

Summary of Questionnaires

What are the main challenges facing rural and aboriginal communities in general and in the RMBR?

- Aging and declining population
- Aging and declining infrastructure
- Rural depopulation- Mobility of population (youth outmigration, mobility of consumers or “retail drift”)
- Finding and retaining skilled employees
- Competitive disadvantages between local and chain businesses
- Transportation costs
- Lack of access to capital (Business start ups, expansions, successions)
- Incentive to invest locally (overcome local resistance to new development)
- Current state of agricultural industry
- Fostering a sense of land stewardship within the locals
- Balancing the understandable desire amongst locals to maintain local control of natural resources with the understandable desire of non-locals
- Aboriginal schools, health facilities, and utilities are not funded as well as the rest of the communities.
- An important challenge for both communities will be to rebuild the once close relations between the Natives and non-native rural people. This will require proactive efforts to rebuild mutual respect.
- Loss of connection with the land from one generation to the next.

What are the main challenges facing the working landscapes and protected landscapes in general and in the RMBR?

- Balance between conservation, sustainable practices and financial profitability.
- It seems that no one agency/group is monitoring biodiversity health and threats to biodiversity across the Biosphere – Parks Canada monitors within the Park, NCC does some monitoring on its lands, some Conservation Districts monitor streams, other don't, etc. Without a comprehensive, coordinated monitoring plan that includes regular reporting, it is difficult to detect problems before they escalate.
- Climate Change - Specific nature of threat unknown, but impacts expected given the fact that local variations in climate are a major determinant of the vegetation communities that occupy various parts of the Biosphere. Wetlands are groundwater and/or precipitation dependent and could undergo shifts if hydrologic cycle is altered due to climate change.
- protected areas will receive continual pressure to be “used” or “managed” in spite of the fact that maintaining these areas in the natural state is the best long term management for biodiversity conservation
- Research is needed on ways to prevent wildlife damage to crops and livestock that are practical and effective in order to develop landowner tolerance of wildlife impacts to farming operations
- Lack of ability to accurately anticipate the cumulative effects of human activities on the environment
- Short sighted decision making by all groups at all levels; the lack of a long-term vision (e.g., 50 to 100 years or more) compromises the ability to make decisions that ensure long-term sustainability.

- Lack of ecological knowledge regarding how adjacent landscapes are interrelated i.e., RMBR, RMNP, Duck Mtn Provincial Park, Spruce Woods Provincial Park
- Disjointedness between land management organizations (CDs, RMNP, Planning Districts, FNs, RMs, etc.)
- Lack of political will to protect the ecology of both working and protected landscapes. Remedial actions should include:
 - articulation of clear long-term objectives for each landscape
 - everything must be stated in unambiguous language with clear, quantifiable objectives

Areas of knowledge or research that will be critical for those living in the RMBR to:

Ensure the sustainability of rural communities:

- Regional cooperation
- Sustainable decline, maintenance or growth of rural communities
- Community investment models
- Economic impact analysis
- Growth from within
- Cooperation between farmers and non-farmers
- Facilitating better working relationships between communities
- The continued involvement of the BR in local schools.
- Better use of fresh water. Continue to work with Conservation districts in this area. Also, the disposal of waste-water.
- Small, non-polluting businesses that use local resource-based products and non-manufacturing businesses should be encouraged.
- Recognizing and appreciating the wealth of traditional self-sufficiency and sustainable management knowledge possessed by the older land managers in the rural communities and ensuring this traditional knowledge as well as “modern” sustainable-management knowledge is made available to all land managers.
- Encourage the formation of clubs/cooperatives to find markets and market local products, such as woodlot products and hunting packages.
- How to get people to adjust their expectations to match the capability of the land
- Provide diversified farming opportunities that are in harmony with the landscape

Ensure the sustainability of aboriginal communities:

- Engagement of the aboriginal workforce
- Cooperation between non-aboriginal, northern affairs and first nation communities
- Cultural awareness and sensitivities between non-aboriginal and aboriginal peoples
- Growth from within
- Ensuring the traditional knowledge of the Elders and Ancestors is passed down to new generations.
- Encouraging and enabling gatherings and mutually beneficial joint ventures with Native and non-natives that will ensure the perpetual integration of the communities.

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Ensure the sustainability of ecological communities and processes on the working landscape:

- Basic knowledge on corridors and natural connections – between Riding Mountain park and Duck Mountain, but also between RMNP and the Assiniboine Delta, the St Lazare Grasslands, the Alonsa woodlands, etc.
- Research/knowledge leading to development of a sustainable recreational development plan for the RMBR – will all remaining natural areas/lakeshores etc be allowed to be divided up into cottage lots? Will intensive agriculture be replaced by cottage subdivisions, etc.
- Basic invasive/alien species knowledge – what the species of concern, where are they on the landscape, how fast are they spreading, who can coordinate their control.
- Monitoring program: Basic knowledge about the current ecological health of rivers, streams, wetlands, prairies and forests. This can be basic or very specific.
- Recognize the value of riparian zones for removing toxins.
- Encourage the preservation of habitat by increasing its economic value to the landowner. This can be done both indirectly by reducing taxes on these lands and directly by encouraging recreational/tourism programs that generate user-fees for the landowners from consumptive and non-consumptive users of the habitat.
- How to separate or integrate (depends on issue) ecological communities from/with agriculture and other land use practices
- Public education and involvement in developing a shared vision

Ensure the sustainability of ecological communities and processes on the protected landscape

- How will climate change affects relatively small isolated protected areas – how should/can corridors between protected areas be designed
- Basic invasive/alien species knowledge – what the species of concern, where are they, how fast are they spreading, who can coordinate their control.
- Study and document the ecological goods and services provided by wild natural
- How to ensure that connections are maintained with surrounding landscape
- Public education to generate understanding that the protected landscape is connected with the working landscape – the working landscape must contribute to sustainability