

Pilot projects in Kejimikujik, Point Pelee and Waterton Lakes National Parks are currently under way. Projects in the six most recently established national parks have already begun or are in the planning stage.

The Federal Government, in an effort to give Canadians the opportunity to express their opinions of proposed development plans for national parks, is holding public hearings on all parks. The intent of the hearings is to develop increased public awareness of the purposes and values of the parks and to gain support for an expanded system of national parks. The first hearing was held for Kejimikujik National Park, Nova Scotia, in April 1970.

Provisional master plans are prepared for the hearings, describing the parks as they exist and as they may appear in the future and outlining the objectives, management goals and development criteria for each.

One of the major steps taken to conserve the park environment while allowing visitors to enjoy the park is the land-use zoning outlined in each provisional master plan.

The zones range from special preservation areas to those that allow intensive use. The amount of land in each zone varies according to the character and purpose of the individual park.

The park land designated as special preservation zone may contain unique and fragile natural and cultural features which are given strict protection.

Most of the land within a national park is zoned as wilderness recreation area, and visitor use is restricted to such activities as hiking and primitive camping. The natural environment area serves as a buffer zone between preservation and development areas while providing a natural background for minor access roads and recreation areas. Roads within all national parks are carefully planned and kept to a minimum, consistent with the park's character and objectives as part of the parks system.

Camp-grounds, public-transportation facilities, interpretive centres and recreational facilities are confined to the general outdoor recreation areas. While commercial development of visitor services is allowed within the boundaries of most parks, such developments are encouraged outside the park whenever possible.

Administration

Canada's national parks are administered by the National and Historic Parks Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. There are three administrative regions: Western, Central and Atlantic.

The management of each park is carried out under a park superintendent with a staff that includes an administration services officer, operations manager and park maintenance officer.