



Chapter 6: Tactics

Introduction

Tactics is a term introduced by staff at Prince Albert National Park. This chapter defines tactics and describes them in detail in a series of tactic statements.

The final section of this chapter summarizes what tactics are most effective for each of the park's Visitor Experience and Outreach audiences.

Staff will use this chapter extensively when planning and evaluating products.

Definitions

What Tactics Are

Tactics are central ideas for Visitor Experience and Outreach products. These ideas are general and should not constrain flexibility and creativity. They may include a reference to a specific medium or method and at their core, they identify one or more:

- target audiences
- theme/subthemes
- possible locations

What Tactics Are Not

Tactics are not:

- detailed program outlines or simple plans that include learning outcomes
- training and professional development activities

What Tactics Will Be Used For

Planning for Individual Products

Tactics will be used throughout the next five years as an initial part of the planning process for developing individual products. All tactics must be compatible with the Interpretive Master Plan's objectives.

Annual Planning for a Suite of Products

Tactics statements will be used in annual planning. Each year the Visitor Experience team and the Outreach team will work together to produce an integrated work plan that develops a suite of new and repeat products that cover the park's audiences and the priority themes and subthemes.

New tactics can be developed over the next five years and existing tactics may be retired. However, these actions can only take place during annual planning sessions.

The Process Used to Develop Tactics Statements

This chapter is based on a series of workshops in which park staff:

- identified current products
- brainstormed ideas for future products

With the aid of the contractor, staff then assessed the listed existing and potential products based on their:

- fit to identified audience segments
- fit to park interpretive themes
- level of success
- cost effectiveness
- age and condition

Based on these criteria, each product was given a priority rating between 1 (poor/discontinue) to 5 (high priority for development or retention).

Products were then grouped by the consultant into high and moderate priority personal and non-personal tactics.

Each tactic statement has the following sections:

Critical Success Factors

These are infrastructures, structures, processes, events and/or information that must be in place for a tactic to be achievable.

Core Competencies

These are the areas of service, core knowledge and skills where staff must excel in order to meet the park's requirements of competency and professionalism.

Primary Target Audiences

These include only the clearly defined target audience groupings identified in Chapter 2: Audience Analysis.



Ideal Locations

These are generally places and times where specific target audiences are likely to congregate.

Linkages

These include other tactics, products that complement a specific tactic, make it more effective or extend and enrich a visitor's or outreach audience's experience.

Support

This includes policy and procedures, professional development/training, technology and equipment, maintenance, evaluation and budget that is required to make this tactic work effectively.

Current Offerings (2010)

This section lists products related to this tactic that are already being delivered.

Potential Offerings

This section lists products and media that may be developed over the next five years within this tactic area.

Tactics Focusing on Personal Media

High Priority Tactics

Tactic: Aboriginal Focused Programming

Brief Description

These products feature the history, culture and traditional knowledge of Aboriginal people of the area, especially those aspects related to Prince Albert National Park.

The intended outcomes of Aboriginal-Focused programming include to:

- communicate Aboriginal history knowledge and perspective to all audiences
- encourage the participation of local story-tellers and experts in development and delivery of programs
- continue the work of making trusting connections with Aboriginal communities through their involvement in the development and delivery of Visitor Experience products
- continued development of awareness and cultural sensitivity of staff

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- Theme 4
- National Theme
- Theme 3

Primary Target Audiences

- Park Experience Visitors
- New Canadians
- Townsite Visitors

Potential Media and Methods

Visitor Experience Offerings

- Activity-Based Program
- Courses and Workshops
- Dramatic Presentation
- Guided Tour
- Talk (Seminar)
- Campfire Program
- Discovery Activity
- Demonstration
- Interpretive Roving

Ideal Locations

- Townsite Main Beach
- Nature Centre
- Townsite Day Use Area
- Pasiwin Cultural Heritage Site

Critical Success Factors

Visitor Experience Offerings

- knowledgeable, culturally sensitive presenters
- space for special events (e.g., Pasiwin Cultural Heritage Site, Townsite dayuse area)

Staff Core Competencies

- knowledge
 - understand Aboriginal culture and history
- skills
 - strong communicators
 - project management
- experience in working with Aboriginal communities

Linkages

Aboriginal Programming can be linked to exhibits in the Nature Centre and Visitor Centre, traveling exhibits from other agencies (e.g., the Saskatchewan Archeological Society).



Support

Professional Development/Training

Visitor Experience staff should receive professional development in:

- history and culture of Aboriginal people
- cultural sensitivity
- project management

Evaluation

All Aboriginal Focused Programming should be evaluated regularly:

- programs delivered many time per season should be evaluated at least twice per season

Partners

Partners can include elders and representatives of Aboriginal Communities, University departments specializing in Aboriginal Studies, and Archeological studies of Aboriginal history and culture, and other specialists organizations such as the Saskatchewan Archeological Society.

Tactic: Children's Programs

Brief Description

These are products developed especially for children and an adult care-giver.

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme,
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- children aged 4-7 and Youth (8-12 yrs) with a mandatory adult (family member or care-giver)
- Park Experience Visitors
- Townsite Leaseholders

Potential Media and Methods

- Activity-Based Program
- Courses and Workshops
- Discovery Activity
- Guided Tour
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Workshop

Ideal Locations

Any place where children and their parents gather.

Critical Success Factors

- skilled knowledgeable staff
- safe program locations

Staff Core Competencies

- knowledge
 - understand ages and stages of child cognitive, emotional and skill capacity
 - knowledge of park natural and cultural themes and core messages
- skills: able to understand and lead children aged 4-12)
- experience in leading groups of children

Current Offerings (2010)

- Métis Moccasins
- Tipi Teachings

Potential Offerings

Priority

Continue with current programming, develop new programs as needed.

Linkages

This program could have linkages with Nature Centre and Visitor Centre exhibits, web pages, blogs and FaceBook pages.

Support

Policy and Procedures

Development of the Personal Interpretation sections of the Parks's Xplorers program must follow Parks Canada's *Guidelines and Tools Parks Canada Xplorers Program* February 8th, 2011.

Professional Development/Training

All Visitor Experience staff should review and use the information contained in *Guidelines and Tools Parks Canada Xplorers Program* February 8th, 2011.

All staff leading children's programming should have professional development in current childhood learning models and best practice in formal and informal teaching techniques.

Technology and Equipment

All staff should be up-to-date in what education and entertainment technology is being used by this audience in order to develop approaches that fit their needs and interests.

Maintenance

All sites used for children's programming should be regularly inspected for safety and hygiene.

Evaluation

- formative evaluation during development of new versions of the program
- summative evaluation at least twice each season

Budget

Depends on the product

Partners

Partners could include Friends of Prince Albert National Park, the Saskatchewan Boreal Forest Learning Centre, and any local education organization that specializes in informal learning for children.



Current Offerings (2010)

The following personal interpretation products have been provided in the past year:

Junior Naturalists

- This long-standing program needs to be redeveloped to meet the needs of the Xplorer program (targeting youth 9-12) although staff see an increasing demand for products aimed at a younger age group.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Junior Naturalist

Offer two versions of this program:

- targeting ages 9-12 (to meet the needs of the Xplorer Program)
- targeting younger children (4-7) to meet the needs of the current audience

Tactic: Education Conferences

Brief Description

This tactic focuses on:

Main Focus

- presenting at teacher's conferences to promote the park and Parks Canada's educational resource
- increase the profile of Prince Albert National park as a place of learning for schools

Potential Minor Focus

- the delivery of presentations at conferences and meetings of heritage interpretation and environmental education professionals on topics of best practice in interpretation and environmental education

Used For

- Visitor Experience
- Outreach

Themes

- National Theme

Primary Target Audiences

- other Visitor Experience and Outreach professionals
- teachers of youth
 - Youth (8-12 yrs)
 - Youth (13-17 yrs)

Potential Media and Methods

Personal Media

- Demonstrations of
 - Activity-Based Program
 - Discovery Activity
 - Demonstration
- Characterization
- Dramatic Presentation
- Leader Training
- Workshop

Non-Personal Media

- Virtual Tours

Ideal Locations

This tactic can be applied at a wide variety of meeting locations inside or outside the park.

Critical Success Factors

Staff should belong to a wide variety of local, provincial and national professional associations where they can take part in workshops and conferences.

Staff Core Competencies

Staff should have excellent presentation and communication skills

Linkages

This tactic can be linked to all products delivered by the park.

Support

Professional Development/Training

Staff should receive regular professional development in:

- advances in learning modeling and cognitive science
- best practices heritage interpretation and environmental education delivery and evaluation
- best practice in communications at workshops and conferences

Evaluation

All presentations by park staff should be evaluated by the audience.

Budget

Operational Costs

The annual budget should have line items for sending staff to make presentations at least two conferences or workshops per year.

Partners

Partnerships for this tactic are not necessary but could include Interpretation Canada, and Saskatchewan Outdoor and Environmental Education Association.

Current Offerings (2010)

Teacher conference presentations.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Staff should continue to deliver promotional products at teacher's conferences.

Optional

Experiences staff could present examples of best practice in education delivery at environmental education conferences.



Tactic: Interpretive Rove/Point Duty

Brief Description

This tactic involves products that feature open-ended two-way interaction between park visitors and staff. The two main approaches are described below.

Interpretive Roving

Visitor Experience staff visit people where they are recreating such as on a beach, in campsites or picnic areas. Often, a curious artifact, or other item is carried to catch attention and stimulate discussion. The program takes place as a two-way conversation between the one or more participants and the park staff person. Both sides ask questions, provide responses, tell stories and reminiscences, and exchange observations and ideas.

Point Duty:

One or more Visitor Experience staff station themselves at a point of natural or cultural significance or at a site of visitor concentration and deliver short, impromptu interpretation to visitors who are attracted to the site.

The Visitor Experience staff do some of the following:

Standard Point Duty

- point out interesting natural or cultural features and viewing opportunities
- may have artifacts (authentic or replica tools, skulls, skins or photographs and pictures) for participants to interact with

Activity-Focused Point Duty

- provide tools, information and instructions for individuals and groups to take part in open-ended discovery activities
- participants are encouraged to return to share and record their discoveries and ask questions about what they have encountered

Theatrical Point Duty

- staff deliver a short dramatic presentation
- may remain in character to answer questions and share reminiscences with park visitors

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- Townsite Visitors
- Park Experience Visitors
- Townsite Leaseholders
- Youth (8-12 yrs)
- Park Sightseers
- Area Sightseers
- New Canadians

Potential Media and Methods

Roving and point duty are media that can include elements of

- Demonstration
- Activity-Based Program
- Discovery Activity
- Characterization
- Dramatic Presentation
- Living History

Ideal Locations

Visitor Experience

Interpretive Roving is best located at areas of high visitor concentration in pleasant weather.

Critical Success Factors

Staff must have extensive knowledge of the topic being covered:

- open ended conversations with park visitors are likely to include many questions about the park's natural and cultural features
- some visitors may be experts who ask for deeper details

To be effective roving/point duty must:

- take place at times and locations when significant numbers of park visitors are present
- take place in pleasant weather
 - visitors will not wish to engage when they are hot, cold or wet

Staff Core Competencies

To be effective Visitor Experience staff must:

- have deep and broad knowledge of the topic being presented, and be knowledgeable on a number of related topics
- have a strong, outgoing personality
- understand and use a variety of techniques to engage visitors and encourage them to take part in the program

Linkages

Point duty programs can be linked with a wide variety of other products and services:

- programs and exhibits at the Nature Centre and Visitor Centre
- upcoming special events and personal Visitor Experience products
- self-guided activities in the townsite and at various visitor activity nodes in the park
- Park website, blogs, FaceBook pages

Support

Policy and Procedures

Timing and location of roving and point duty delivery requires a strategic approach and follow a standard planning process that identifies themes to be covered, locations, timing and duration of each product. These products require:

- significant numbers of people gathered at a location
- fair weather
- must be located adjacent to or within the landscape or feature being interpreted

Professional Development/Training

Roving and point duty is difficult for beginners to do well. Ideally, beginners should apprentice with a seasoned mentor, starting as an observer or assistant to learn the ropes before delivering this type of program solo.

Maintenance

All materials and equipment use must be maintained in weekly, monthly and annual cycles.

Evaluation

Products should be evaluated at least twice each season.



Budget

Budget ranges broadly, depending on the topics covered. That said equipment models, artifacts and props are vital as visitor engagement and learning tools. Quality, well maintained equipment is a must. As a result, budget for materials for a major point duty product may range well over \$500 —e.g., if wildlife pelts are to be used.

Partners

No specific partners are recommended.

Tactic: School Program

Brief Description

This tactic includes all curriculum-based school personal interpretation products delivered by park staff in Prince Albert National Park. Classes from Grade 1–12:

- visit the park for a half-day to a full day and take part in hands-on discovery activities based on the curriculum of their grade (mostly social studies and science)
- are visited by park staff at their school (to pilot new products)

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

Schools or Community groups travelling to the park as a day trip or staying overnight in the park. This includes Aboriginal Communities.

Potential Media and Methods

- Activity-Based Program
- Campfire Program
- Characterization
- Courses and Workshops
- Discovery Activity
- Dramatic Presentation
- Demonstration
- Guided Tour
- Living History
- Long Term Program
- Projects
- Talk (Seminar)
- Citizen Science Projects
- Workshop
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Visitor Centre/Nature Centre (Participatory Setting)

Ideal Locations

Locations will vary depending on theme and curriculum connections, but may include:

- indoors for start and finish (Nature Centre, Visitor Centre)
- meeting room in main compound (for indoor classroom)
- day-use areas, beaches, trails

Current Offerings (2010)

In 2010, the park offered many roving and point duty programs.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Current levels and locations of interpretive roving and point duty should be continued, but using the strategy developed under policy and procedures.

As well, roving and point duty in dayuse and campsites along Highway 263 is likely to be the best way of contacting the small and elusive Area Sightseeing Visitor segment.

Critical Success Factors

All school program locations must have facilities that can accommodate class-size or multiple class-sized groups. Facilities must include:

- toilets
- nearby shelter (shade/warmth)
- drinking water
- picnic tables
- wildlife-proof garbage disposal
- trails and activity sites designed to handle class-sized groups

Booking system*:

- system for booking
- coupled with statistic recording system recording:
 - number of students served
 - grades served
 - number and type of curriculum-based programs delivered
 - weekly, monthly, seasonal, annual contacts
 - schools and communities served
 - comparison of current stats compared to previous years

* Part of a park-wide Visitor Experience statistics system

Staff Core Competencies

- knowledge
 - familiarity with curriculum
 - understand ages and stages of child cognitive, emotional and skill capacity at all grade levels
 - clear understanding of current learning models
 - knowledge of park natural and cultural themes and core messages
- skills: able to understand and lead students Grades 1-12
- experience in leading groups of children

Linkages

Linkages can be made to:

- most other products developed for children of similar ages to each school grade
- exhibits in the Nature Centre and Visitor Centre
- Outreach products
 - teacher's resources
 - website, blogs

Support

Policy and Procedures

The park will have to update its process for booking, keeping stats, gathering evaluations by teachers and students.



Professional Development/Training

All Visitor Experience staff should review the support materials for developing effective interpretation for children in:

- *Guidelines and Tools Parks Canada Xplorers Program*, February 8th, 2011
- *Planning a Comprehensive Interpretation Program - Version 1.4*, September 2009

Regular attendance of conferences or workshops on:

- current best practice in environmental education
- current understanding of learning theory in formal and informal learning settings
- early childhood development
- use of technology in learning

Technology and Equipment

Current equipment used in outdoor learning situations (may include cellphones, GPS equipment, tablet computers).

Maintenance

Regular (at least each season) maintenance of all equipment used in school programming (e.g., dip nets, binoculars, etc.).

Evaluation

Annual evaluation of all school products is required to ensure:

- that products actually do deliver curriculum connections advertised
- that identified themes and subthemes are incorporated
- planned student learning outcomes are achieved
- school programs are delivered in a professional manner
- students and teachers are satisfied with products delivered

Proposed Evaluation Methods

- informal evaluation by students and teachers at end of the program (e.g., program high and low from each student in a sharing circle)
- formal questionnaire filled out by teachers and students at end of the program
- formal evaluation by park Visitor Experience supervisors
- formal self-evaluation form filled out by Visitor Experience staff after each program

Tactic: Skill Development Workshops

Brief Description

These are workshops led by park staff or guest experts on one or more of the following:

- outdoor skills (e.g., snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.)
- outdoor safety and navigation (e.g., winter survival skills, map reading/orientation, etc.)
- wildlife-watching skills
- traditional skills (e.g., flint tool making, traditional pottery, canoe-building)
- stewardship and citizen science skills (e.g., bird identification, plant identification, plant and wildlife census techniques, native plant planting techniques)

Although skill development is stressed, these products will include significant amounts of discovery learning activities.

Budget

Must have budget line items for regular maintenance/replacement of current equipment, and acquisition of new equipment.

Partners

May include Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards, Saskatchewan Boreal Forest Education Centre, Friends of Prince Albert National Park.

Additional partnerships could include:

- regional school boards
 - part of Parks Canada's initiative to better engage with youth
- Ducks Unlimited
 - work together to develop Saskatchewan curriculum-based wetland education program that could serve students across the province
- University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina Departments of Education
 - work with education researchers to develop effective environmental education and Aboriginal education programming in the park
 - act as a test bed for new education methods and technology in outdoor education

Current Offerings (2010)

In 2010 and before, the park offered curriculum-based school programming for grades 1–12, including Wildlife Management program with Nutana Collegiate.

Potential Offerings

Priority

The entire school programming offer should be reviewed and revised to incorporate:

- the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education new curricula
- new park interpretive themes and a focus on *Reconnecting* themes
- new technologies
- the My Parks Pass program with the park's Grade 8 school products

Optional

The park's Wildlife Management program with Nutana Collegiate should be reviewed and consideration given to developing more relationships like this one.

In special circumstances off-site school programs may be delivered to priority audiences such as Aboriginal communities or to pilot new products.

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| • National Theme | • Theme 1 | • Theme 2 |
| • Theme 3 | • Theme 4 | |

Primary Target Audiences

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Townsite Visitors | • Park Experience Visitors |
| • Townsite Leaseholders | • Youth (8-12 yrs) |
| • Youth (13-17 yrs) | • Youth (18-34 yrs) |
| • Schools and Youth Groups | |



Potential Media and Methods

- Activity-Based Program
- Discovery Activity
- Guided Tour
- Long Term Program
- Talk (Seminar)
- Visitor Centre/Nature Centre (Participatory Setting)
- Courses and Workshops
- Demonstration
- Living History
- Projects
- Volunteer and Partner Learning

Ideal Locations

Locations will vary depending on theme and topic covered, but may include:

- trails
- day use areas
- indoors for start and finish (Nature Centre, Visitor Centre, park compound building)

Critical Success Factors

All workshops must have:

- skilled, experienced, personable workshop leaders
- adequate support
 - indoor or outdoor venues that provide adequate space for a workshop-sized group (15–30 people), washrooms, water, warmth/shade, safety and first-aid capabilities

To be successfully attended, workshops must be well promoted to target audiences through a variety of media that is frequented by that target group and have a system that makes it easy for workshop attendees to register and pay for participation.

Staff Core Competencies

All workshop leaders and assistants (either park staff or guest experts) must have:

- deep knowledge and understanding of the topics being covered
- high levels of skill and experience leading groups

Linkages

Workshops can have connections to the park's personal interpretation programs, and citizens science and stewardship initiatives. They may also be linked to Outreach products such as the Park's Facebook page, blogs, website and printed and electronic materials about park wildlife, history and Aboriginal heritage.

Support

Policy and Procedures

Park staff would be greatly assisted by up-to-date policy and procedures for hiring and assessing guest workshop leaders, promotion, booking workshops participants and ensuring participant safety.

Professional Development/Training

Visitor Experience staff would benefit by attending professional development sessions on:

- leading workshops
- skill development within workshop topics (e.g., snowshoeing technique, plant identification, etc.)
- management of contractors (workshop leaders)

Technology and Equipment

Ideally, some workshop presentations could be recorded and used as outreach products (e.g., streaming video, Podcasts, etc.)

Evaluation

A workshop should be evaluated:

- by participants each time it takes place
- by Visitor Experience staff at least twice per year

Budget

Capital Costs

Will vary greatly depending on the program.

Operational Costs

Will vary greatly depending on the program.

Partners

Partners can include:

- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- Ducks Unlimited Canada (Saskatchewan)
- Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Nature Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Boreal Forest Learning Centre
- Prince Albert Historical Society
- Provincial and Regional Cross-Country Ski Organizations
- Saskatchewan Archaeological Society
- Waskesiu Marina Adventure Centre

Current Offerings (2010)

In 2010, the park has offered snowshoe outings and instruction.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Visitor Experience staff can provide instruction in a variety outdoor skill training throughout the year. However, priority should go to activities that take place in the winter and shoulder seasons (e.g., snowshoeing, winter survival, cross-country skiing). Workshops should also be based on reaching key audiences such as youth.

Optional

Other activities that could take place in the summer include:

- nature photography
- wildlife and landscape painting
- wild edible plants and medicines (with Euro-Canadian herbalist and Aboriginal perspectives)
- wild plant identification
- flint tool making and First Nation pottery



Tactic: Special Events

Brief Description

Special events are designed to:

- attract large number of visitors
- celebrate historic events (in many cases)
- engage people who are already visiting the park
- encourage new people to visit the park
- increase the park's and agency's profile in the community and across the country

Interpretive content in these events varies.

There are two types of special events:

Events where Visitor Experience plays a *major* role

- Visitor Experience staff participation is required
- annual special events in 2010 these included:
 - Bio-Blitz
 - Canada Day
 - Children's Festival
 - National Aboriginal Day
 - Parks Day
 - Pasipiw Community Feast
 - West Side Residents Day
- special programs during target times Thanksgiving, Christmas break, February Break

Events where Visitor Experience plays a *lesser* role

Mandatory participation:

- Parks Canada AGM

Optional Participation

- Narrows Canoe Challenge
- Frank Dunn Triathlon
- Waskesiu Foundation Dinner
- Heritage Day

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- Townsite Visitors
- Park Sightseeing Visitors
- Park Experience Visitors
- Townsite Leaseholders
- Youth (8-12 yrs)
- Youth (13-17 yrs)
- Youth (18-34 yrs)
- children under 8 yrs
- Families
- Aboriginal Communities

Potential Media and Methods

Personal Programming

- Activity-Based Program
- Campfire Program
- Characterization
- Workshops
- Discovery Activity
- Dramatic Presentation
- Demonstration
- Guided Tour
- Interpretive Roving
- Living History
- Point Duty
- Visual and Performing Arts

Non-Personal Programs

- Artifacts/Models
- Brochures
- Critter Cams
- Exhibits
- Mass Media
- Self-Guided Trails
- Websites

Ideal Locations

Special events require spaces where large numbers of people can gather.

Critical Success Factors

A special event require:

- an effective organizing committee
- space that includes power, water washroom facilities
- energetic partners

Staff Core Competencies

- skills in project management
- knowledge of audiovisual equipment
- experience in organizing large gatherings

Linkages

Special events should have links to a variety of Visitor Experience products throughout the park.

Support

Policy and Procedures

As of 2011, a special events calendar will be developed by park management. Staff will be required to develop a project plan for each event identified on the calendar.

Visitor Experience staff would be strongly assisted by a knowledge of the park and agency's policies and procedures for holding large special events.

Currently the park has a large number of special events. If any new special events are to be considered:

- the new event must be shown to:
 - have significant interpretive content
 - have potential to reach large numbers of people
 - especially audience segments that are currently not being well served
- an existing special event or other Visitor Experience program must be retired in order to maintain a sustainable workload for staff

Professional Development/Training

Visitor experience staff would benefit by attending regular professional development sessions on:

- project management
- volunteer management

Evaluation

All special events should be evaluated each time they take place. Evaluation criteria should include:

- level of community involvement (including number of partners attracted and attendance)
- connection to the Parks Canada mandate and interpretive themes
- level of positive media coverage
- cost

Budget

Costs vary dependant on the special events.

Partners

Depending on the special event, partners can include local, regional, provincial and national groups and organizations with mandates similar to or compatible with Parks Canada and Prince Albert National Park.



Current Offerings (2010)

See listing in Brief Description section above.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Events where Visitor Experience plays a *major* role

All current special events should continue. However, the Children's festival should be reviewed and revised to counter declining attendance.

Shoulder season events should be expanded.

Events where Visitor Experience plays a *lesser* role

All current special events should continue .

Optional

These events could be considered as additional annual events:

- MS Bike Tour
- Elk Ridge Fun Run

Tactic: Wildlife-Viewing Tours

Brief Description

This is a staff-led discovery activity where participants drive in an automobile caravan style with short stops to discover and hopefully see, hear or find signs of wildlife. These tours may include some night activities.

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- Park Experience
- Youth 8-12 yrs
- Children

Potential Media and Methods

- Discovery Activity
- Dramatic Presentation
- Characterization
- Campfire Activity
- Guided Walk
- Autotour
- Evening Program

Ideal Locations

- any location in the park frequented by the focus species

Critical Success Factors

- a healthy local wildlife population
- knowledgeable and skilled staff
- staff with detailed knowledge of the wildlife species
- at least one staff capable of producing authentic vocalizations

Staff Core Competencies

Staff must:

- have detailed knowledge of the focus species, wildlife at night
- be capable of producing wildlife vocalizations
- have skills and experience leading a group at night

Linkages

This program could have linkages with exhibits, web pages, blogs, YouTube video, Twitter feeds about sightings and promoting programs, FaceBook pages about the focus species and other park creature that specialize in nighttime activity, or may be active in the park during the program.

Support

Policy and Procedures

Must conform to all park policies regarding protection of wildlife and public safety.

Professional Development/Training

Staff should receive training in first aid, night safety and group dynamics.

Technology and Equipment

Depends on media and methods chosen. May require portable sound equipment to playback wolf howls (see Wildlife Sound Recording Society website: www.wildlife-sound.org/) for current information about sound recording equipment and techniques).

Maintenance

Depends on media and methods chosen. May require seasonal or annual maintenance of portable sound equipment used in the program.

Evaluation

- formative evaluation during development of new versions of the program
- summative evaluation at least twice each season

Budget

Capital Costs

- Sound recording and playback equipment \$400–\$1,200

Partners

Could include university researchers who are conducting research in the park on the focus species.

Current Offerings (2010)

Wolf Howl Evening program was delivered several times in the summer of 2010.

Potential Offerings

Priority

- deliver wolf howls in August
- pilot wolf howl in fall and winter
- pilot other wildlife viewing/calling in fall i.e., elk bugling



Moderate Priority Tactics

Tactic: Citizen Science Activities

Brief Description

Citizen science consists of real scientific research conducted with the aid of volunteers, some of whom may not have formal scientific training, but have a keen interest in the topic of study and a desire to meet and work with professional scientists and make real positive contributions to the research. In all citizen science projects professional scientists are involved, either leading the project, designing the scientific procedures or acting as advisors and mentors to experienced citizen science groups. The bottom line is that rigorous research is conducted providing dependable and usable results.

Projects can be short term seasonal endeavours or may be long-term multi-year projects. Projects may be simple monitoring of species population numbers to much more complex research involving habitat restoration, removal of invasive species or looking at the health and social effects of visiting natural areas. Fields of study can range from paleontology, archeology, anthropology, ethnology, biology and ecology.

Some ready-made citizen science programs exist with pre-made reporting templates and procedures. These include FrogWatch, PlantWatch, WormWatch, and IceWatch sponsored by Nature Saskatchewan.

Used For

- Visitor Experience
- Outreach

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- Park Experience Visitors
- Townsite Leaseholders
- Youth (8-12 yrs)
- Schools and Youth Groups

Potential Media and Methods

Participatory scientific research

Ideal Locations

Locations will vary depending on the project.

Critical Success Factors

All park-specific research (i.e., all projects other than FrogWatch, PlantWatch, WormWatch and IceWatch) must be associated with at least one professional scientist who will ensure that research is low impact, accurate and uses current best practice.

Ideally, the park should have its own Citizen Science lead acting as the major coordinator and organizer.

Staff Core Competencies

The project will also require a Visitor Experience coordinator. If the park is working with an established program (e.g., FrogWatch), this position may be limited to liaising with the project lead and park visitors. Ideally the park liaison should have interest and experience on science research projects, and working with and maintaining volunteers.

Linkages

All citizen science projects in the park should have links to ongoing or necessary new scientific research identified by park resource managers. Citizen science activities must contribute to the understanding and management of the park's ecological and commemorative integrity.

Support

Policy and Procedures

This type of project would be greatly assisted and enabled by a park-level policy and procedures for engaging and managing citizen science projects.

Professional Development/Training

Visitor experience staff would benefit by attending regular professional development sessions on:

- project management
- volunteer management
- evaluation of citizen science projects

Technology and Equipment

This will depend on the project.

Evaluation

All citizen science projects should be evaluated annually to determine the effectiveness of the research and levels of volunteer engagement.

Partners

Key partners will include Nature Saskatchewan and perhaps local researchers specializing in the program (e.g., local herpetologists may be interested in working with the park's FrogWatch program).

Current Offerings (2010)

The park's Christmas Bird Count has taken place with limited participation by non-park staff.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Park staff should consider piloting, at some time in the next five years, an established Citizen Science project such as:

- Christmas Bird Count
- FrogWatch
- PlantWatch
- IceWatch

Optional

Visitor Experience

Consider other projects based on park research priorities.

Outreach

- Publicizing and displaying citizen science projects through mass media, on the park's website, FaceBook pages and YouTube channel can provide Canadians especially urban Canadians and new Canadians in distant locations an opportunity to virtually participate in citizen science projects and perhaps support some projects with financial contributions.



Tactic: Evening Interpretive Program

Brief Description

These programs generally take place at the Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre in the evening, but have also taken place in the Waskesiu townsite. They consist of three major types:

- stage plays
- campfire programs
- street theatre

The stage plays usually take place on a stage in the Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre where an audience gathers on benches to watch the show.

Campfire programs are more informal. Here visitors gather around a campfire beside the Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre and watch staff perform skits, lead campfire songs and tell stories.

These presentations are generally labour intensive requiring several performers, script writing, rehearsals and prop and costume fabrication. They can also be material intensive, requiring sound equipment, costumes and props.

In the past, these traditional evening programs were the top type of Visitor Experience programming. They drew large audiences and were considered an essential component of any interpretive program.

However, since the late 1990s attendance to this type of program has been dropping in Prince Albert National Park and elsewhere in Canada.

Finally, the Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre requires extensive renovation. In light of the reduction in visitor interest in traditional evening programming, Visitor Experience staff should consider decommissioning this site instead of spending additional funds on renovations.

Used For

- Visitor Experience

Themes

- National Theme
- Theme 1
- Theme 2
- Theme 3
- Theme 4

Primary Target Audiences

- Townsite Visitors
- Park Experience Visitors
- Townsite Leaseholders
- Youth (8-12 yrs)

Potential Media and Methods

- Campfire Program
- Characterization
- Discovery Activity
- Dramatic Presentation
- Demonstration
- Living History
- Talk (Seminar)
- Visual and Performing Arts

Ideal Locations

Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre and the streets of Waskesiu townsite

Critical Success Factors

- staff with dramatic presentation skills
- visitor interest
- venue that includes a stage (for stage play) or large fire pit (campfire program) plus seating for a large crowd, sound system, electrical outlets, washroom facilities and a large parking lot

Staff Core Competencies

- extensive knowledge of park's natural and cultural features and park history
- skills
 - acting, script writing, stage direction
 - music performance
 - working with sound systems

Linkages

Traditional evening programs can be linked to all other Visitor Experience products.

Support

Professional Development/Training

Visitor Experience staff should receive regular training in:

- script writing
- dramatic techniques such as characterization
- stage management

Technology and Equipment

Sound system, lighting, digital projector, etc.

Maintenance

The outdoor theatre, campfire site and electronic equipment will need regular weekly, seasonal and yearly maintenance.

Evaluation

All traditional evening programs must be evaluated at least twice each season.

Budget

Capital Costs

The Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre requires extensive restoration and upgrading that may cost up to several hundred thousand dollars.

Operational Costs

The park must have a budget line item for maintenance and regular replacement of audio visual equipment.

Partners

The park could partner with local theatre companies and music groups to develop a series of professionally presented performances based on park themes

Current Offerings

Three campfire products were offered at Beaver Glen Outdoor Theatre in 2010.

Potential Offerings

Priority

Visitor Experience staff must experiment with delivering this type of program at new locations. Annual evaluation will occur to determine whether or not these programs will continue.