

FROM VISITOR TO PARTICIPANT

Engaging communities by empowering and supporting volunteers in
Alberta's parks and protected areas



Prepared for Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation
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"Albertans want more involvement in decisions about parks and in the delivery of parks programs.

Both citizens and stakeholder groups want to have an active role in shaping decisions that affect our natural heritage."

(Plan for Parks draft, August 2008)

There is a need for community-based environmental education and stewardship within Alberta Parks. In order to make knowledge-based decisions about Alberta Parks, we need to engage Albertans in a dialogue. To make that step, we must build relationships and engage communities on a local level.

The following strategy addresses one approach to enable increased community engagement. Through a set of recommendations – derived from the case study of a successful community-based environmental education initiative – Alberta Parks has the capability to continue fostering stewardship in communities through deliberate, well thought-out volunteer environmental education programs.

How do you engage and empower your community?



“Connecting to communities is crucial to the support and success of parks.”

Global studies spanning many continents and species all emphasize the importance of focused, contextualized and consistent education as a key tool in conservation work. For example, personal contact between community members is more effective at normalizing behaviours and reinforcing social norms than the media¹. It has also been shown that **normative messaging** to protect the environment has the best effect when clear concise messages are paired with visible demonstration of the desired behaviours². When these clear messages and demonstrated behaviours are paired with perceived societal approval or acceptance, normative messages seem to have an even higher impact³.

Why use volunteers?

While there are many motivations for volunteering, the 2004 Statistics Canada survey of “Giving, Volunteering and Participating” cites “contributing to the community” as the number one reason people volunteer their time⁴. Further research on local stewardship initiatives has found people volunteer as stewards⁵...

“...for a wide array of reasons that include personal growth, social enjoyment and the desire to be of benefit to society. Exploratory interviews with naturalist group members reveal they join because they want to experience nature and the outdoors, educate themselves, share knowledge, ‘make a difference’ by working with a group, and enjoy social activities.”

By involving community members in wildlife conservation and education, the community develops a stronger sense of place as well as pride in their innovative human-wildlife conflict education strategies⁶.

In order to keep messages consistent and to begin the spread of desired behaviours, it is essential to engage communities using trained volunteers as educators. There are many current, highly successful programs that use trained volunteers as educators: Beach Watchers, Wildlife Watch, Inc., Clean Calgary Association, and the Vancouver Aquarium. Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Parks Division has an opportunity to join these ranks and lead the way toward fostering a stewardship ethic in our local communities.

How do you know if the program is working?

Program evaluation is essential for strong programs, whether in education, government or corporate programs. However, formal evaluations are often pushed aside because they are too time-consuming and expensive. Only when a program has been around for a long time will a more **summative evaluation** be conducted. Furthermore, while evaluation is often built into more formal (school-based) environmental education, evaluation is often overlooked in **non-formal environmental education**⁷.

Proactive and ongoing, **participatory evaluation** can be the most effective tool in programs such as community volunteer programs. Participatory evaluation ranges from large focus group interviews to one-on-one interviews with individual participants, but either way can be done relatively quickly and effectively with in-depth results. Participatory evaluation has additional effects of empowering your participants by involving them in the evaluation of their program.

Participatory Evaluation Case Study: The Wildlife Ambassador Program



An Alberta Parks Issue: Human-wildlife conflict

Species-specific issues will vary from area to area throughout Alberta, but the overall concept of **human-wildlife conflict** is familiar to most areas. Human-wildlife conflict issues occur all over the globe⁸; from simply encountering wildlife, hunting animals for food, competing with animals for habitat and other resources, or sharing the same living environment, humans have had relationships and conflicts with wildlife throughout history. As our human population increases, we expand the area where we live and recreate, moving humans further into “wild” territory where animals were previously undisturbed. As the human communities surrounding these wild areas increase in size and population, more and more humans venture into these spaces⁹ and the likelihood of an encounter with a wild animal increases.

Much of the literature around human-wildlife conflicts has focused on the wildlife portion of the equation – specifically on methods of aversive conditioning and techniques to teach animals to stay away from humans and human areas¹⁰. This focus is often due to the perception that a relatively small population of animals is easier to train and manage than a large, fluctuating population of people (Dave Hanna, personal communication). An estimated 8 million visits are made to Alberta’s provincially protected areas each year. For example, Kananaskis Country, in the Rocky Mountain natural region of southwestern Alberta, receives over three million visits per year, compared to a resident population of approximately 48

grizzly bears, 150-200 black bears and 40-50 cougars (personal communication, Steve Donelon, Heritage Protection Team Leader, Kananaskis Country). Here too, a common mindset exists among park managers, conservation officers and bear biologists, that the fewer number of animals makes them easier to train than humans.

While aversive conditioning techniques play an important role in protecting these wild animals, studies and global conferences regarding large carnivore conservation continue to advocate focused education initiatives in order to maintain sensitive populations¹¹. Furthermore, the role of education is often overlooked in conservation work, yet Fien, Scott and Tilbury¹² urge managers to view education as “a conservation strategy”.

How do we address the issue?

Rather than focusing solely on the wildlife, we can approach the issues differently by examining the human side of the equation. In an evaluation of the Worldwide Fund for Nature’s (WWF) global education programs, Fien and his colleagues lay out an integrated framework for successful education activities:

“Effective education programs will work with local populations, young people, teachers, non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) and other professional groups, agencies, education and environment ministries, the scientific community, parliamentarians, and the media. This integrated approach is more likely to achieve a willingness to cooperate, rather than if conservation issues are addressed without informed consent by the community.”

Education is an essential tool for empowering individuals and communities to take responsibility in conserving and protecting the wildlife and wild spaces in their backyards. As other studies have shown, when communities become aware of and engaged in a local environmental issue, they will take responsibility for, or ownership over, the local conflicts’ history, plans, research and action¹³.

Internationally, many communities have relied upon education as a key component in wildlife conservation¹⁴.

“For centuries, the dominant attitude toward wildlife and nature was one of ‘human dominion over nature’. If wildlife or nature was perceived as a threat, it was destroyed or removed.”¹⁵

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The Project: The Wildlife Ambassador Program

The residential and recreational demands on the Bow Valley wildlife corridor are increasing at a rapid rate due to the high volume of visitors: the provincial parks and recreation areas in Kananaskis Country alone receive over three million visitors annually, and the Bow Valley is the gateway to Banff National Park which received nearly eight million visit-days in 2008.

The Bow Valley corridor has seen many human-wildlife conflicts, both fatal and non-fatal, to humans and to wildlife. As the human population in the Bow Valley increases, the potential for these conflicts increases. Through personal conversations and newspaper articles it emerged that much of the Bow Valley community did not feel as though they were being engaged on a personal level by local government agencies. From this, a project was proposed to the Friends of Kananaskis Country, in conjunction with Alberta Tourism, Parks, and Recreation (ATPR) and Bow Valley WildSmart, to develop a program where volunteers would rove trails and campgrounds to educate people about wildlife safety ethics and human-wildlife conflict in the Bow Valley: this program became the Wildlife Ambassador Program (WAP).

In early January 2007, the preliminary training manual and workshop outlines were sent out to a group of stakeholders for review – board members from the FOKC and WildSmart, local environmental education professionals, Conservation Officers, Fish and Wildlife Officers, ATPR Parks Division staff, and representatives from local guiding companies. This review was to ensure the content being covered was consistent with the greater conservation education community in the Bow Valley.

WAP Pilot Season

The program evolved into a training handbook, with 'pre-workshop' activities, two evening workshops and one full-day training workshop. The recruitment process resulted in a group of 15 committed and enthusiastic volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds ranging from a retired doctor to a recent high school graduate, to a mother wanting to set a good example for her ten-year-old son. They developed their skills and knowledge by completing workbook activities and training

workshops run by provincial park interpreters. Then, in order to practice their skills and receive feedback for *in situ* presentations, the volunteers shadowed interpreters on trail roves. WAP volunteers were issued vests, hats and nametags with the WAP logo to be identifiable as volunteers. Then, pairs of volunteers were assigned to various trails and other public locations every Saturday and Sunday – morning and afternoon – talking to visitors and community members from July 1 until September 30, 2007.

Throughout the summer, two formalized feedback sessions occurred and logbooks were kept for comments and questions from volunteers. The volunteer coordinator and other staff members were easily contacted for follow-up questions or concerns. The study forming the basis of this strategy explored the perspectives and experiences of the volunteers, trainers, organizers and coordinators in order to uncover the **impacts** and the unintended **outcomes** of the Wildlife Ambassador Program.

Research Methodology

Statistics

Volunteers collected the number of contacts they made (number of people talked to), the location of the encounters, as well as the time and day of their shift. While these data can't tell us much at this early stage, they are useful in evaluating the logistics of the program itself (locations and time/day success in contacting the public), in making future comparisons, and as a starting point for more long-term evaluation. Continued collection of this type of data will have to be consistent.

Background information

The research began with a review of the recorded feedback sessions, along with the summer volunteer logs, feedback forms, and informal feedback e-mails. This background information informed the development of the main themes of inquiry in the study and the subsequent interview questions.

Interviews

The use of interviews as a main data collection technique enabled a thorough exploration of participant experiences through several perspectives. Semi-structured

"This shadowing allowed volunteers to practice their new skills under the guidance of a seasoned interpreter and receive immediate feedback on their interactions and communications."

~ interpreter

interviews focused on the training program and the implementation of the program's pilot season.

There was a combination of individual and focus group interviews with the Wildlife Ambassadors themselves – as well as key individuals involved in the pilot season. I spoke with the WildSmart education coordinator, the volunteer coordinator with FOKC (also a WAP volunteer), an Alberta Parks interpreter (who aided in training), a representative from Volunteer & Stewardship Services for Alberta Parks, and the Outreach Coordinator for Kananaskis Country. These representatives were chosen as they each had different roles in the implementation of the pilot program.

Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed and interview transcripts were sent to the interview subjects for feedback and clarification. Using NVivo7 software, data were analyzed throughout the study, with memo and note-taking completed after each interview. Several themes emerged from the interview data which inform the recommendations below.

Recommendations

The Plan for Parks (Draft November 2008) identifies that a priority action in involving Albertans is to diversify existing volunteer programs in the Alberta Parks system. The recommendations for current and future Government of Alberta programs are directly related to the findings and main themes that emerged throughout the data analysis of the WAP case study.

- 1) *Volunteer programs in parks should be solutions-based and be built on local context and key issues of concern to the community.*
- 2) *Volunteer programs in parks should build on the motivations and social diversity of their community members.*
- 3) *Volunteer programs in parks should foster an emotional connection to parks (e.g. by examining and incorporating the issues the community cares about, and by building on the experiences and knowledge brought to the program by the volunteers).*
- 4) *Volunteer programs in parks should provide thorough training of volunteers in order to equip them for the tasks expected of them, enable effective two-way delivery of information and foster ongoing dialogues between volunteers and among volunteers and the community.*
- 5) *Through building strong relationships with the volunteers themselves, volunteer programs in parks should foster and encourage ongoing relationships with the community as a whole.*

“And what’s the key word? I think the key word is relevance. We’ve got to have a context that allows us to be relevant.”
~ volunteer

Recommendation #1: Solutions-based approach built on the local context

"Environmental adult education is most effective when it's locally situated and contextualized."¹



In order to create strong and effective volunteer programs that engage the community, local issues of importance to the whole community must form the basis for each program. For example, the Wildlife Ambassador Program was created to address the perceived lack of human-wildlife conflict communication in the Bow Corridor, and to engage the community on a grass-roots level, while keeping messaging consistent with the government's. People are much more likely to demonstrate stewardship behaviors when they are involved with a program in their own community versus contributing to some project in Africa that is 'out of sight, out of mind'². Additionally, if the issue forming the basis of the program is only of concern to a small, select group of individuals, the entire community will not be as engaged.

"It's incredibly effective because it's relevant to the activity that they're doing at the time and it's relevant to our community because we've had past histories of people being attacked by wildlife."

~ volunteer

Recommendation #2: Build on the motivations and social diversity of your volunteers (and thus your community)

"Experts in the field of adult environmental education suggest that by learning about nature and their community setting in such a program, volunteers are also learning about themselves and their community."³

A community is not comprised of simply youth, or retirees, or immigrants, or single moms. Each community across the province has a different make up and different diversities. While group diversity may be seen as a challenge – with clashing personalities or potential communication barriers – volunteers can work through those challenges simply by being united in a common goal. And this variety is essential in a successful and truly community-based program. The diversity of volunteers should reflect the diversity of the people with whom they may be interacting: families with children, twenty-somethings, part-time and full-time residents, as well as Canadian and international visitors.

In the case of the Wildlife Ambassadors, of the fifteen volunteers five were men and ten were women, ranging in age from 19 to 65 years old, and including backgrounds such as auto mechanic, wildlife biologist, international transient, university student, single mom, physical therapist, mountain tour guide, retired doctor, and employee with an environmental non-governmental organization.



"It means that there are different needs and feelings being represented and you're going to get a better mixture by having a huge spectrum for the job, not just because it looks interesting, but because you're getting different flavours of needs and feelings from the human story."

~ volunteer

Many volunteers felt that as members of the Bow Valley community – a community that shares space with a significant wildlife population – it was their responsibility “to be educated on it and to share that information with [their] friends and family and people that [they] meet.” This reflects the view of environmental lifelong education as “a process focused on the empowerment of people and communities in relationship to a changing environment”⁴.

“The education I got, the friends I made, and being able to get out there and help others. Just giving them some more information to make their time out there a little more enjoyable and less impact on wildlife. And it was a lot of fun too!”
~ volunteer

Recommendation #3: Foster emotional connections to each other and to parks

“The research around learning identifies two factors that greatly influence the ability for a person to recall and understand the information later on: (1) whether the information has meaning, and (2) whether the information has an emotional hook.”⁵

If a volunteer initiative truly follows the first two recommendations, volunteers should easily feel more connected to Alberta Parks as well as each other. As *The Spirit of Alberta: Alberta’s Cultural Policy* identifies...

“Albertans have a deep connection to the land. We believe Alberta’s natural glories are among the most beautiful and inspiring in the world. Our attachment to environment through our parks and wilderness areas is an important part of what constitutes our understanding of culture and quality of life.”

While many of the volunteers were required to push themselves a little out of their comfort zones, this nervousness made for an exciting experience. The volunteers found themselves making emotional connections with each other, and with the task at hand. One volunteer stated it quite well:

“It was interesting to see the group dynamics because at the start everyone was kind of... you know sitting a little bit further away from each other and getting to... maybe sort of a little uneasy about the whole situation I guess and then basically everyone became really close when they were bonding over the group activities and the sessions we were doing.”

In their book *The Nature of Transformation*, Clover and her colleagues discuss the need for learners to have fun and be challenged in the learning experience⁶. As was revealed in the focus groups, having fun was an integral part of both the training



“You could see that they’re just sweatin’ and shakin’ and they’re just so excited, they’ve never done anything like this before and it’s just so... it was really pushing their learning curve and it was great for them.”

~ program stakeholder

and the pilot season itself. Additionally, volunteers were challenged right away with presentations, scenarios, working with people they had never met before, and learning new information. The challenges of presentations and scenarios were designed to gradually increase in difficulty in order to build the confidence of the volunteers. By challenging them early on however, many volunteers commented they felt quite prepared for the varying scenarios they might encounter once they began their shifts.

Further studies on emotion and learning have shown activities that engage emotions lead to more vivid memories and the more intense the emotion, the stronger the imprint of that memory⁷. This being said, the effect of stress and strong emotions may backfire; many instructional settings are perceived as threatening and can actually impede the learning process. Thus, *it is critical to create a safe space for people to take those risks in order to learn.*

We need to create a balance between pushing people out of their comfort zones, while still providing a safe and constructive space in which to grow. As one volunteer put it so succinctly, "Well I think I was a bit frightened by the first experience [...]. And I actually did get a sense of confidence from that experience."

"...through sharing that natural history and natural attributes of that area [...you can] really make that connection between the people and the area [...] as part of the same cycle and same ecosystem."

~ volunteer

"They felt so much more a part of Alberta Parks and the whole process and ecology of the area."

~ stakeholder

"learning is what can happen throughout life for those willing to risk it"¹¹

Recommendation #4: Provide appropriate training to foster ongoing dialogue

"The brain is a social organ innately designed to learn through shared experiences"

When designing the training program and implementing a new volunteer initiative, it is important to consider the social aspect of the program. It is the social network surrounding any program that is crucial in opening up a dialogue first between the volunteers themselves and secondly, between the volunteers and the Parks agency.

In many cases, this will mean training sessions on communication techniques, being aware of different learning modalities (i.e. kinesthetic, aural, visual, etc...), and engaging a variety of audiences. By increasing the volunteers' ability to communicate and ask questions, we can create a two-way conversation and meaningful interactions.



"We're more appealing and we're more inviting than someone who say has a badge on or something and still some people think we're enforcement. But they [the public] see these props and they want to come over and talk and soon as they realized that you maybe know a thing or two then they want to know more and they start asking questions."

~ volunteer coordinator

Recommendation #5: Create relationships with volunteers and thus with the community as a whole

"A guiding principle in the draft is citizen engagement – Albertans need to have opportunities for meaningful input into decisions about parks."

(Plan for Parks draft, August 2008)



By exposing a social network and community of practice to the volunteers, they felt as though they were part of the larger picture in the Bow Valley and that their contributions were validated by people within the organization.

By learning about their community and the other individuals within the volunteer group, the Wildlife Ambassadors were immersed in the local social and ecological context of their community, fostering a greater sense of place, as supported by the work of Worster & Abrams and Belanger⁹. Throughout the winter, a WildSmart speaker series was offered in the community and a contingent of WAP volunteers was present every time. In the second summer season of the program, WAP volunteers attended Kananaskis interpretive programs in the town of Canmore and introduced themselves and the Ambassador program to the audience at the beginning of each program. Not only were relationships built between volunteers and their community, but the other key players involved in the WAP experienced new connections to their community as well.

Additionally, the volunteers are not only Wildlife Ambassadors when they are on the trails – they are ambassadors in multiple contexts. One program stakeholder discussed this **social diffusion** of awareness of the program and wildlife messaging: "the people that are doing it, they talk to their friends and they're part of a family on occasion, so you get a spread out [of] influence by the number of people who are actively involved in it."

Doug McKenzie-Mohr¹⁰ has developed the concept and strategy of Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) which lays out a framework and provides tools for fostering behaviour change through "initiatives delivered at the community level

"...you know you have opinions, and you really feel like your opinions are appreciated, you know."

~ volunteer

"they're [Wildlife] ambassadors on their couch, and even when they go to their friends' house."

~ volunteer

which focus on removing barriers to an activity while simultaneously enhancing the activities benefits". There is a growing understanding that conventional social marketing, which relies heavily on mass media, is limited in its ability to foster behaviour change. CBSM on the other hand emphasizes direct, personal contact among community members to spread social norms. Wildlife Ambassadors are community members that are not only talking about desired behaviours, but are also modeling those behaviours within their community.

With volunteers as an 'ear to the ground', not only is information and awareness diffusing outward, but also information surrounding public perceptions is diffusing inward, to the Alberta Government agency. In examining the connections and contacts in the WAP social network, the volunteers have many ways in which to feed back into the Alberta Parks system. They have contact with other field staff (interpreters), the volunteer coordinator (FOKC), WildSmart staff, and their trainers – all of whom have connections to the Alberta Government (GoA).

I didn't expect to get so many hugs! I don't even know how to explain this, but everywhere I go, I run into the ambassadors and they're hugging me and they're so happy and they're like "Things are going great!" and I really, it's given me a sense of community.

~ program stakeholder

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- ¹¹ Sumner, J. (2003). Environmental adult education and community sustainability. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 99, 38-45.

Challenges to Success

Messaging

While there was a general sense of receptivity from the community, the data show there are also potential threats to public support for the program that need to be addressed when developing or strengthening any volunteer program of this nature. The number one challenge in building community relationships is *inconsistent messaging*:

- Volunteers themselves being consistent with their messaging
- Consistency in message delivery
- Consistency in messaging across agencies

However, the simplicity of the messages being presented limits the risk of this information being detrimental to the program overall – in many ways the very simple demonstration that people in the community think parks are important enough to spend time volunteering for them has a positive impact.

Staff Support

While each staff member doesn't need to have a personal connection to the volunteers themselves, they should be encouraged to understand and support any volunteer programs in their area. This requires encouragement by supervisors and support through internal communication. By creating a community of stewardship that includes both staff and volunteers, any new program initiative will be set up for success.

Organizational Capacity

Fostering a culture of stewardship and passion for the resource among ATPR Parks Division staff will be crucial to gain their support for volunteer initiatives. A clear need for high quality training and to foster a dialogue must

be supported by organizational capacity. The coordination and training of volunteers cannot just be added to the plate of parks' staff already overloaded with their own duties. The staff responsible for working with these volunteers must be able to foster the growth of a relationship with the volunteers by personally running the training, by being available to chat or answer questions, by doing on-trail assessments, and by being accessible. It is this support that allowed the volunteers to feel as though they were being heard, and to give them the sense of being part of the bigger picture, crucial in engaging and empowering the community.

In order to increase organizational capacity, volunteer coordinators responsible for different areas of Alberta should be hired as soon as programs are launched.



Volunteer Programs and Transformative Change



“The feeling is that [...] as a volunteer you’ve contributed; this program has given you a structure to contribute to another person’s life.”

(Volunteer)

For the Wildlife Ambassadors involved in the focus groups, the participatory evaluation process has allowed them to have an impact on the future directions of the Wildlife Ambassador Program itself. This involvement was and is crucial to maintaining the community-based feel of the program. With the volunteers continually providing input into the program, a sense of ownership has begun to develop.

Part of the transformative power of the WAP was in creating wildlife stewards of all the volunteers. The volunteers were extremely well supported from recruitment, through training and even after their season had ended through organized guest speakers.

Implications

If we take another perspective and examine the support and resources available for internal government field staff – seasonal and permanent – the volunteers have more support readily available to them in terms of training, coaching, and feedback than do some Parks Division staff. In order to foster transformation and stewardship in the entire parks community, it is crucial for government staff – those who have

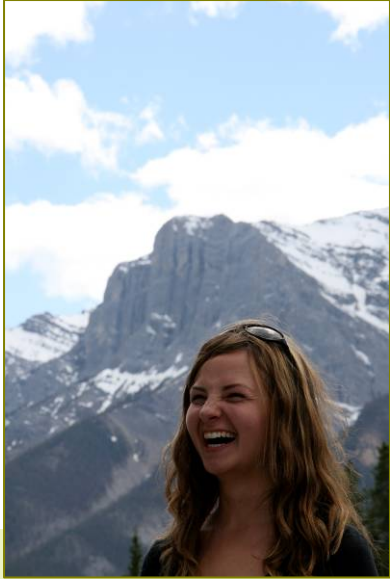
committed their careers, not just their volunteer time to the parks system – to be supported in developing the same kind of stewardship ethic as the volunteers. It would be beneficial to examine what aspects of the Wildlife Ambassador Program could be transferred to the training and support of government staff.

Volunteer Program Checklist

Regardless of whether you're starting a new volunteer initiative, in the middle of developing a program, or evaluating an existing program, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Is your volunteer program providing a possible solution to a local Parks issue?
- ✓ Have you consulted relevant program stakeholders?
- ✓ Who are your volunteers? What are their motivations for volunteering?
- ✓ Do your volunteers represent the community's diversity?
- ✓ Is your program flexible in order to build on the strengths and diversity of your volunteers?
- ✓ Have you thoroughly developed a training program to build up your volunteers for success?
- ✓ Are you providing opportunities for your volunteers to give you feedback on the program?
- ✓ Have you built in a mechanism for evaluating your program?
- ✓ Are you involving a variety of perspectives (volunteers, stakeholders, etc.) in the evaluation of your program?

Participant Voices



"Oh you remember how last week there was that grizzly bear that was on Engine Bridge? Well my friend – who I had told all about being an ambassador and how to be safe around wildlife – they were there at that scene when thirty people started approaching this grizzly bear. [My friend] controlled the crowd and actually managed to educate [the public] on the spot and assist in helping keep that space between that animal and them, while Conservation Officers were called."

"I was more inspired by volunteering as a Wildlife Ambassador than I have been guiding for [local guide company]. [...]And it informed something to me about the connection and the empowerment that you can have as you're doing this volunteer role. It's really exciting to me!"*

"It's just opened up so many more doors I guess. I'm a bit sad to be leaving the Bow Valley now...but now there's other parts of the world that need this same kind of stewardship that we have here I guess and I need to help other places as well. So it's kind of just opened the world to me."

"This opportunity is fantastic and I am so thankful to have come across it. I truly believe that it is the doorway that will lead me to a rewarding and passion-filled career!"

"This program has connected me with so many more animals and so many more different things"

~ volunteer

* The name of the company has been omitted for protection of privacy.

Glossary of Key Terms

Human-wildlife conflict is defined as occurring when: “the needs and behaviour of wildlife impact negatively on the goals of humans or when the goals of humans negatively impact the needs of wildlife”¹.

Outcomes: “changes that are brought about by a program which provide context for evaluating longer-term ‘impacts’”². Outcomes are potentially more short-term and could include increased knowledge and understanding or an increased network of program supporters.

Impacts are defined as the “longer-term, cumulative effects of a program which embody lasting changes”³.

Normative messaging: communication messages or campaigns aimed at producing socially beneficial conduct. Optimal normative messaging aligns descriptive norms (what people do) with injunctive norms (what people typically approve or disapprove. Often the focus on negative or undesirable behavior can produce the opposite result by normalizing and thus undermining the desired message – for example, anti-littering campaigns showing people littering can actually encourage this behavior more than a campaign showing people picking up litter⁴.

Non-formal environmental education: environmental education that takes place outside the classroom with learners of all ages. The setting could be, but is not limited to: a zoo, a nature centre, a park, or an aquarium. Crucial to this distinction is that the audience of learners is a 'non-captive' audience who are voluntarily involved in directing their own learning experience⁵.

Developmental evaluation "refers to long term, partnering relationships between evaluators and those engaged in innovative initiatives and development"⁶.

Participatory evaluation: interviewees are active participants in the program evaluation, resulting in the empowerment of the local groups involved⁷.

Formative evaluation occurs during the development and initial stages of a program⁸, and has goals of improving the delivery of a program or educational intervention, and focusing more on specific short-term outcomes rather than the long-term program impacts.

Summative evaluation deals more with the longer-term results of a program⁹, and is often wanted for generalizations of effective types of interventions to other programs and policies¹⁰.

Social diffusion is a term used to describe the spread of behaviours and attitudes in a society or community¹¹.

Transformative learning is defined as "a profound shift in awareness or consciousness of being in the world", or a learning experience that evokes powerful emotional responses¹².

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- ¹² Dirkx, J. M. (2006). Engaging emotions in adult learning: A Jungian perspective on emotion and transformative learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 109, 15-26.