

Three Sisters Wildlife Corridor Decision: Smith Creek

March 3, 2020
Canmore, Alberta

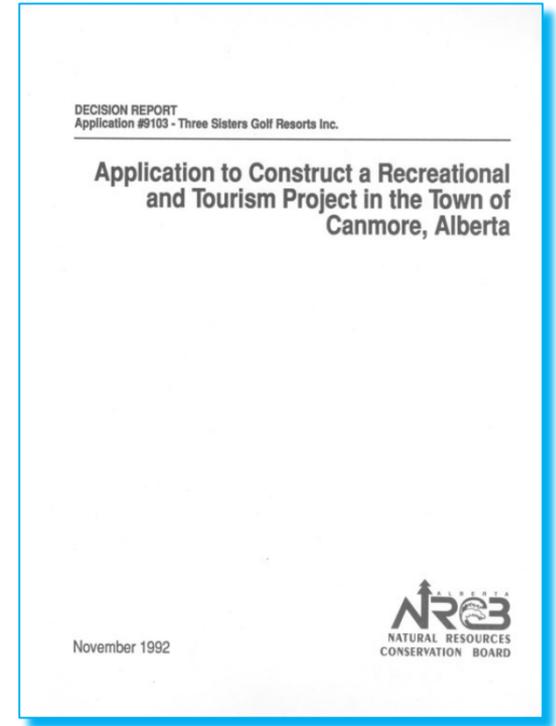


Agenda

- History and how we got here
- Principles used to guide decision process
- Final wildlife corridor determination
- Next Steps
- Questions

History and How We Got Here

- NRCB Project Approval OC 8/93 Condition 14 (Appendix C, Page C4)
 - “Three Sisters shall incorporate into its detailed design, provision for wildlife movement corridors in as undeveloped a state as possible, and prepare a wildlife aversive conditioning plan, both satisfactory to Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife”.



History and How We Got Here

- Recommendation (Appendix D, Page D5)
 - It is recommended to Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife that locations for wildlife corridors be legally designated and that in determining their locations and widths, primary corridors should not be narrower than 350 m except in unusual circumstances, that widths and locations be reviewed with the full range of species that may make use of them in mind, that corridors be located to allow movement across adjacent properties, that measures such as bundling road, utility line and pathway crossings be adopted, and that corridors correspond with known movement routes of the animals

History and How We Got Here

- **Current Status**
 - Smith Creek Wildlife Corridor for eastern portion of Three Sisters Property needs to be finalized to allow Area Structure Planning to move forward through the municipal planning process (as requested by the Town of Canmore)
 - Building on past application and decision rendered in 2018

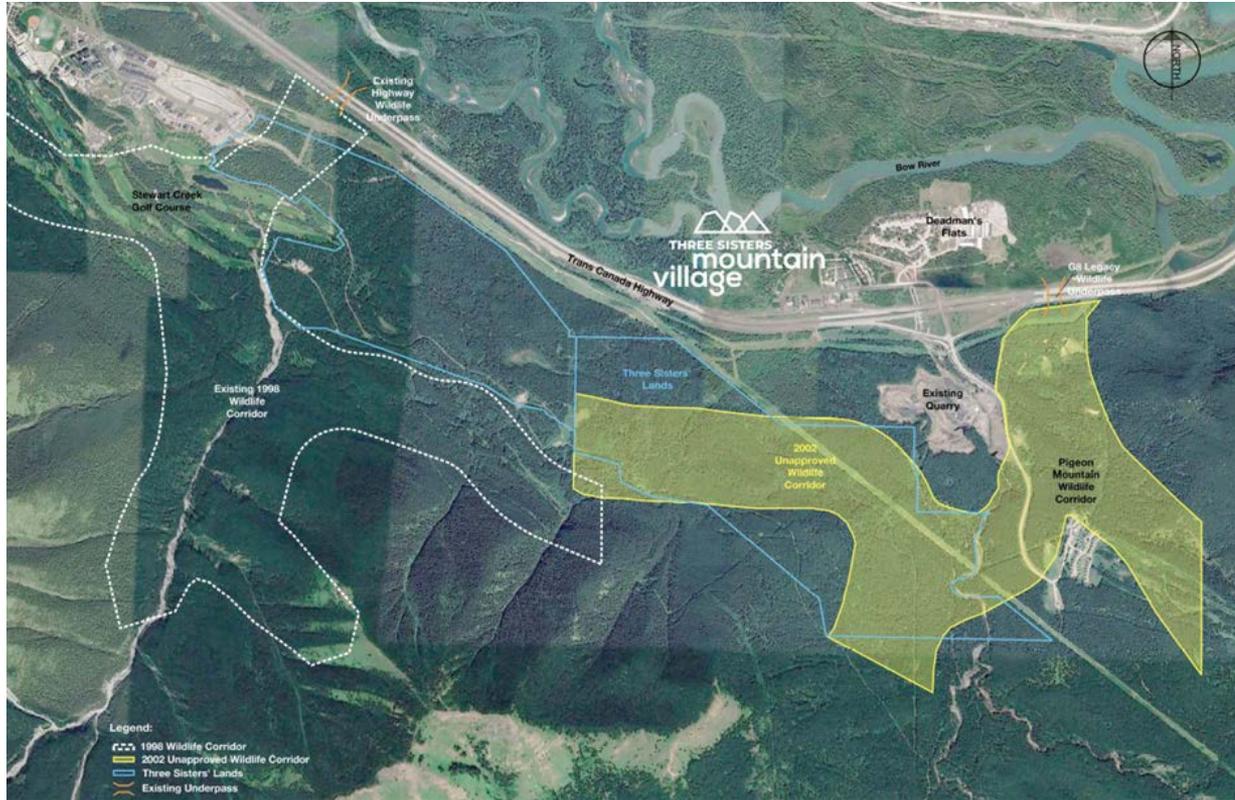
Principles Used to Guide Decision Process

- Corridors are designed to provide movement for wildlife, while enabling human development to proceed which is in keeping with the 1992 NRCB decision
- Corridors are designed to maintain the most direct, unimpeded route, while avoiding human disturbance
- Corridors that are shorter are more effective than longer corridors as wildlife are able to move efficiently from one habitat patch to the next. Longer corridors should generally be wider to provide more efficacy for wildlife movement
- Corridors and patches should not include topographical barriers that would block movement
- Where possible, corridors should include existing natural habitat features, such as wetlands, licks, or other known wildlife sites.

Principles Used to Guide Decision Process (con't.)

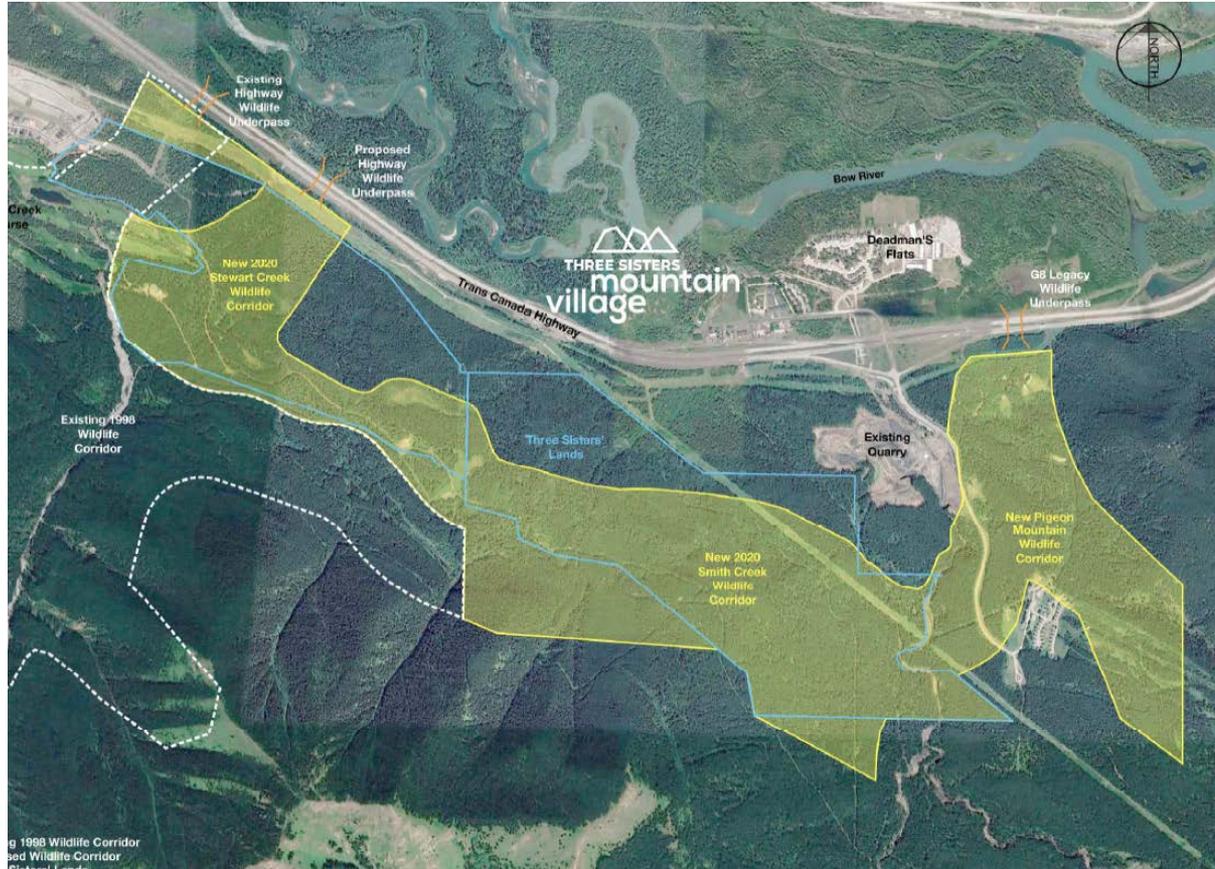
- Corridor Width: The optimal corridor width is a function of how animals respond to the boundary of the corridor. The NRCB recommended a 350m minimum width for primary corridors in its 1992 Decision. Based on available science, it was determined that 400m was a desired minimum width and 600m was a desired average width.
- In some cases, due to logistic or other constraints, it may not be possible to achieve the minimum or average widths referenced above. Where deficiencies exist, functionality will be maintained through other management approaches (e.g. human use management, habitat enhancements).

The Corridor (approved 1998 corridor and proposed 2002 corridor)



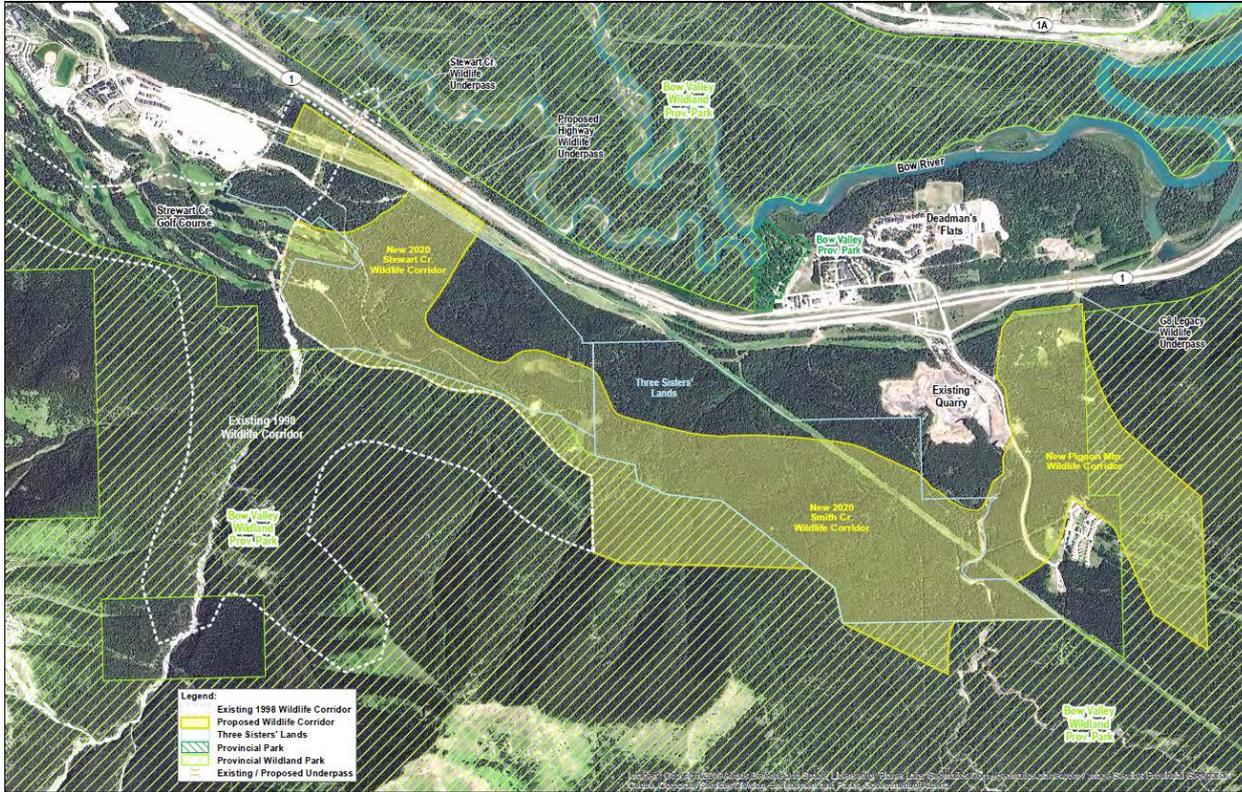
- 1998 Corridor was formally approved
- 2002 Corridor was not formally approved
- Both created what was referred to as “the disconnect”

The Approved Smith Creek Corridor



- Encompasses approximately 70% of Three Sisters property
- New cross-valley corridor width of 401 meters at its narrowest point
- Now 3 cross-valley corridors in addition to new crossing announced by Alberta Transportation
- 89% of overall corridor below 25 degree slope

Larger landscape perspective



- Important to note that in 2002 and 2010 significant lands in the Bow Valley converted to Parks and Protected Areas status to further enhance conservation objectives and limit future development.

Wildlife Corridor Attributes

- Proposed corridor has documented wildlife use, a key parameter of corridor location.
- Lands were added to existing approved corridor to increase width. At request of the Province, TSMVPL added lands within Sites 7 and 8 areas to the 1998 corridor.
- Wildlife corridor includes a large central fen within the corridor land, and other minor ones.
- Approved corridor is based on best available data from a variety of sources, literature reviews, AEP specialists and is an objective, science based decision.

Final Approved Corridor Attributes

- TSMVPL field-reviewed and surveyed corridor boundaries with wildlife specialists and professional surveyors to ensure that boundaries of the approved corridor accurately represented topography considerations, boundary location, habitat considerations and included appropriate setback from the large fen.
- Final approved corridor has been evaluated on its own merits with respect to wildlife movement functionality and efficacy and determined to be functional. As a result, no additional features such as buffers or setbacks are required.
- Approval requires that TSMVPL participate in implementing appropriate recommendations within the 2018 report *“Human-Wildlife Coexistence: Recommendations for Improving Human-Wildlife Coexistence in the Bow Valley”* and also active participation in local WildSmart initiatives.

Aversive Conditioning

- *Wildlife Act* of Alberta generally provides enforcement tools against private citizens or entities that poses a threat to or harasses wildlife which essentially precludes TSMVPL from undertaking wildlife adverse conditioning
- Wildlife Human Interaction Prevention Plan (WHIPP) approved/updated in 1999/2004
- Now more properly addressed within the work regarding the understanding of co-existence with wildlife in the Bow Valley culminated in the 2018 report “*Human-Wildlife Coexistence: Recommendations for Improving Human-Wildlife Coexistence in the Bow Valley*” and through active participation in local WildSmart initiatives
- Town of Canmore *Wildlife Attractant Bylaw* 2017-10 last updated on August 26, 2019 and *Recyclables and Waste Disposal Bylaw* 2016-11 last updated January 1, 2019

Next Steps

- Legal designation of the corridor
 - Options currently being discussed in regards to conversion to public land or addition to existing adjacent Parks landbase to best suit management intent
- Land exchange
 - Standard provincial appraisal and assessment process to facilitate transfer of crown parcels to TSMVPL in support of provision of deeded lands within Site 7 and 8 to support the wildlife corridor
- Monitoring of Conditions

Questions?

