



Alberta's Nature Strategy

A survey guide from Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

Want to help shape the future of Alberta's mountains, rivers and parks? Here's how you can help!

Nature in Alberta is the heartbeat of the province; and it's worth protecting for many reasons. Right now, Alberta residents have a chance to speak up for the places — from the mountains to our headwaters — that support our health, well-being and enjoyment.

Until November 7, the Government of Alberta is seeking public input into a 'made in Alberta' nature strategy that will guide how it maintains, conserves and sustainably manages nature in the province for years to come.

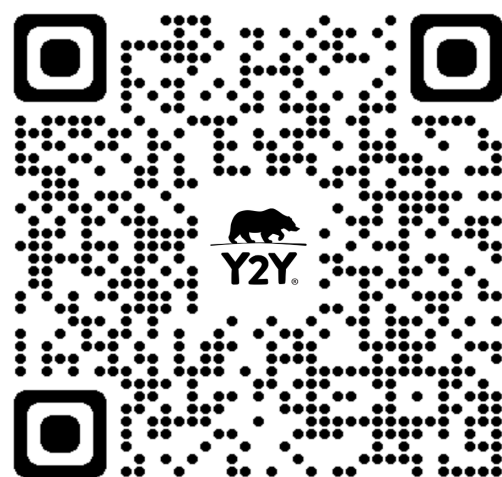
The nature strategy survey responses also have the potential to encourage leadership with conservation efforts — much like the province has done with the successful wildlife crossings already in place and being planned for.

People and wildlife rely on healthy mountain landscapes in Alberta. Now's your chance to share your valuable feedback through the [Alberta Government's nature strategy survey](#).

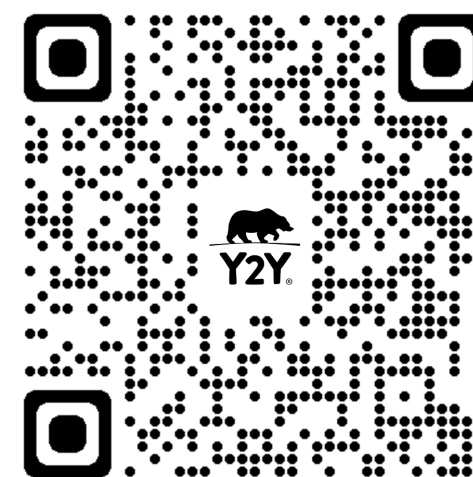
In Y2Y's survey guide that follows, we've outlined our perspectives on each question. Please feel free to use this guide as a starting point for your responses.

Your personalized responses and contributions make a difference! Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, which is open until November 7, 2024.

Scan or click the QR code



**Alberta Nature Strategy
public survey**



**Alberta Nature Strategy
overview**

Survey question 1/19

1. I am completing this survey *

- As an individual
- On behalf of an Indigenous community or organization representing First Nations or Metis peoples in Alberta
- On behalf of an organization (such as industry, municipality, a non-profit or community organization)

Our perspective

Select the statement that applies to you.

Survey question 2/19

2. The list below identifies some direct benefits people receive from nature. How do you, personally, benefit from nature? Select all that apply. *

- Spending time in nature improves my mental health (e.g., I feel calmer and less stressed, it improves my mood or my ability to focus).
- Spending time in nature improves my physical health (e.g., I feel stronger or sleep better after spending time outside).
- Nature provides clean air and water.
- Nature has value in and of itself.
- Nature provides connection to traditional ways of life and customs.
- Nature provides connection to spiritual values.
- Nature provides important resources that support my quality of life (e.g., paper, clothing, wood products, nutritious food, etc.).
- My employment is associated with a natural resource.
- I do not personally benefit from nature.
- Other (please specify)

Our perspective

Select **all** the statements that reflect how you benefit from nature.

All of us depend on healthy and protected and connected nature — and we are especially lucky here in Alberta. Our Rocky Mountains, which contain the headwaters of many major western rivers, are vital to ensuring that we have:

- Access to iconic natural places to recreate, rejuvenate, find peace of mind, and experience remarkable fish and wildlife.
- A healthy nature-based economy both at the province and local level, and,
- Clean, plentiful supplies of water.

Please share all the ways nature benefits you. Select those statements that apply and add your own favorite if it's not included here.

Here are some other benefits you could consider and mention:

- Intact nature is one of the best ways to mitigate harmful impacts of climate change.
- Intact nature supports healthy wetlands and floodplains that naturally store water when we need it most. Healthy nature prevents harmful flooding and provides clean and plentiful water during drier seasons and drought.
- Healthy forests can help mitigate devastating wildfires as well. Intact nature means fires burn more frequently but less severely; and healthy wetlands provide wet, green buffers that can slow fires and protect our mountain communities and air quality.

Survey question 3/19

3. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

It is important to manage our landscape to maintain healthy ecosystems.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Protected areas have an important role in conserving nature.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

It is important to recognize that our working landscapes contribute to maintaining biodiversity, and the health of our ecosystems.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Survey question 4/19

4. Share any comments you have on the above statements.

Our perspective

Select those statements that reflect your level of agreement.

Y2Y checked “Agree” for statements 1 and 2 and suggests “Neutral” for statement 3 because the answer depends on how these working lands are managed.

Our perspective

The term “working landscapes” can mean different things, including allowing industrial development on public lands. In some instances, working landscapes can be important for maintaining healthy biodiversity if they are managed with nature as a priority.

Survey question 5/19

5. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.*

I am interested in learning more about Indigenous ways of knowing and practices related to environmental stewardship.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

It is important to consider Indigenous knowledge and science in forward planning for Alberta's land.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Survey question 6/19

6. Share any comments you have on the above statements.

Our perspective

Y2Y checked "Agree" for both statements

Alberta has many opportunities to support and learn from Indigenous leadership in environmental stewardship.

Our perspective

More than "important to consider," Indigenous knowledge, science and culture are essential to informing land-use planning processes. Meaningful, respectful engagement with Indigenous Peoples, including involvement in the development and implementation of Alberta's nature strategy, and support for Indigenous-led conservation and co-management, should be at the forefront. Y2Y also believes that Alberta should adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and approach land planning accordingly.

Survey question 7/19

7. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *

Spending time in nature is important to me.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Connection to nature and spending time outdoors is important to support my physical and mental well-being.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

I can easily access nature and outdoor opportunities.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Survey question 8/19

8. Share any comments you have on the above statements.

Our perspective

Y2Y checked “Agree” for all three statements because we love being outdoors!

Survey question 9/19

9. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *

Alberta's economy depends on nature.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Integrating the value of nature more fully into Alberta's economy will help us be more competitive, productive and resilient.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

It is important to quantify the ecosystem services we receive from nature.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Survey question 10/19

10. Share any comments you have on the above statements.

Our perspective

Y2Y checked "Agree" for all three statements, if managed primarily for conservation, a nature-based economy, that also values intact nature, can be a strong and sustainable one.

Our perspective

Alberta's Rocky Mountains are a major draw for Albertans, Canadians and people from around the world. The mountains attract hunters and anglers, skiers and climbers, wildlife watchers as well as entrepreneurs, workers, and business owners.

Survey question 11/19

11. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. *

Stewardship, collaboration, and partnerships are essential for conserving, managing and restoring nature.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

It is important to support the landowners that contribute to providing ecosystem services through stewardship of their land.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

I am aware of actions I can take to support the environment.

Agree Neutral Disagree No opinion

Survey question 12/19

12. Share any comments you have on the above statements.

Our perspective

Please select those statements that best reflect your thoughts.

Y2Y checked “Agree” for all 3 statements as we believe deeply in the value of partnerships with all those who care for, and live on, the land.

Our perspective

The province can help support partnerships and collaborations by including in their nature strategy a commitment to managing lands on the Eastern Slopes for conservation; providing a pathway to protection for special places; halting mining and logging where it doesn't belong; incentivizing community co-existence with wildlife; and working with partners to better plan for and support responsible tourism, development and recreation.

Survey question 13/19

13. Which of the following actions are important to pursue to improve conservation, management and restoration of nature in Alberta? Select all that apply. *

- Recognizing the contributions of all lands to maintaining the health of our ecosystems and the province's biodiversity.
- Recovering species at risk.
- Reducing the introduction and spread of invasive species.
- Restoring disturbed ecosystems.
- Maintaining threatened ecosystems (e.g., grasslands, wetlands) across our landscapes.
- Supporting Indigenous leadership and initiatives in conservation.
- Improving access to nature to support health and well-being.
- Continuing to advance land use planning initiatives (e.g., regional and subregional planning).
- Mobilizing society through communication to raise awareness and knowledge and encourage action on nature.
- Cultivating a strong environmental stewardship ethic and shared commitment to nature.
- Recognizing stewardship actions by landowners, communities and organizations.
- None of the above.
- Other (please specify)

Our perspective

Y2Y would check all of them!

However, we think there is one tool that is clearly missing here and that is the option to support the **protection** of new lands and waters.

Albertans care deeply about their mountains. Continued efforts to protect the most fragile and wonderful places within our Rocky Mountains is key if we are to ensure that these places will be there for generations to come. Not to mention protecting key areas will also safeguard critical headwaters that are increasingly vital for Albertans and other provinces that rely on our cool, mountain waters.

Further, following the lead of Indigenous Peoples, we can explore and designate Indigenous-led protected areas, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs), and support Indigenous Guardian programs on protected and unprotected public lands in Alberta.

Let's call on the province to show us a plan for protecting our natural heritage. Y2Y would check all of them!

Survey question 14/19

14. Integrating nature into systems across our society will help us account for the value of nature to our communities and economy. Which of the following actions are important to pursue? Select all that apply. *

- Creating economic incentives to protect and manage natural resources and ecosystems.
- Developing systems to trade nature/biodiversity credits.
- Improving sustainability of natural resource-based industries.
- Quantifying the benefits received from nature.
- Increasing financial resources allocated to environmental stewardship.
- Progress towards systems that improve efficiency in resource use, such as improving recycling of material and reducing waste (circular economies).
- None of the above.
- Developing guidelines and objectives for nature across activities and sectors.
- Other (please specify)

Survey question 15/19

15. Are there other actions that will be important for a nature strategy?

Our perspective

Y2Y likes all these options except for “trading nature/biodiversity credits” as that approach needs more research and development and is still untested.

When it comes to other important actions for a nature strategy, we believe that the province should:

- Provide a pathway to protection of more lands, including through Indigenous-led efforts.
- Manage lands west of the Forest Trunk Road primarily for conservation and halt coal mining on the Eastern Slopes.
- Protect all our critical headwaters.
- Engage in sustainable and responsible tourism and development that avoids important wildlife migration corridors, among other things.
- Support responsible recreation.
- Support and funds programs that help communities and wildlife coexist.

Survey question 16/19

16. Where do you think Alberta's government is currently making progress towards conserving, managing and restoring nature? Select all that apply. *

- Continuing to build our network of parks and protected areas.
- Advancing relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations.
- Incorporating biodiversity into our management systems.
- Sustainable use of natural resources.
- Reducing threats to biodiversity loss.
- Ensuring access to nature and improving opportunities to pursue activities in nature (outdoor recreation, being in nature, tourism).
- Using nature-based solutions to address societal challenges such as natural hazards (flood, wildfire), food security and climate change.
- None of the above.
- Other (please specify)

Our perspective

Now is your chance to let the government know what is working or not working when it comes to their stewardship of nature:

Under “other” we would let the Alberta Government know how proud we are that Alberta is seen as a leader, around the world, in wildlife crossings. Specifically, the wildlife crossings in Banff National Park are seen as the gold standard for effectively keeping wildlife and people safe on our major roads.

With that legacy, Alberta is now showing real leadership in building more highway overpasses and underpasses for wildlife. These structures with fencing help minimize wildlife-vehicle collisions, keeping motorists safe and helping animals move across the land in the way they need to survive and thrive. Everyone gets to where they are going safely! Let's tell them to keep up the good work here and continue to lead!

However, the Alberta Government can also lead in the areas identified in question 16, all of which are vital to improve the protection of nature for Albertans today and in the future. We suggest all are essential components to Alberta's nature strategy and much more work is needed to see progress, including solid plans supported by long-term, sustainable funding.

Survey question 17/19

17. What do you currently do and/or what would you be willing to do to support nature and conserving biodiversity? Select all that apply. *

Learn about the natural landscapes and biodiversity in our province.

Learn about current issues and threats to biodiversity.

Understand the economic value of nature.

Learn how to reduce my impact on nature.

Consider sustainability when I purchase products.

Consider sustainability when I dispose of waste.

Raise awareness about the value of nature within my community.

Implement practices that support biodiversity on my property.

Implement practices within my business that support biodiversity.

Support or get involved in conservation initiatives.

Make an ecological donation.

None of the above.

Other (please specify)

Our perspective

Select the ways you feel you can best do your part to support Alberta in better protecting and conserving our invaluable lands, waters and wildlife.

Y2Y is working in all these areas and plans to check all these boxes.

If you would like to learn more about what we are working on, please visit y2y.net.

Survey question 18/19

18. Share any other feedback you have on the development of Alberta's nature strategy.

Our perspective

Please share any additional thoughts here about Alberta's nature strategy. Your personalized contributions are encouraged and make a difference!

Survey question 19/19

19. How would you like to receive information about the development of the nature strategy? *

- Social media content.
- News releases from the Government of Alberta.
- Updates to government webpages.
- I do not want to receive information.
- Other (please specify)

Our perspective

Let the Alberta Government know whether and how you would like to keep in touch in the future.

Thank you for taking time to share your feedback in this important survey. Learn more about Y2Y's work in Alberta and across the Yellowstone to Yukon region:

Visit our website at y2y.net.
Sign up for Y2Y's newsletters at y2y.net/join.