	Regular market analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual review current market trends and conditions in tourism, recreation, informal learning and leisure • sources of market information focussing about the park and the David Thompson Corridor and on central Alberta 		X	
	Established relationships with social science researchers specializing in visitor and market research	contact specialists identified in this chapter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with social science experts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyze trail counts - develop and analyze visitor questionnaires - develop questionnaires that provided needed information - are distributed and collected in ways that provide statistically valid results - analyze and apply results of the questionnaires 		X	

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Table 17.1 Research: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators ... continued

Research on Effective Interpretation and Environmental Education (Informal and Formal Learning)		Media and Methods
Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular contributions and updates on current best practice in public programming and environmental education - including techniques and media that are effective at the ecological reserve - what is working at other sites regular experimentation with and analysis of methods, media, placement and timing of Visitor Services programming in and around the park 	<p>Established a positive relationship with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the academic community working in the fields of environmental, education, learning theory and cognitive development of children environmental education providers in the David Thompson Corridor <p>A consistent system for comprehensively planning programs.</p> <p>A consistent system for evaluating programs.</p> <p>Well developed relationships with other interpretation, education and recreation service providers in the district.</p>	<p>District Alberta Parks staff regularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify academic researchers who study formal and informal learning in park settings in Canada, the USA and other English Speaking countries approach colleagues in Alberta Parks who are working with researchers (e.g. Fish Creek Environmental Learning Centre and in Kaninaskis Country) for contacts contact leading researchers to discuss possibilities of working together to study and improve formal and informal learning that occurs through Visitor Services programming at Crimson Lake Provincial Park <p>See the program planning forms included in this chapter</p> <p>Alberta Parks in the David Thompson Corridor have committed to developing an effective program evaluation system.</p> <p>See recommendations in this chapter.</p> <p>This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular formal and informal meetings and discussions of issues and how they can be addressed sharing staff training and professional development costs working to provide visitors and community members with a wide variety of programs and services with limited overlap and duplication of effort
		<p>in place, ✓ = yes, X = no</p> <p>Status (2011)</p> <p>X</p> <p>✓</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
		<p>Key Performance Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> many research projects and reports and regular scholarly contributions to the ecological reserves library effective interpretation and environmental education programming (shown to be effective by rigorous evaluation methods) takes place on site peer and academic recognition that Crimson Lake Provincial Park follows good practice high satisfaction of teachers and educators with program quality and content high satisfaction of campers and day users with program public interpretation program quality and content increased levels of participation in Visitor Services programs programs meet the needs of audiences identified in visitor and market analysis ideas, solutions and staff training is shared with other groups and agencies that provide interpretation and education services in the David Thompson Corridor

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Table 17.1 Research: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators ...continued

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
		Description	Status (2011)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular contributions and updates local and provincial market trends specific focus on the David Thompson Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a positive relationship with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experts working for the Alberta Government (e.g., Travel Alberta) the academic community working in the fields of tourism and market research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular research on market trends and opportunities in the David Thompson Corridor 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular market studies and reports on Crimson Lake Provincial park and the David Thompson Corridor a variety of programs developed to meet the needs of audiences identified in visitor and market analysis increased levels of participation in programs at Crimson Lake high levels of political and community support for Visitor Services programs

Audience and Market Analysis

- To encourage and enable appropriate expert research on Crimson Lake Provincial Park’s visitors and potential visitors. This will include:
 - current activities, interests and prior knowledge about the natural and cultural heritage of the park
 - attitudes and behaviours with respect to the park and its features
 - current visitation including where, when, how long, how often, seasonality and motivations for visiting
 - characteristics of current and potential visitor groups especially new Canadians based on ethno-cultural biases and backgrounds
- To analyze the implications of findings about current and potential park users in order to develop approaches, media and methods for effectively delivering Visitor Services to these users.
- To develop Visitor Services offerings for specific target users, evaluate their effectiveness and modify them as needed to ensure they are effective (using an action research approach—for more information on Action Research see Chapter 1).
- To catalogue and make available this new information for use of park Visitor Services staff for planning purposes.

2. Information/ Orientation

Introduction

The grounding for this program can be found in the Foundations (Chapters 2 and 12) and Presentation Options (Chapter 6).

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should understand the key concepts of customer service and have excellent communications (both oral and written) and people skills.

To do this job well, staff in an Information/Orientation position must have a detailed knowledge of the park's natural and cultural features, park rules and regulations, current Visitor Services programs and activities, the names and backgrounds and ways of contacting the park's major partners, and the recreation and education opportunities in Alberta Park system.

Define

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.2 on the following page.

Objectives

1. To assist park users in locating the park, its facilities and trails, and in navigating within it.
2. To assist regional residents in identifying and recognizing Crimson Lake Provincial Park as a valuable community resource.
3. To inform park users and potential users of the park's rules and regulations.
 - best done through framing—e.g., why rules are in place and how they support park stewardship
4. To maintain the profile of Crimson Lake Provincial Park, especially to people within one-hour's travel time.
5. To provide basic information about Crimson Lake Provincial Park including:
 - the reasons for the establishment of the park
 - the park's history
 - an introduction to key natural and cultural features
6. To inform park users and neighbors of the park's stewardship mandate and to keep them abreast of current developments and new initiatives.
7. To assist park users, park neighbours and passers-by to recognize the boundaries of Crimson Lake Provincial Park.
8. To maintain good relations with current and future collaborators and partner Visitor Services service providers and cooperating stewardship groups in the area.

This can include:

 - promoting their services and special events in Crimson Lake Provincial Park publications
 - making their information/orientation publications available at selected Crimson Lake Provincial Park sites (e.g., the park's website)
9. To fulfill the park's status as a gateway to the David Thompson Corridor.

This can include:

 - providing information about and travel directions to other parks and protected areas in the corridor (this will include information about Visitor Services and recreation opportunities at these sites)
 - provide information about recreation and tourism opportunities in the corridor
 - making available the information/orientation publications of Alberta Parks and other agencies and businesses in the David Thompson Corridor

Table 17.2 Information/Orientation: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear signing of the park boundaries an up-to-date wayfinding system aimed at park users, especially trail users <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if needed may include some brochures in maps in languages of major groups of new Canadian park users summarized information about special features of the park, its history and the reasons for its existence clear park rules and regulations framed in a positive manner information about the purpose and goals of the Alberta Provincial Park system access to information about the vast array of parks and protected areas in the David Thompson Corridor 	Clearly marked park boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Sign Program standard design 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all park boundaries signed a large majority of park visitors and park neighbours recognize the site as a provincial park 	
	Sign Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear standards for design, materials and installation of interpretive, wayfinding, site identification and regulation signs (the Alberta Parks Sign Program manual) 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all park communications have a Crimson Lake Provincial Park look and feel 	
	Media Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear standards for design and dimensions for non-sign media such as brochures, websites, smart phone applications, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> could be based on the Alberta Parks Sign Program standards 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all park information and orientation materials have a polished, professional look – no photocopies of printed maps and brochures 	
	Staff and contractors with graphic design skills and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> basic understanding of graphic design principles familiarity with design and ability to use industry standard graphic software <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for work on permanent signs and panels (e.g., InDesign, PhotoShop, Illustrator, XPress) familiarity with Alberta Parks Sign Program standards 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> information/orientation materials are accessible to park users when they need them (includes brochures and park website) park users are aware of and understand park rules and regulations 	
	Up-to-date information about location and condition of the park's natural and cultural features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information should include regular updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> presence of rare and common habitats and plant and animal species information on locations where wildlife can be safely observed trends in habitat health and information about human activities that are adversely impacting habitats and species new on-site discoveries about the geology, ecology, history and archeology of the site all management and research initiatives taking place in the park current management issues (e.g., concerns about fire safety during periods of drought) 	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> park users show a high degree of complying with park rules park visitors can find and use information about other recreation and tourism opportunities in the David Thompson Corridor 	
	Information about Alberta Parks in the David Thompson Corridor available to the public	Maps and descriptions of Alberta Parks properties in the David Thompson Corridor.		✓	

3. Assisting in Park Management

Introduction

A role of Visitor Services is to assist park management through supporting the Three-E management model which has three parts:

- Education
 - informing park users of problems, regulations and solutions
 - usually framed in positive language, such as “Help us protect the fragile riparian habitat by staying on official hiking trails ...”
- Engineering
 - designing and locating park facilities, including trails in ways that reduce chances of endangering park users, wildlife, habitat and historic features
- Enforcement
 - following up education of the park’s rules and regulations with enforcement of the same by trained enforcement staff

Visitor Services staff have the background and communication skills that will assist park managers in developing and delivering the education component of this model.

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should understand the key concepts of customer service, the park’s key management goals and objectives as put forward in the park’s Management Plan and have excellent communications and people skills.

Define

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.3 on the following page.

Objectives

1. To assist park management and enforcement staff through developing clear communications about park regulations and on-going management issues.
2. To be able to react quickly to emergency management issues by producing quick communications to park users, neighbours and the general public about emergency management issues (e.g., floods, problem wildlife, etc.).

Plan

Target Participants

- all park users
- all potential park users
- park neighbours

All communications should follow a planning process similar to that used in interpretive program development.

Deliver

Key Locations

Key locations for printed information will be similar to those listed for the Information and Orientation section.

Optimal Methods and Media

For On-going Management Issues

On-site

- trailhead kiosks
- notice boards
- posters
- brochures and park notes
- personal contact through staff, volunteers and partners

Off-site

- the Crimson Lake Provincial Park website
- newsletters (print or digital) or seasonal brochures or email messages about upcoming programs

For Emergency Management Issues

The same media can be used for communications about emergency management issues. However, depending on the level of emergency, press releases and public service announcements to local media (newspapers, television and radio) can also be included.

Evaluate

Evaluation of this service should be done annually by a team of management, enforcement and Visitor Services staff who will look at performance using the key performance indicators in Table 17.3.

Table 17.3 Assisting Park Management: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, ✗ = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key park management issues - key park stewardship initiatives (e.g., regular lake water sampling citizen science project) - communicated to park users and local communities - provide the education component of the Three-E visitor management model 	<p>Close communication with park management and the regional park ecologist</p>	<p>This will include regular meetings where Visitor Services staff can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learn about current management issues and research/stewardship initiatives make suggestion on how they can assist by providing visitors with current information, and perhaps by delivering specific information/education programs 	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key park management issues - key park stewardship initiatives (e.g., regular lake water sampling citizen science project) - communicated to park users and local communities - provide the education component of the Three-E visitor management model
	<p>Visitor Services staff with the capacity to quickly develop and produce effective communications</p>	<p>Visitor Services staff will have the capacity to quickly develop press releases, public service announcements, simple temporary signs, posters etc., to assist the park's management team address pressing visitor management and safety issues as they arise.</p>	✓		
	<p>Good relations with local media</p>	<p>Visitor Services staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain regular contact with local, print and broadcast media develop contact with and/or maintain contact with local and regional bloggers who specialize in camping, boating, nature and outdoor recreation activities in Alberta regularly provide high quality photos, video clips and short articles about the park and its programs to local news outlets who are often looking for local news to publish or broadcast 	✗	under development	
	<p>A popular park web presence regularly visited by users</p>	<p>Note that at the time of writing, Alberta Parks was in the process of updating the design of park websites and is encouraging park staff to set up park social media pages. EcoLeaders recommend that the new design should enable Visitor Services staff to regularly add new materials via blogs, Facebook, or entries in the park's website about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> upcoming interpretive programs, recreation events and special events outcomes of recent programs and events photos, video clips of activities or findings (e.g., photos of strange pond creatures discovered by families on a lake life quest) descriptions of what is happenings as the result of a public stewardship project testimonials and narratives from participants online forums where park users can ask park staff questions, share observations and discoveries with other visitors and park staff 	✓	may be incomplete	

4.1 General Information

Define

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.4 on page 17.28.

Objectives

The key objectives for interpretation in Crimson Lake Provincial Park include the following:

1. To inform participants of:
Natural and Cultural Heritage and Stewardship
 - features in Crimson Lake Provincial Park
 - Crimson Lake Provincial Park's role as a key player in the stewardship of natural and cultural heritage, especially wetlands
 - opportunities to work with Crimson Lake Provincial Park and other agencies and groups to further its stewardship
 - other opportunities to learn about Crimson Lake Provincial Park provided by other groups and agencies
2. To inspire participants to care about the natural and cultural heritage of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and its stewardship.
3. To involve participants in appropriate activities in Crimson Lake Provincial Park, especially recreation, heritage appreciation/discovery activities and stewardship.
4. To inform park visitors of the many other opportunities to discover and enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the David Thompson Corridor.

General Plan

Target Participants

The main focus of interpretation services will be on people who visit Crimson Lake Provincial Park. People located outside of Crimson Lake Provincial Park will be addressed in the Outreach section of this chapter. For a detailed analysis of participants and markets, see the Visitor Analysis (Chapter 15).

Key Characteristics

No large-scale formal study of park users and potential park users has been done (such studies to be undertaken as soon as possible). The following information has been extrapolated from discussions with park staff. Key features of park users include:

- a large majority are multiple repeat visitors
- most are currently from nearby communities (approximately a one-hour's trip to the park)
- through multiple repeat visits many park users know the park well
- the majority come to enjoy recreation activities and to have connections with nature

Requirements of Participants

The implications to Visitor Services service development and delivery are:

Repeat visitors

- require fresh experiences and activities to attract them to regularly take part

Knowledgeable visitors

- need Visitor Services that go deeper than basic information about what is special about this place
- know about the site and have experiences and observations that they want to share—two-way communication required in programming

Visitors come for their own planned activities

- must be flexible to accommodate their timetables:
 - feature drop-in programming that start and finish when they want and engage for a short or a long time, depending on their timetable

Recreation-Focused Visitors (e.g., runners)

- need Visitor Services that mesh with their recreation activities
 - take place before or after their recreation activity
 - or are relevant to their main recreation activity and that they can do while they cycle park roads or hike park trails

Table 17.4 Interpretation: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a suite of Visitor Services offerings based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the park's Visitor Services themes, subthemes, goals and objectives suitability for specific audiences taking into account the protection and stewardship of park resources 	Accurate detailed information about park features and current and potential visitors	Up-to-date information about the park's natural and cultural features - for details see section 1: Research of this chapter Visitor Monitoring: - a park-wide visitor monitoring system - a system for developing detailed user profiles (best be conducted with input and support from social science research professionals) - for details see section 1: Research of this chapter	X		Participants in Visitor Services programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have an increased awareness, appreciation and understanding of the park's natural and cultural heritage enjoy the park's Visitor Services offerings and recommend them to friends and family display an increased level of environmental literacy understand the concept of environmental goods and services and support the stewardship of the park and its wetlands as an important source of these ecological services reflect all levels of the stewardship scale (except unresponsive)
	Regular Market Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> this is ongoing research and reporting on tourism activities and trends in the David Thompson Corridor Note: Travel Alberta conducts regular regional tourism surveys (e.g., for Central Alberta) but not for smaller regions such as the David Thompson Corridor	✓	may be incomplete	
	A formal planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a program planning form designed to assist Visitor Services staff in identifying target audiences, learning objectives, assessing risk for visitors and site resources and choosing interpretive themes, effective media and methods, location and timing of programming 	✓	new	
	Sufficient staff, volunteers and partners	Visitor Services staffing levels should try to meet visitor demand. Staffing levels can be supplemented by volunteers and partners. However, best practice requires that Alberta Parks staff supervise training, and manage and regularly evaluate programs delivered by volunteers and partners to maintain high standards of delivery and content.	✓	may be incomplete	
	Robust staff support	This includes yearly opportunities for professional development and meeting with colleagues through membership in professional associations and attendance of conferences and workshops on environmental education, heritage interpretation, natural and cultural history of Alberta, First Nations culture, cultural sensitivity, etc.,	X		
	High Quality Infrastructure	This includes trails, interpretive nodes, amphitheatres, interpretive sign systems and kiosks, and viewpoints. This infrastructure enables Visitor Services staff to develop and deliver high quality personal and non-personal public programming	X	most is currently aging	
	A Visitor Services program evaluation system	Evaluation of a Visitor Services Program will be based on the program plan. It will determine if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identified target audiences were reached learning objectives were met (knowledge, skills attitude and behaviour) Alberta Parks design and performance standards were followed participants were satisfied project was cost effective (good value for money)- including revenue generation projections 	X	to be developed by Alberta Parks	

4.2 Personal Interpretation Services

Leading Visitor Services professionals consider personal programming to be the most effective way of helping people to discover and explore natural and cultural heritage in real settings.

As well, when dealing with multiple repeat visitors, personal programming affords a flexibility of delivery and content that is not achievable through non-personal media. A skillful interpreter is able to converse with participants, assess their levels of knowledge, interest and skills, and rejig the program to accommodate the prior knowledge, and needs of a particular set of participants. In contrast, even the most well designed and engaging interpretive sign or exhibit will become stale to park users by the third or fourth reading.

Personal Visitor Services are relatively expensive (requiring paid staff, or paid partner, volunteer coordinators and volunteer trainers). All require professional skills in planning, developing, supporting and evaluation. Ideally, presenters need broad knowledge of the topics and region in order to facilitate two-way communication with the audience, answer questions and to the inspire and involve participants.

Define

What is Personal Interpretation?

This is any Visitor Services activity where staff and/or volunteers or partners interact directly with participants face-to-face.

Plan

A planning process should be developed and followed for all Visitor Services provided. Planning should take into account:

- identification of specific target audiences
- indication of the Visitor Services themes and subthemes that will be addressed
- clear statement of participant learning objectives including critical success factors and key performance indicators
- identification of location(s) within the park with justification(s)
- identification of media and methods to be used with justification
- risk analysis (to participants, to park features — see Conducting a Risk Assessment below)
- a listing of key points that will be covered
- required materials with costs
- evaluation strategy

Conducting A Risk Assessment

What is Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment is a process of identifying and assessing the dangers that participants and watershed resources may be exposed to in the course of your program or project. Risk assessment can be done in two steps.

Step 1: Site Inspection

The first step is to identify potential risk factors to the people and to the watershed resources. Resources may include not only natural components of the watershed such as delicate habitat, rare plants and animals, but also cultural items like heritage buildings and historic artifacts.

When you have a project and a site in mind, you may find it useful to visit the location and visualize the activities there.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- What hazards (fast flowing water, sensitive vegetation etc.) can you see?
- Is access to the site safe and easy?
- What would this site be like in bad weather?
- Are there alternative sites or other ways to gain access?

Using Maps And Taking Notes

When doing a site inspection, take along a map or sketch one as you go. Mark locations and make notes about hazards and potential hazards.

Step 2: Assess Risks and Act

The second step is to assess the hazards you have identified and determine if they are true risks, how risky they are and what you are going to do to avoid or reduce that risk to an acceptable level.

5. School Programming

Introduction

The grounding for the School Program can be found in the Visitor Analysis (Chapters 8 and 15), the Market Analysis (Chapter 9), Presentations Options (Chapter 6) and the Curriculum Review (Chapter 5). These chapters provide a grounding in content and effective presentation options.

Education programs provide an opportunity for Visitor Services to reach a wide number of people, including the children of families that do not choose to visit Crimson Lake Provincial Park. This will also be true for programs where Visitor Services staff travel to schools.

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should have the same skills and knowledge as outlined for Interpretation (above) plus additional knowledge and skills including:

Additional Knowledge:

- child cognitive, physical and emotional development (ages and stages)
- current learning theory related to outdoor-focused learning
- current Alberta Science and Social Studies curricula plus other areas of curricula that can be addressed through park programming

Additional Skills:

- leading groups of children in the outdoors

Define

Education programming focused on public, private and home schools is a viable option for Crimson Lake Provincial Park's Visitor Services program. This mandate can include preschool and post secondary education groups as well.

Personal education services will include all programs led by Visitor Services staff, volunteers and partners (e.g., guided walks, stream studies, projects, etc.). Non-personal education services will include those that do not require presenters (e.g., teacher-led visits, workbooks/work sheets, audio-visual presentations, websites, etc.).

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.9 on the following page.

Objectives

The key objectives for education services in Crimson Lake Provincial Park include the following:

1. To provide education services that mesh with the mandate of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and its parent agencies, the themes and subthemes of the Crimson Lake Provincial Park Visitor Services Plan and the science and social studies curriculum set out by Alberta Learning for grades K–12.
2. To develop or increase student overall environmental literacy and develop sustainable behaviours.
3. To inspire students to care about the natural and cultural heritage of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and take part in its stewardship.
4. To enable students to participate in appropriate activities in Crimson Lake Provincial Park.

Plan

Target Participants

The key target participants in order of size and importance include students in:

- grades K–8
- grades 9–12
- preschool
- community colleges and universities

Grades K-12

This is by far the largest market for education services.

Community Colleges and Universities

Most of this group are at the undergraduate level. The types of undergraduate and graduate level studies that students take part in (e.g., plant and wildlife censuses, ecological investigations and the effects of interactions between people and wildlife) fit very well into the Crimson Lake Provincial Park mandate for learning more about the ecology of Crimson Lake Provincial Park properties for management purposes, and more.

Preschools

Preschool students are children aged three to five. The key function of education services to this group are to engender the idea that natural areas and historic sites are fun to visit and to increase the profile of Crimson Lake Provincial Park to them and their families. They are less likely to visit if a long bus ride is required.

Table 17.9 School Programming: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, ✗ = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in-park discovery/inquiry learning activities based on Visitor Services themes and the K-12 Alberta Learning curriculum for science, social studies/geography, language arts, and art focusing on half-day and full-day visits to the park by teachers with their students school visits by Visitor Services staff to deliver in-school learning activities based on the park's Visitor Services themes and Alberta science and social studies curriculum education programming includes multiple, sequential half-day and full-day visits to the park by teachers with their students an on-going application of best practice in environmental education programming 	<p>School marketing/promotion/program booking system</p> <p>A Program Planning System</p> <p>An Program Evaluation System</p> <p>Infrastructure</p> <p>Parking</p>	<p>System should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contact lists for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all schools in and adjacent to the David Thompson Corridor schools in Central Alberta that have shown an interest in visiting the park a school program promotional system (email, mail, phone, fax) that suits individual schools and teachers a regular program promotion cycle that fits schools' lesson planning and field trip cycles a program booking system that is easy for teachers to access to book learning sessions with Visitor Services staff <p>The park should have a program planning system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies grade-specific curriculum connections for each program identifies learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours) identifies and describes activities and locations where learning will take place assesses risks to students and park features includes opportunities for participants to evaluate the learning process <p>Staff currently evaluate teacher satisfaction with current programming (highly satisfied). However, the park should have a program evaluation system that evaluates student learning outcomes and all aspects of a program outlined in its planning form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> washroom facilities that can accommodate one or more classes easily accessed by school buses and personal vehicles a booking system and contact staff for teachers to book programs a fee schedule for programs and a money management system for managing collected fees locations in the park with facilities to support visiting students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a group shelter for 1-3 classes to warm-up/dry-out from the weather picnic tables and garbage containers for 2-3 classes to eat lunch/snack daily maintenance and garbage pick-up during school programming season near-by equipment storage for learning equipment (e.g., insect nets, and magnifiers for a catch and release insect study) easily accessible wetland, lake and forest features for study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a nested loop pathway system with numerous learning nodes where a class can gather without blocking the trail for other users special features such as a dock or jetty on which a class can gather to collect specimens of aquatic life and take water samples for lake, pond and wetland studies <p>This will include space near the main program site for 1-5 buses, and 15-20 cars if school chooses to car pool</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a environmental education program that serves a spectrum of grades on a variety of subjects evaluation shows that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planned learning outcomes are being achieved in all programs planned curriculum connections are being achieved effective learning about the park's natural and cultural history and stewardship is occurring schools wanting to book the park's education programs meets or exceeds staff capacity to deliver programs a high percentage of teachers are returning to book programs every year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ mostly present ✓ provided by this plan ✗ to be provided by Alberta Parks ✓ ✗ ✓ 	

... continued on following page

Table 17.9 School Programming: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators *continued*

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, ✗ = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)	Status (2011)	
	Number of Staff	The number of skilled staff with knowledge and skills to deliver hands-on school programming must be at levels are able to meet the demand and be sustainable (not exhaust staff).	✗		
	Skilled Staff	Staff that plan, develop and deliver education programming must be highly skilled and experienced in natural and cultural history and education programming.	✓		
	Capacity to Deliver Multiple/ Sequential School Visit Programming	Staff Capacity (Skills, Knowledge and Experience) to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan, develop, deliver and evaluate innovative, effective school programs Visitor Services staff with first-aid/cpr certification 	✓		
	Regular Professional Development	Supports and Enables Visitor Services Staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hold membership in environmental education professional associations regularly attend and/or make presentations at workshops and conferences featuring good and best practice in environmental education network with colleagues working for other local environmental education providers and at centres of excellence in Alberta, Canada and the world 	✗		

A Program Planning Form Template

A standard planning process for use by Visitor Services staff to develop future personal programs must be based on current best practice and include a standard planning form.

A prototype program planning form can be used as a starting point for a park-specific school program planning (see attachment at the end of Chapter 11.).

Deliver

Key Locations

Currently park staff use the shoreline of Crimson Lake to the west of the main beach as the main wetland program area. Other education programs take place in the day use area.

Optimal Methods and Media

Most Effective Science Education Will Take Place in Natural Settings

Science-education activities that involve discovery and inquiry learning in the outdoors are more likely to develop an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural systems of Crimson Lake Provincial Park. Most education programs will focus on outdoor natural setting in the park.

School Grade Levels

Site locations may depend on the target grade. Primary and middle grades have more flexible schedules and may have a travel budget so park visits are more possible.

High school classes have a period system that makes it difficult for teachers to arrange a park visit. The best possibility for working with these grades is to visit the school with a traveling program and/or develop education

Budget

1. Visitor Services staff should continue to follow the school program fee schedule developed by Alberta Parks.
2. If additional staff are hired to deliver education programming, the park will have to budget appropriately for a permanent or seasonal staff. If the park chooses to use volunteer educators, a full or part-time coordinator/ trainer/evaluator of volunteers will be required
3. The park should have budget line items for:
 - regular professional development
 - staff/volunteer training and professional development
 - purchase of equipment and materials for the current year's education program
4. Program fees collected for school programming should be funneled back into the overall park school program and be used to fund:
 - subsidies for schools and classes that can not afford current fees
 - formal evaluation and assessment of student learning
 - purchase of equipment and tools used in school programming
 - development of new school programs

6. Stewardship Involvement and Education

Introduction

Alberta Parks Stewardship Action Plan: An Action Plan to Inspire Albertans to Value and Care for Alberta Parks (2009) (an internal document only available to Alberta Parks staff) indicates that stewardship, including habitat protection and restoration is a mandate of Alberta Parks (see Foundations, Chapter 2).

The Visitor Services program at Crimson Lake Provincial Park has a role in inspiring, informing and involving park users and park neighbours about the stewardship initiatives undertaken by the park and the opportunities to participate in and contribute to these initiatives.

Visitor Services staff must realize that many participants may have significant knowledge about the parks natural and cultural history plus skills and experience in stewardship activities. They are also likely to have very strong passions and opinions. At Crimson Lake, cottage leaseholders may become important stewardship program participants because many have long-term connections with the park.

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should have skills in group facilitation, and have good working knowledge and understanding of the park's ecological systems and detailed understanding of the concepts of volunteerism and citizen science.

Knowledge of the park's management goals and initiatives are also important.

Define

What is Stewardship

One of the best definitions of stewardship comes from Alberta's Land Stewardship Resource Centre (www.landstewardship.org/):

...the practice of carefully managing land usage to ensure natural systems are maintained or enhanced for future generations.

The centre goes on to identify four guiding principles of what is meant by carefully managing usage:

1. **Caring for the system as a whole**—understanding the fundamental roles and values of natural systems, building up biological fertility in the soil, incorporating an understanding of the ecological cycles on the landscape (water, energy, nutrients) and how land-use practices can either benefit, be in harmony, or negatively impact these cycles and other land-users, flora and fauna.
2. **Resource conservation**—maximizing efficiency and striving to reduce the one-time consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources; aiming for long-term optimization versus short-term maximization of production.
3. **Maintaining, building and enhancing stability in Nature**—maintain and encourage natural biological diversity and complexity; maintaining natural areas and functions on the land (wildlife habitat conservation).
4. **Cultural values and ethics**—caring for the health of the land for future generations and long-term economic stability; the link between civilization, urbanization, and the land-base and ecosystems that are vital to survival; the intrinsic value and right to exist of all life on Earth.

The Land Stewardship Resource Centre believes it is cultural values and ethics where the very essence of land stewardship exists.

"Land, water and air stewardship is about re-connecting with our dependence on earth, air, water and sunshine - and the abundance of life it supports."

Table 17.10 Stewardship Involvement: Outcomes, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
Visitor Services provides opportunities for park users and neighbours to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn about stewardship of the park's natural and cultural resources • contribute to and take part in stewardship projects in the park • develop capacity to take leadership in advocating and supporting the stewardship of the park and other properties in the David Thompson Corridor 	Connections of Visitor Services staff with the Park Management Team	Visitor Services staff must have regular contact with the park's management team to be aware of current management issues and research projects that may have potential connections with citizen science initiatives.	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation shows that participants in Visitor Services stewardship offerings are progressing through the levels of the Stewardship Development Model • an increase in public support for Crimson Lake Provincial Park's stewardship program • an increase in public participation in the park's stewardship activities
	Staff Capacity For Regular On-site Stewardship Projects	Clear understanding of the conditions within the park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the park management team to choose meaningful stewardship projects • be on top of current knowledge about the reserve to avoid negative impacts on natural and cultural features 	X	up-to-date info not available	
	Staff Capacity For Citizen Science Projects	Visitor Services staff must have knowledge, skills and experience in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project management • experimental design • group facilitation and volunteer management • background in biology, anthropology, geology 	X		
	Partnerships	Visitor Services staff must develop partnerships with Citizen Science groups or sponsors such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Science Central • Alberta Field Naturalists • provincial or national academic experts in researching topics relevant to the Kootenay Plains • First Nations elders and experts 	X		

7. Recreation

Introduction

Crimson Lake Provincial Park is an important regional centre for water-based recreation. Twin Lakes features year-round fishing opportunities, while Crimson Lake is a focus for boating and beach activities. Visitor Services staff will continue to promote these activities plus, wildlife watching, hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the park. They should also promote the wider variety of self-propelled and motorized recreation activities available throughout the David Thompson Corridor.

This plan does not anticipate active delivery of recreation programs by park staff. However, it will provide information about and facilitate recreation activities that are permitted in the park or available in the David Thompson Corridor.

Key areas of activities can include facilitating:

- skill training and development
- safety training and instruction

in popular outdoor activities that take place in the park. Instruction will be provided by partner organizations (e.g., cross country ski workshops provided by local and regional ski clubs).

Define

Currently, recreation in Crimson Lake Provincial Park consists of:

- hiking/walking on park trails
- wildlife watching
- bicycling on designated trails
- canoeing/kayaking
- picnicking
- snow shoeing/cross-country skiing
- fishing

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.11 on the following page.

Objective

- to inform park users of and encourage appropriate recreational activities in the park
 - if designated locations for specific recreational activities are identified by park management, Visitor Services staff will provide this information to park users
- to encourage appropriate recreational activities in the David Thompson Corridor

Deliver

Currently Alberta Park staff hold several winter activity-based events in the park during the winter and at least one trail running competition in the summer.

Alberta Parks staff do not have the time to deliver regular recreation programming. However, they may consider expanding the number of recreation offerings through working with partners such as local cross-country ski clubs and provincial and regional recreation and safety associations (e.g., Paddle Alberta and the Red Cross) to deliver skills and safety workshops and special events (e.g., a cross-country loppet on the Amerada Trail). As well, Visitor Services staff can work to combine recreation and interpretation activities, combining snowshoe instruction with winter wildlife tracking activities.

However, with current staffing levels, any increase in recreation programming, either delivered directly by Alberta Parks staff or delivered by partners but coordinated by Alberta Parks will result in a corresponding decrease in delivery of core services such as public interpretation and school programming.

Evaluate

Alberta Parks staff will be developing an evaluation system for all Visitor Services over the next five years. Ideally evaluation of recreation programming will include the key indicators listed in Table 17.11.

Support

Capital Needs

Key capital expenditures will revolve around supporting existing recreation activities. This could include:

- new, larger docks at both the Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes boat launches
- extended, nested-loop trail in the northern section of the Crimson Lake Block for cross-country skiing, mountain biking and hiking
- a secure equipment shed for partners and contractors to store recreation equipment (e.g., snowshoes)

Operational Needs

The stewardship program will need:

- legal support for liability issues regarding recreation activities encouraged in the park
- administrative and organizational support for projects, workshops and training courses

Table 17.11 Recreation: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visitors choose to spend several hours on the beach, ski trails or picnic area while others visit for several days to a week or more camping or staying in the cabinsubdivision and take extended time to enjoy the park's facilities 	Significant Natural Features and Scenery	The park features two lakes (Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes), provincially significant wetlands and forests typical of the prairie-foothills transition zone.	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a steady increase in sustainable use of the park's lakes, beach and trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> visitors continue to take part in appropriate recreation activities in the park including, boating (powered on Crimson, motorless on Twin Lakes), beach activities, camping, hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing visitors express satisfaction with the recreation opportunities at the park
	Appropriate Infrastructure Features	The park has: Crimson Lake Beach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a well-maintained sand beach adjacent to the day use area a site for swimming, sun bathing, picnicking and socializing washrooms, change rooms and picnic facilities nearby Boat Launches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at Crimson and Twin Lakes enable a wide variety of boating related activities Campgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> well maintained campgrounds at Crimson Lake and Twin Lakes include washrooms, (showers, laundry and store at Crimson Lake) an extensive network of interconnected trails with basic wayfinding signs and limited interpretive panels Trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide users access to many locations around Crimson Lake and a wide variety of wetland and forest ecosystems. a concentration of walking trails in the south end of the Crimson Lake Block a smaller selection of trails in the Twin Lakes Block a multi-use recreation trail connecting the two blocks to the town of Rocky Mountain House 	✓		
	Modern infrastructure in top condition	As described in the Features Analysis (Chapter 11), the parks infrastructure is ageing and trails and boat launches need upgrading.	X		
	Trail Design	Best practice in recreational and interpretive trails favours winding loop trails.	✓		
	Partners	Recreation-Focused Partner Groups that can organize and deliver recreation skills training (e.g., cross-country ski training, canoe/kayak safety and paddling skill courses)	X		

- budget for:
 - promotion of recreation skills training, workshops and special events
 - equipment maintenance and replacement

Staffing

If the recreation program is to be developed to its fullest extent in the future extra staffing will be needed. This could include a recreation activity coordinator

Crimson Lake Provincial Park will need to rely more on the expertise of well-trained, long-term, full-time staff.

Revenue Generation

Recreation skills workshops and special events can charge fees to participants.

Implementation Recommendations

General

1. Work with stakeholders to provide a broad spectrum of appropriate outdoor recreation activities in parks and adjacent public lands
 - this can also include working with the private sector to inform park users of recreational activities available on nearby private lands and private lands throughout the David Thompson Corridor.
2. Apply scientific research (see section 1 Research in this chapter) into park user behaviours, motivations, recreational needs and the effects of recreational activities on the ecological integrity of park lands.
3. Use the information gathered above to determine real visitor needs and impacts to decide on the types of recreation that is appropriate in the park.
4. Work with regional planners, park managers and stakeholders (including accessibility advocate groups) to identify potential additional and appropriate recreation activities and sites in the park and in other Alberta Parks properties in the David Thompson Corridor.
5. Work with local recreation providers to cross-promote recreation opportunities in the park.
6. When it is completed, regularly review the active living and sport policy to identify activities that can be promoted in Alberta Parks within the David Thompson Corridor that are compatible with the park's conservation and stewardship mandates.
7. Work with park management team to identify local potential partners in the private and public sector who can work with to develop new recreation opportunities within the park.

8. Collaboration and Partnerships

Introduction

Over the next five years, collaboration and partnerships will be an especially important area of focus for Visitor Services staff in both Crimson Lake Provincial Park and throughout the David Thompson Corridor. Limited Visitor Services staff, increasing visitor pressure and the high potential for interpretation and recreation activities in Alberta Parks properties and public lands in the David Thompson Corridor will make it highly important that Alberta Parks works with other Alberta Government agencies, local conservation and recreation groups and local tourism operators. It will be very important that Alberta Parks chooses its partners well because programs delivered by partners will be perceived by park visitors as products of Alberta Parks.

Also collaboration, cooperation and sharing of training opportunities with other stakeholders can reduce the isolation of Alberta Park Visitor Services staff.

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should understand the mandates of Alberta Parks and current and potential partners. Staff must have skills in group facilitation, and excellent people skills as well as a good understanding of the collaboration process.

Define

Partnership and collaboration are defined in Chapter 4: Analysis of Potential Partners.

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.12 on the following page.

Table 17.12 Collaboration: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a range of collaborations and partnerships between the park and other groups to develop, deliver, evaluate and support Visitor Services services fund raising for project staff and capital projects 	Connections with the Park Management Team	Visitor Services staff must have regular contact with the park's management team to be aware of Alberta Parks policies and procedures regarding partnerships, current management issues and research projects that have potential connections with partner groups.	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the park and district develop a partnership policy and protocol that covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requirements for collaboration and partnership agreements guidance for Visitor Services staff on initiating and terminating such agreements the Visitor Services program is able to expand its level and quality of services through working with partners past and potential partners are eager to work with Crimson Lake Provincial Park because of previous positive experiences
	A List of Potential Collaborators or Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a review of regional, provincial and national agencies and groups with goals and objectives that are compatible with those of Alberta Parks 	✓	included in this plan	
	Staff Capacity	For General Development and Maintenance of Collaborations and Partnerships Visitor Services staff should have training and experience in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> group dynamics and multi-stakeholder dialogue leadership consensus building and conflict resolution project management 	X		
	A protocol for creating and terminating collaborations and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> this is a transparent process that Alberta Parks staff can follow to approach, develop and terminate associations with government agencies, and NGO groups and individuals in delivering Visitor Services 	✓		
Positive Relationships with local First Nations elders, community leaders and experts	This is a long-term project that will require following an extended process of trust building and cooperation.		X		

9. Tourism

Define

Tourism refers to destination visits to the park by people on holiday. Tourists are usually people from a fair distance away from the park who come to recreate and, often, to learn about the landscape and history.

The Audience Analysis (Chapters 8 and 15) and Market Analysis (Chapter 9) in this plan indicate that people from central Alberta are the main source of tourist in the David Thompson Corridor.

Learning Enrichment and Experiential Travel (LEET) Tourism

Alberta Parks in the David Thompson Corridor is committed to addressing this type of tourism. It is defined as a concept that focuses on tourists who have a strong interest in learning and personal development. Key elements of programming that LEET tourists are interested in are:

- hands-on authentic experiences and activities with real things in natural and cultural settings
- longer, deeper experiences that can extend over several days to a week or more
- personal contact with skilled instructors (for outdoor skills), knowledgeable, personable experts (especially real researchers and specialists) and authentic personalities (local people who live and work in the area)
- opportunities to make real, meaningful contributions to science, conservation and knowledge

Core Skills and Knowledge

Visitor Services staff should have excellent communication skills and an understanding of marketing techniques including web-based and viral marketing.

For LEET tourism they will also have to have most of the following skills and knowledge:

- deep knowledge and extensive experience with the site's natural features and processes
- outdoor guiding and leadership training
 - high levels of skills in outdoor activities
 - could include training in outdoor skills instruction (backcountry hiking, cross-country skiing, canoeing)
- contacts and good relationships with local experts including members of First Nations communities
- first aid certification

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.13 on the following page.

Objectives

Objectives for the tourism program include:

1. Promote regional tourism.
2. Work with public and private tourism operators to provide tourists with a complete package of activities in the region including LEET tourism packages.

Plan

General Tourism

Audiences have been identified and analyzed in previous chapters. The key targets are:

- Alberta citizens from inside the region
- Alberta citizens from outside the region

Table 17.13 Tourism: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
General Tourism					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crimson Lake Provincial Park is an attractive natural location with safe, clean, attractive and well-maintained trails and facilities that complement other local tourist attractions the park supports appropriate local tourism initiatives the park is a gateway to tourism activities in the David Thompson Corridor 	Good quality recreation features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clean water land akes with adequate boat launching facilities well maintained beach groomed ski trails in winter 	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crimson Lake Provincial Park continues to be a popular regional tourism destination Crimson Lake Provincial Park continues to be a clearinghouse or accurate information about tourism opportunities in the David Thompson Corridor
	Appealing Natural and Cultural Features and Excellent Scenery	The Features Inventory (Background Paper 2) and Features Analysis (Chapter 11) show that the park has many water-focused and forest focused features that make a stay in the park enjoyable.	✓		
	Safe, appealing infrastructure	up-to-date signs and wayfinding structures	X		
		appealing informative information/orientation signs and brochures	X		
	Excellent Visitor Service programs	well maintained, well designed trails	✓	limited	
		best practice personal interpretation programs	✓	but limited	
	A David Thompson Corridor Tourism Association	best practice non-personal interpretation programs (e.g., detailed program planning and regular evaluation based on learning and behavioural outcomes identified in the planning process)	X		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a federation of tourism sites in the David Thompson Corridor pooling resources for tourism research, promotion, staff training and maintaining high standards 	X		

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Table 17.13 Tourism: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators *continued*

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	Key Performance Indicators	
			in place, ✓ = yes, ✗ = no	Status (2011)
LEET Tourism				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crimson Lake Provincial Park can be a component of LEET tourism in the eastern section of the David Thompson Corridor Alberta Parks staff and partners deliver in-depth hands-on informal education programming that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outdoor skills training natural and cultural history of the Kootenay Plains First Nations' perspectives on the natural and cultural history of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special places and special features Research on the LEET tourism market Safe, attractive infrastructure Knowledgeable, skilled full-time staff 	<p>Crimson Lake Provincial Park has unique spectrum of wetland habitats found in Alberta, plus many of the species of plant and animals—rare and common) that can be found in Alberta's wetlands. Also, the park may contain important archeological sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with Travel Alberta and other tourism specialists to identify size and composition of the LEET market up-to-date signs and wayfinding structures detailed knowledge of natural and cultural features of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and adjacent lands outstanding customer service skills excellent facilitation skills for working with partners and stakeholders well developed outdoor leadership safety and first-aid skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Parks hires a skilled LEET tourism specialist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> either one for the entire David Thompson Corridor or two (one each for the east and west halves of the DTC) development of a local LEET tourism association in two years, successful delivery of at least one LEET tourism package focusing on the east end of DTC including Crimson Lake Provincial Park in five years demand requires the development of at least three new LEET programs involving the park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✗ ✗ ✗

LEET Tourism

Market

There have been no formal studies of the LEET tourism market in the David Thompson Corridor. Alberta Park staff should consider approaching Travel Alberta to conduct market study for the David Thompson Corridor. Until this take place the best information will be to focus on the general tourism audience.

Program Planning

Planning should focus on personal programming in the park led by:

- skilled full-time park staff
 - there is no place in LEET programming for lightly trained seasonal staff)
- experts from other Alberta Government agencies
 - e.g., Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
- expert researchers working as partners or contractors with Alberta Parks
- other local experts including members of nature clubs, outdoor clubs and First Nations elders

All programs should contain the elements identified by Arsenault (2004)—see summary on page 1.6 in Chapter 1: Defining Visitor Services.

Deliver

Locations

General Tourism

Key locations for tourism promotion will be off-site and on-line.

Crimson Lake Provincial Park may include links to other attractions in the region on the Crimson Lake Provincial Park website.

LEET Tourism

Arsenault (2004) indicated that a key component of LEET tourism programming is providing participants with exclusive access to special places. In the case of Crimson Lake Provincial Park, this will depend on the outcomes of research recommended in Section 1: Research of this chapter. Special places may include: the heron nesting colony, sandhill crane nesting areas (only if access to these sites does not disturb nesting birds), locations of rare plants such as the linear-leaved sundew, breeding areas of rare amphibians, and archeological sites.

Implementation Recommendations

Address Missing Critical Success Factors

Infrastructure

To be an important tourism destination the park must have safe, attractive, well maintained trails, trailheads, parking lots and amenities. This indicates to tourists that the site is safe, cared for and worth visiting.

1. Visitor Services staff should work with the park's management team to upgrade trails and wayfinding signs to current Alberta Parks standards.

Interpretation Services

1. Continue to deliver personal programming with current staff (see section 4, Interpretation in this chapter for details)
2. Use program planning forms for development of all new programs.
3. Work with district Visitor Services staff to develop an effective program evaluation program based on the criteria developed in the program planning form. The evaluation process should be developed within two years.

Formation of a David Thompson Corridor Tourism Association

1. Alberta Parks should work with local tourism operators and government agencies to develop a local tourism association to pool resources to promote and market sustainable tourism in the corridor. Visitor Services staff could sit on this council and work with other stakeholders to integrate education, recreation and interpretation services and maintain high levels of service standards including staff training.

LEET Tourism

Address Missing Critical Success Factors

Staffing

The descriptions of LEET programming stress the importance of highly skilled, knowledgeable program leaders. This type of work can not be delivered by lightly trained seasonal staff. It must be preformed and coordinated by seasoned veterans. If LEET programming is to take place skilled staff are needed. They must receive regular professional development to further develop knowledge and skills (successful LEET programs can attract multiple repeat visitors who will be looking for even deeper education and more authentic experiences).

Formation of a David Thompson Corridor LEET Tourism Association

Ideally, Alberta Parks can work with partners and local businesses that are involved in various aspects of LEET tourism. An association could:

- help coordinate LEET offerings in the David Thompson Corridor
- organize and share cost of:
 - tourism market research
 - professional development
 - program evaluation
 - maintain high quality standards through certification

Developing LEET Tourism Programming

Development of programming will depend on the outcomes of research on topics identified in the research section of this chapter and the outcome of market research recommended in this section.

10. Marketing

Introduction

A review of the Market Analysis (Chapter 9) indicates the need for a more in-depth review of market structure and opportunities for Crimson Lake Provincial Park and the David Thompson Corridor. EcoLeaders recommends that Alberta Parks commissions a detailed market study for the region. In the mean time, we recommend that Visitor Services staff use this core competency statement. Advertisements play a large part in marketing.

Define

Marketing is the process of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and the David Thompson Corridor:

- making current visitors and stakeholders aware of the park and the district's sites and services (especially Visitor Services)
- attracting new visitors
- keeping existing customers interested in activities and services

Outputs/Critical Success Factors/Key Performing Indicators

See Table 17.14 on the following page.

Objectives

For both Crimson Lake Provincial Park and the David Thompson Corridor:

1. To increase the profile of the park and district as places to enjoy nature, learn about its history and recreate in the outdoors.
2. To increase visitation.
3. To increase participation in Visitor Services offerings.

Plan

Target Participants/Audiences

Target participants will include:

External Markets

Local Residents

People within a one-hour drive of Crimson Lake Provincial Park are currently and will remain an important visitor group.

Central Alberta

The audience Analysis Chapter of this plan indicates that people from central Alberta are likely to remain the major market for the park and the district.

Table 17.14 Marketing: Outputs, Critical Success Factors and Performance Indicators

Outputs	Critical Success Factors	Description	in place ✓ = yes, X = no		Key Performance Indicators
			Status (2011)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that local park users and tourists are aware of Crimson Lake Provincial Park and the opportunities it affords for learning and recreation ensure local people and people in the region are aware of the Visitor Services programs and activities available at the park ensure that park visitors are aware of the many opportunities to discover and enjoy the David Thompson Corridor 	Up-to-date regional market information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Tourist Regions market information - provided by Travel Alberta 	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> target users are aware of and participate in the Park's Visitor Services programs and the recreation and learning opportunities throughout the David Thompson Corridor target users regularly visit Crimson Lake Provincial Park no net loss in biodiversity and cultural features resulting from increased marketing (and visitation) to the park and to the David Thompson Corridor an increase in park use that does not overwhelm the park infrastructure
	Up-to-date district market information	Information focussed directly on the David Thompson Corridor and specific sites such as Crimson Lake Provincial Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a visitor use projection study for the David Thompson Corridor that accurately records current visitation and projects visitation growth under a number of community growth and marketing scenarios a detailed listing of recreation and tourism sites and operators in the David Thompson Corridor 	X		
	A marketing plan	Plan consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification and description of characteristics of target markets identification of features to market to targets strategy and communications plan 	X		
	A marketing budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a budget for marketing Crimson Lake Provincial Park and the Alberta Parks Properties in the David Thompson Corridor 	X		