

Our Three Year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2024

Approved by the Board on 19 April 2022

Land Acknowledgement

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley (BIBV) is in Châ Ûpchîchîyên Kudebi (Canmore), which stands on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional lands of the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations of Wesley, Chiniki, and Bearspaw; three Nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Pikani, Kainai and Siksika; the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. The Salmon People to the west and the Buffalo People to the east have long understood this valley to be a shared space.

We acknowledge the past, present, and future generations of these nations who help us steward this land, as well as honour and celebrate this place of creativity, collaboration, and learning. We believe that we have much to learn from them.

About us

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley (BIBV) is a non-profit organization with charitable status. Our Charitable Number is 83043 5079 RR0001. A volunteer Board of Directors represents a broad cross-section of Bow Valley stakeholders, and guides the work of the BIBV and its staff as we serve the community and continuously seek to strengthen relationships with other organizations, cultures and communities. Our primary geographic focus encompasses the Bow Valley from Bow Lake to Seebe and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations, and extends into Kananaskis Country.

Our Vision

Residents and visitors of the Bow Valley are actively engaged to ensure a thriving ecosystem – now, and in the future.

Our Mission

The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley empowers community leadership to address environmental challenges.

Guiding Frameworks

BIBV's Roles and Guiding Principles outlined below guide our work as we deliver on mission. This plan is also anchored by two helpful documents which are appended to this document: a one-page 'Theory of Change' that captures our understanding of the causality between the outcomes we seek to create, which was created and refined by staff with input from Board and stakeholders; and a one-page 'Engagement Pathway' that illustrates how we deliver on our mission.

About this Strategic Plan - and our other planning documents

This strategic plan addresses our five key program and operational domains: Climate ('Shift'), Wildlife ('Wildsmart'), K-12 Education ('Future Leaders'), Community Hub operations, and organizational and fund development. The Board annually revisits this strategic plan to ensure that the organization is best positioned to deliver on its mission. Board approval of this three-year plan is subsequently followed by Board approval of an annual 'Program Plan' and accompanying budget that shows the Board's wishes for those elements of the Strategic Plan that should take place during the upcoming calendar year. Execution on the Program Plan is contingent upon adequate resourcing of the elements of that Plan, through our ongoing fund development efforts. Please contact our Executive Director for more information on this process or these plans.

Our Roles

To deliver on mission, BIBV takes on the following roles in the community:

Deliver programs. We deliver a suite of education and outreach programs connected to climate, wildlife, and other environmental topics, guided by our engagement pathway.

Convene the community. We facilitate interaction, networking and sharing as we work inclusively with different sectors, seeking a collective impact in our work together as we galvanize and accelerate progress on environmental goals.

Connect the community. We provide people and organizations with tools, resources, and guidance that sustains them and builds their influence and efficacy. We act as a community hub, connecting organizations and individuals to one another, and sharing our materials and resources with community members.

Our Guiding Principles

To deliver on mission, BIBV's work in the community is guided by the following principles:

Collaborate with others. To increase our impact and broaden our reach, we strategically collaborate with others around our program areas, as we leverage volunteers and work with other organizations to ensure we fill a unique niche.

Evidence-based. We ensure that our work is informed by the latest science and social science research and best practices.

Advocate for the environment. We take an evidence-based approach in our advocacy, striving for a positive frame for this work as we encourage environmental best practices.

Seek multi-solving solutions. Even as we champion the environment we embrace holistic and equitable "Yes, and" solutions that address and solve multiple and interwoven problems in the environmental, social, and economic realms.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion. These concepts are foundational to our work and we consistently review projects, programs, policies, and plans through this lens.

Value Indigenous Perspectives. We strive to involve and consider local Indigenous land ethic and knowledge as we do our work.

Curriculum connected. We situate our K-12 education programs in the Alberta Programs of Study, and explore the interconnections between subject areas.

Empower community. We grow the capacity of individuals and organizations by developing opportunities to take personal and collective action on environmental issues.

Help others take action. We consistently develop opportunities for well-informed positive action at the personal or system level, be it with program attendees or partner organizations.

Help others develop their leadership. We consistently seek to incubate, facilitate, and encourage environmental leadership by individuals or organizations.

Evaluate our success

We identify and measure key indicators of success to support program evaluation. We report our findings to stakeholders, and integrate what we learn into our work to ensure evidence-based continuous improvement of our programs.

Implementation by staff on this Strategic Plan, using Logic Models

To assist in execution on the approved Strategic Plan, staff build a detailed logic model that shows initiatives, activities, and outputs that will deliver on the Board-approved outcomes and impacts. One of the benefits of this approach is that it makes it easier to evaluate success, allowing staff to identify key indicators of success that connect to meaningful outputs and outcomes of our work.

Our Five Impacts

Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley proposes to play a pivotal role in creating the following five impacts. The strategy to achieve each impact is described in the tables that follow:

1. Bow Valley individuals and communities are empowered to take climate action – and act accordingly.
2. The practices of residents and visitors ensure human-wildlife coexistence and protection of the ecosystem.
3. K-12 students living or visiting the Bow Valley are environmentally literate (Future Leaders).
4. The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley is a community hub for environmental learning and action.

- Organizational development and diverse revenue streams ensure that the Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley sustains and increases its impact.

Impacts, initiatives, and outcomes.

The following tables summarize initiatives and outcomes that contribute to each of our five impacts.

We use black text to identify initiatives and outcomes that we will deliver throughout the three year period covered by this Plan (2022 to 2024).

We use blue text to identify initiatives and outcomes that we anticipate delivering beginning in 2023, and into 2024.

Impact #1: Bow Valley individuals and communities are empowered to take climate action – and act accordingly.	
INITIATIVE	OUTCOMES <i>changes that occur as a result of this initiative</i>
Develop, lead, and implement projects that focus on energy solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bow Valley residents learn climate solutions through tangible demonstrations and examples of energy efficient homes, renewable energy projects, and low carbon transportation - and embrace these solutions Builders, planners, and developers are aware of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and low carbon transportation design and construction best practices for residential & commercial buildings, and embrace and adopt these as standard practice Community members become climate champions / ambassadors, and feel confident in their abilities to have conversations about climate change actions with their peers
Convene key Bow Valley sectors around climate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key sector partners in the Bow Valley are aware of and aligned on each other’s focus areas, create a shared agenda, and agree on mutually supportive climate actions. Municipal governments in the Bow Valley (Town of Canmore, Town of Banff, MD of Bighorn) have robust and fully implemented climate action plans. The community embraces multi-solving climate action that addresses issues of equity and justice, climate mitigation and adaptation - and works towards the solution of system-level problems
Represent BIBV’s interests through collaborative and advisory work with key partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners understand BIBV’s scope of work, identify areas of synergy, and allow their work to be influenced by us Partners are better informed: they are aware of relevant local initiatives, and know where to access relevant subject matter experts The BIBV is viewed as a trusted partner and community resource group in the community The community becomes aware of and takes advantage of relevant initiatives, benefits, and opportunities

Impact #2: The practices of residents and visitors ensure human-wildlife coexistence and protection of the ecosystem.

<p>INITIATIVE</p>	<p>OUTCOMES <i>changes that occur as a result of this initiative</i></p>
<p>Deliver wildlife safety education and outreach through WildSmart</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse and inclusive audience of Bow Valley residents and visitors are educated about current wildlife activity and warnings/closures, human-wildlife coexistence, solutions, and personal actions they can take to help improve human-wildlife coexistence - and act accordingly • BIBV staff share our findings and challenges related to human-wildlife coexistence with other communities facing similar challenges, and learn about relevant new approaches, research, and equipment • BIBV is viewed as a reputable, reliable, and trustworthy source of information
<p>Diversify and Manage the Volunteer Wildlife Ambassador Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more inclusive and diverse group of community volunteers feels empowered and prepared to educate residents and visitors out on the trails; volunteer satisfaction is increased, and their ability to engage and educate the public is improved • A diverse audience of recreationalists receive well-crafted messages that resonate with them - and change their behaviour to help improve human-wildlife coexistence in the Bow Valley • The Wildlife Ambassador program generates revenue possibly through sale of bear spray,etc.) and requires less external funding to continue.
<p>Optimize WildSmart Advisory Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WildSmart convenes and collaborates with other organizations and stakeholders in the Bow Valley, and their needs/challenges are incorporated into The Wildsmart program and workplan • WildSmart's efforts are optimized: its members better understand wildlife issues, and it becomes an even better coordinated and united coexistence program that meets the community's needs
<p>Promote community-wide engagement with the recreation community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreationalists understand why environmental stewardship of natural areas is important, and integrate this knowledge into their practice, making decisions based on wildlife considerations • Fulsome engagement and buy-in of respected recreation groups, accompanied by their commitment to act • A robust network of designated trails meets the needs of user groups and are designed to minimize impact on wildlife; and undesignated trails are closed, and not used • Recreation patterns that support human wildlife coexistence become a cultural norm
<p>Collecting and disseminating data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners, stakeholders, developers, etc. access accurate and current information to help inform decisions about projects, etc. • Residents and visitors use reports, maps etc. to help decide where and when to recreate

Impact #3: K-12 students living or visiting the Bow Valley are environmentally literate (Future Leaders).

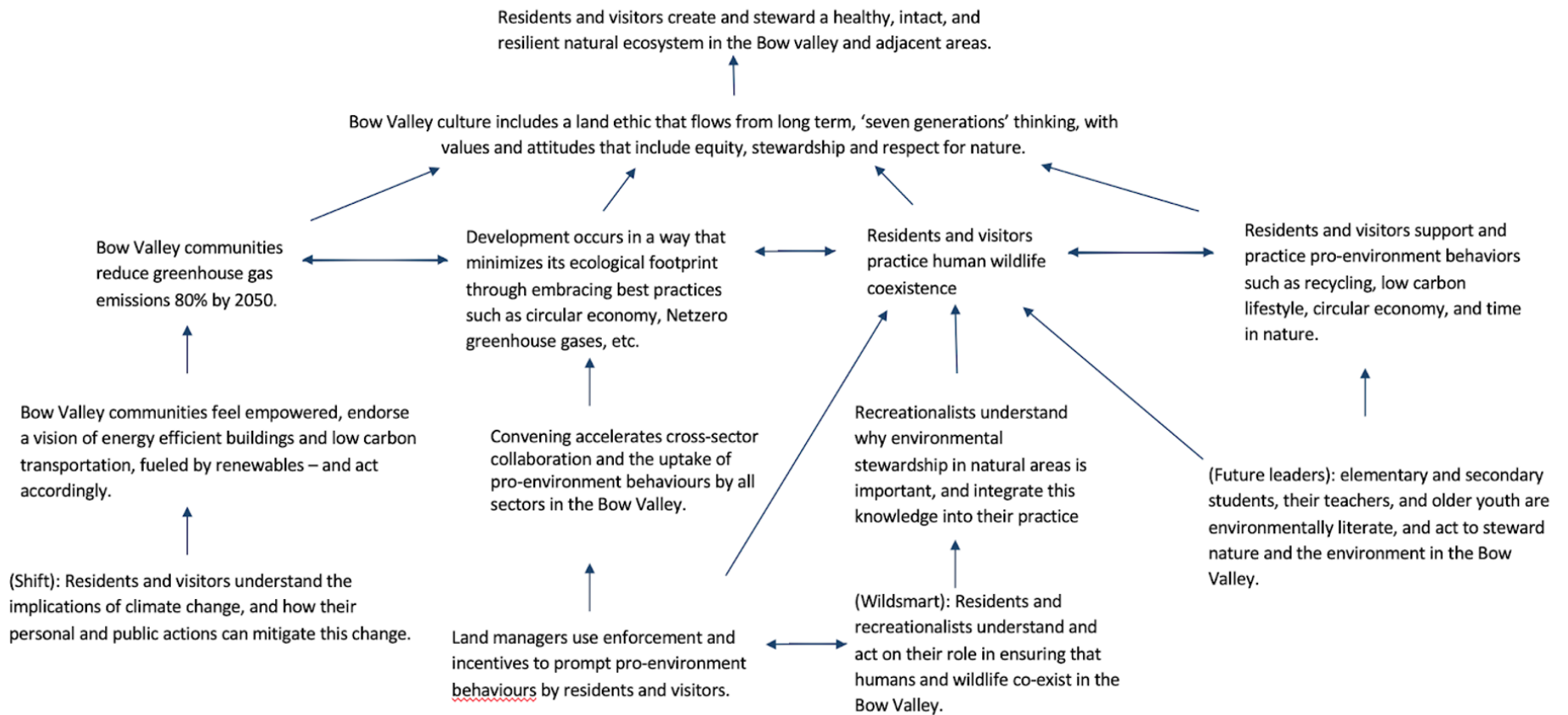
INITIATIVE	OUTCOMES <i>changes that occur as a result of this initiative</i>
Design and deliver classroom programs	<p>Students...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are ecologically literate, adopting long-term pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours • have a strong knowledge base pertaining to regional wildlife and climate change issues • demonstrate the critical thinking and problem-solving skills required to address environmental issues at multiple scales • demonstrate their competencies through thoughtful action projects that 'move the needle' vis-a-vis positive environmental impact • have improved intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect (aligned with the TRC Call to Action 63)
Connect community educators to classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn about different environmental topics from a variety of community educators • The Bow Valley sees a higher and richer level of interconnectivity between community and school
Convene and engage high school student leaders	<p>High school student leaders involved in environmental action...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access colleagues through the network, and feel solidarity and support • organize and execute on direct actions related to conservation and climate action that produce measurable benefits for the environment and community • are meaningfully engaged in relevant decision-making processes
Maintain a teacher resource lending library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta teachers integrate more wildlife and climate change topics into classroom-based learning • Biosphere Institute is viewed as a hub for learning re: wildlife conservation and climate change
Design and deliver teacher professional development workshops	<p>Teachers...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are more ecologically literate • have a strong knowledge base and increased confidence pertaining to regional wildlife and climate change concepts and how to teach them • empower their students to take action around these topics

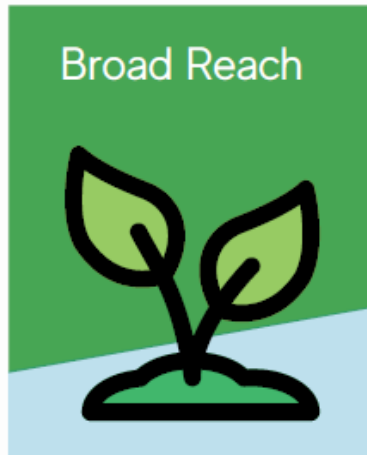
Impact #4: The Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley is a community hub for environmental learning and action.	
INITIATIVE	OUTCOMES <i>changes that occur as a result of this initiative</i>
BIBV becomes a Community Hub, providing physical resources to support activities by environmental groups and community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members are empowered to carry out environmental projects without needing to purchase expensive and rarely used items BIBV supports a more circular local economy, and increased connection and collaboration on environmental challenges
Incubate community-based initiatives through Community Conversations (Topics to include clean air and human health, circular economy/Bow Valley Isn't Disposable, food security and gardening, valuing municipal natural assets, nature-based solutions, how to be 'Nature positive, 'etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIBV annually catalyzes community activity and well-informed action around several environmental challenges, using an incubation model that creates new initiatives and groups, or strengthens existing ones. Event attendees have increased knowledge of the issue, what work is being done, and how they can contribute to solutions; and want to be involved in the issue Partner organizations feel that involvement has moved them towards success, as they see increased volunteer numbers, newsletter signups, and community input and involvement in projects

Impact #5: Organizational development and diverse revenue streams ensure that BIBV sustains and increases its impact.	
INITIATIVES	OUTCOMES <i>changes that occur as a result of this initiative</i>
Build the organizational capacity of BIBV Board and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An engaged, diverse, and enthusiastic Board of Directors guides BIBV; and its staff are well-supported, empowered, and work to their potential as they drive our work forward Staff members are provided with appropriate compensation and benefits, within the financial means of the organization Sound financial systems are in place to guide program planning, and meet legal and financial standards for monitoring and reporting
Create and maintain a diverse and sustained funding stream.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIBV's revenue streams are diverse and include a healthy component of funding from a variety of sectors (Foundations, government, corporations, and individuals) BIBV steadily increases the percentage of its revenue that it receives from individuals Our organization manifests a culture of fund development

Appendices

Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley - Our Theory of Change (DRAFT!)





Broad Reach



Deep Impact

Stage

SOW THE SEEDS

INCUBATE IDEAS

NOURISH GROWTH

SELF-SUSTAINING COMMUNITY

Focus

Widespread messaging

Education and Training

Opportunities for Action

Long Term Culture Shift (this is our end goal)

Goal

Reach a large audience with messaging that helps people understand an issue, and create desire for change.

Participants gain a deep understanding of an issue, explore different sides of it, and find what they are passionate or interested in. This is the traditional strength of BIBV.

We provide avenues for people to take meaningful action and resolve the feelings they may experience from becoming aware of an issue. Templates or toolkits to create their own projects.

Organic organization of events and activities separate from BIBV. Community members have the knowledge, skills and expertise to create and maintain change themselves, supporting each other throughout.

Example

Bear Report + Shift Newsletter, Solar Power campaign

WildSmart bear spray training, ZEV webinars

Wildlife Ambassadors, CRYN Action Projects

Bow Valley Green Energy Co-op