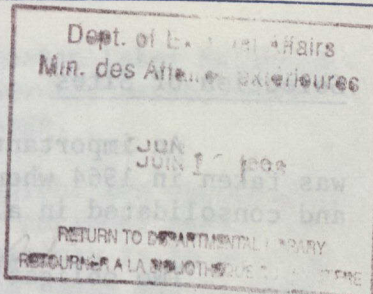


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INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA



No. 104
(Revised January 1972)

THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA

The national parks of Canada have been established and maintained by the Federal Government to preserve areas representative of the variety of the country's landscape, flora and fauna for the benefit of Canadians.

The National Parks System began in 1885, when the Federal Government acquired ten square miles of land surrounding the mineral hot springs at Banff, Alberta, and dedicated the land to the people of Canada. Two years later, the Rocky Mountains Park Act was passed, reserving an area of 260 square miles "as a public park and pleasure ground".

By 1911, four more national parks had been established, all in Western Canada. In May of that year, the Dominion Forest Reserves and Parks Act was passed, creating a Commissioner of Dominion Parks and a distinct National Parks Branch to protect, administer and develop the parks. During the next 20 years, nine more national parks were added to the system. The next major development was the passage of the National Parks Act in 1930, an unrestrictive piece of legislation that has remained the basis for national parks administration. The general purpose was set forth as a dedication of the parks to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, to be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

Under the Transfer of Resources Agreement of 1930, all public land within the provinces came under the administration of provincial governments. All national parks added to the system since that date have been set up with the co-operation of provincial governments, which made lands available for that purpose. The land, after having been assembled by the province, is transferred with all natural resources to the Federal Government, and an Act of Parliament is passed to establish it as a new national park.

From 1930 to 1963, five national parks were established. Agreements were signed for one new park in 1969, another four in 1970 and one, Pukaskwa National Park in Ontario, in July 1971.

Recognizing the need for more national parks, both to relieve the extensive use of existing parks and to preserve representative samples of the natural landscape for the future, the Federal Government plans to establish from 35 to 55 new parks within the next three decades.

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Selection of Sites

An important step in the development of national park administration was taken in 1964 when all policies concerning the parks were reviewed, amended and consolidated in a statement and tabled in the House of Commons.

Two obligations were recognized concerning the establishment of new parks -- preservation of the Canadian heritage and insurance that Canadians of the present and future would have the opportunity to appreciate and understand their natural environment and to enjoy and benefit from the values of natural wilderness.

Originally, national parks were chosen for their outstanding scenery and unique features, but today areas representing the diversity of the Canadian landscape are selected. One of the basic objectives of the National Parks System is the preservation of representative areas from the various physical and biological units found in the country, as well as the protection of outstanding or unique areas.

Included in the policy statement was recognition of the need to establish at least one national park in each province. This has now been realized, with the establishment of two such parks in the Province of Quebec -- Forillon and La Mauricie.

The expectation of industrial development in Canada's North and the resultant population growth has brought recognition of the need to set aside land for national parks in the North, both to meet the future needs of the people who will live there and to protect examples of the natural environment.

Two large areas of land have been placed in reserve in the Northwest Territories for this purpose: 870 square miles in the South Nahanni Reserve and 2,860 square miles in the Great Slave Lake Reserve. Also under consideration are amendments to legislation that would create a significant national park in the Yukon Territory. The area is currently the Kluane Game Reserve.

Development

A resource inventory program was begun by the National and Historic Parks Branch in 1970 to provide a description of the total resource-base of each national park.

One objective is to identify and describe within each park the representative samples of the country's landscape worthy of being preserved unimpaired for future generations or warranting interpretive programs.

The information contained in each resource inventory will be used by park-planners to achieve a sound zoning-plan. Nature interpreters will use the information to plan programs suited to the character of each park and resource-conservation personnel will initiate resource-management plans based on the findings.

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.

Through information provided by the resource-base description and special studies of the total park environment -- plant and animal life, land formation, soil, geology and climate -- park naturalists develop interpretive programs to help visitors understand and appreciate the individuality of each national park. The programs include guided hiking, illustrated lectures and exhibitions.

The natural resources of the national parks must be protected from misuse, damage and destruction, a job that falls to the park wardens. Trained in resource-management, the wardens are involved in forest-fire control and assessment of the condition of plant and animal life. They also deal with visitor safety and search and rescue operations.

The national parks staff are advised on wildlife management and protection by specialists of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Other federal agencies also provide expertise -- the National Museum of Natural Science, the Forest Management Institute, the Geological Surveys of Canada and the Fisheries Research Board.

A Junior Warden Program, begun in 1971 as a pilot project in Georgian Bay Islands National Park, Ontario, and Fundy National Park, New Brunswick, will be extended in 1972 to 12 parks. The boys, 16 and 17 years of age, were selected by the Boy's Clubs of Canada. The boys spent several weeks working with park naturalists on interpretation programs and studying park resources, forest, wildlife and fisheries management, forest-fire control and safety regulations.

Description

Evidence of the increasing attraction of Canada's national parks is the growing number of visitors. Since 1961, attendance has almost tripled, over 13.5 million people visiting the parks in 1970-71.

The 25 national parks extend virtually from sea to sea -- Pacific Rim National Park on the west coast of Vancouver Island and Terra Nova National Park on the east coast of Newfoundland.

Pacific Rim National Park will be under development until the mid-1970s. The park will encompass three distinct areas: Long Beach, including Grice Bay and a section of Kennedy Lake totalling 60 square miles; 90 to 95 islands and rocks in Barkley Sound and a 45-mile stretch of coastline between Port Renfrew and Bamfield.

There are two national parks in the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia. Mount Revelstoke covers 100 square miles of timbered slopes, alpine meadows and lakes. It is located near the city of Revelstoke. Glacier National Park lies a few miles to the east and covers 521 square miles. There are more than 100 glaciers in the park.

The Rocky Mountains consist of numerous ranges, each adding to the unique alpine beauty of the mountain parks.

The Continental Divide forms 150 miles of the western border of Banff National Park in Alberta and parts of the eastern borders of both Yoho and Kootenay National Parks in British Columbia.

In the interior of Banff National Park are the Sundance, Palliser, Sawback and Fairholme Ranges. Covering an area of 2,564 square miles, Banff is the third-largest national park in Canada. It is situated 80 miles west of Calgary.

Banff and Jasper National Parks meet at the Columbia Icefields. In Jasper a series of ranges run roughly parallel -- the Miette, Jacques and Colin Ranges, with the Desmet Range lying to the north. Jasper, 240 miles west of Edmonton, covers an area of 4,200 square miles.

Within the 507 square miles of Yoho National Park are the Van Horne, Ottertail, Waputik and President Ranges. A total of 28 peaks rise over 10,000 feet within this park. The east park-gate is 25 miles west of Banff.

Bordering Kootenay National Park are the Vermillion, Brisco and Mitchell Ranges. The park lies along the southwestern border of Banff National Park and covers 543 square miles.

In the southeast corner of Alberta, 70 miles from Lethbridge, mountain and prairie meet in Waterton Lakes National Park. The Canadian section of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park covers an area of 203 square miles.

The entire 75-square-mile area of Elk Island National Park is enclosed by a fence. While deer, elk and moose roam at will within the park, two sections isolate herds of plains bison and wood bison from visitors. The park is 30 miles east of Edmonton.

The Northwest Territories and Alberta share Canada's largest national park. Wood Buffalo National Park, 17,300 square miles of forest and open plain, is home to the largest remaining herd of bison in North America and is the only known nesting-ground of the rare whooping crane. Under strict protective measures by Canada and the United States, the whooping crane population has increased to approximately 60 birds.

Saskatchewan's only national park is located 35 miles north of the city of Prince Albert. Covering 1,496 square miles, Prince Albert National Park shows the transition between the northern forest and prairie grassland.

Riding Mountain National Park on the Manitoba Escarpment preserves 1,150 square miles of evergreen and hardwood forests, lakes and a variety of wildlife. It is situated 60 miles north of Brandon.

Point Pelee National Park south of Windsor, Ontario, is the most southerly point of Canada's mainland. Lying on the Mississippi flyway, the six-square-mile park is a staging-ground for migratory birds. The marshland of Point Pelee is one of the few remaining freshwater marshes in North America. The park also contains a small remnant of the original North American deciduous forest.

Georgian Bay Islands National Park is made up of 42 islands with dense woodlands and interesting geological formations. The formations that gave Flowerpot Island its name are vertical pillars of rock eroded by the action of the waves. The total land area of the park is six square miles.

With a land area of 594 acres, St. Lawrence Islands National Park is Canada's smallest national park. It is made up of 17 islands and 80 islets in the St. Lawrence River between Kingston and Brockville, Ontario.

Pukaskwa, Canada's newest national park, is a 725-square-mile wilderness area on the north shore of Lake Superior. The rugged terrain contains many lakes and rivers and a large variety of wildlife.

Forillon National Park in Quebec was established in 1970. Situated on the scenic tip of the Gaspé Peninsula on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the park covers an area of 90 square miles.

La Mauricie National Park is a heavily-wooded area covering 175 square miles with over 50 lakes in the Laurentian Mountains near Trois Rivières, Quebec.

Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick covers an area of 90 square miles on the northern section of Northumberland Strait. An outstanding feature is its sweep of offshore sandbars.

Fundy National Park, also in New Brunswick, has a rugged shoreline, steep cliffs and the highest tides in the world. Magnified by the shape and size of the Bay of Fundy, the tides reach as high as 40 feet in the park area, which covers 80 square miles.

Kejimikujik National Park lies southwest of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It covers 145 square miles of inland country with numerous lakes and islands. Cape Breton Highlands National Park in northeast Nova Scotia has a rugged coastline, forested hills and a variety of wildlife. It covers 367 square miles.

Prince Edward Island National Park is a coastal strip of dunes, cliffs, marshes and beaches stretching for 25 miles along the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The total area of the park is seven square miles.

Gros Morne National Park on the western coast of Newfoundland contains mountains, fjord-like lakes and forests in its 700-square-mile area.

The rugged coastline of Terra Nova National Park on Bonavista Bay contrasts with the rolling terrain and the thick boreal forests found inland. It covers an area of 153 square miles.

With the annual addition of new parks, the National Parks System in Canada will acquaint more and more Canadians with the Natural beauty and wonders of their native land.

THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA

ANNOUNCEMENT

RP/A

It was announced late in February 1972 that more than 15,000 acres of land in the Yukon and Northwest Territories had been set aside to be new national parks -- in the Klondike area of the Yukon Territory, in the Northwest Territories, along the South Nahanni River and on the Peninsula of Gaffin Island. These are Canada's first national parks north of the 50th Parallel.

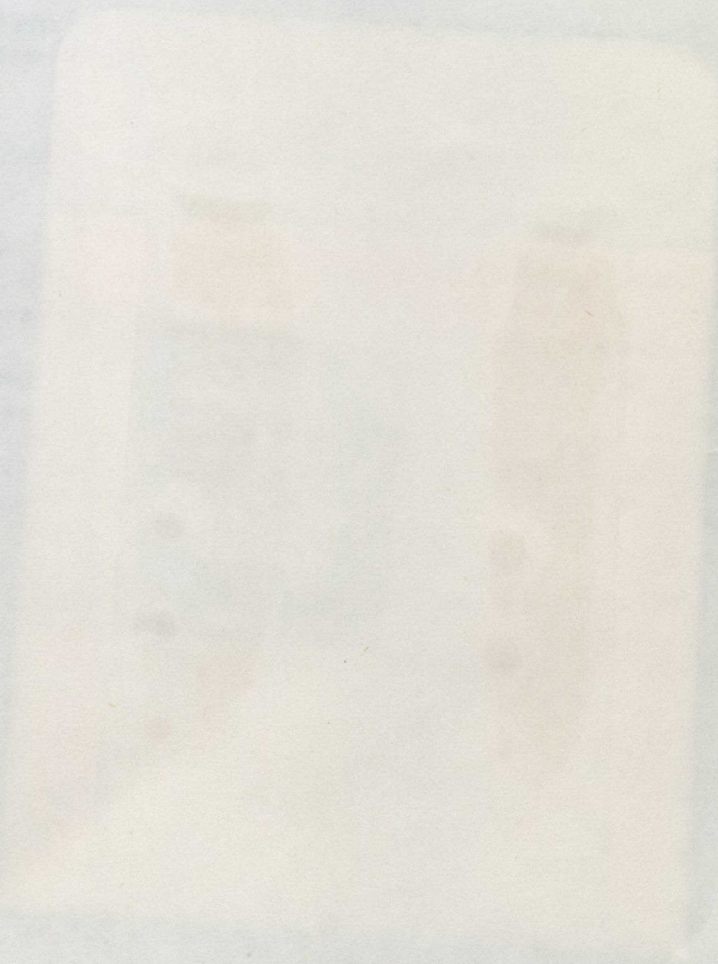
Their creation means that two new parks have been established in the Northwest Territories and one in the Yukon Territory. In addition, only two years ago, in the preceding year, the outstanding natural areas of the Northwest Territories were designated in the national parks system.

The three new national parks are:

1. Klondike National Park

2. South Nahanni National Park

3. Gaffin Island National Park



The rugged coastline of Terra Nova National Park on Newfoundland's coast contrasts with the rolling terrain of the forested interior. It covers an area of 155 square miles and is one of the largest parks in the province. With its natural beauty and more Canadian wilderness, it offers a unique experience for visitors.

This special area is a part of the park's natural heritage. It is a place where nature is preserved in its original state. The park is a treasure for all Canadians and a source of pride for the province.

Canada's National Parks are a source of pride and inspiration. They are a part of our natural heritage and a source of beauty and wonder. The National Parks of Canada are a source of pride for all Canadians.

The rugged terrain of the park is a source of beauty and wonder. It is a place where nature is preserved in its original state. The park is a treasure for all Canadians and a source of pride for the province.

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THE NATIONAL PARKS OF CANADA

ADDENDUM

It was announced late in February 1972 that more than 18,500 square miles of land in the Yukon and Northwest Territories had been set aside to create three new national parks -- in the Kluane area of the Yukon Territory, and, in the Northwest Territories, along the South Nahanni River and on the Cumberland Peninsula of Baffin Island. These are Canada's first national parks above the 60th Parallel.

Their creation means that ten new parks have been established since 1968, whereas only two were set aside in the preceding 30 years. For the first time, outstanding natural areas in every province and territory of Canada are represented in the national parks system.

The three northern parks will increase the total area of Canada's national parks by more than 50 per cent, from 31,300 square miles to 49,800 square miles.

The three northern parks contain some of the most spectacular scenery in Canada.

The Kluane area (8,500 square miles), in the southwest corner of the Yukon Territory, includes Mount Logan, the highest peak in Canada (19,850 feet) and one of the world's largest non-polar icefields systems.

The new park along the South Nahanni River covers 1,840 square miles -- more than double the 870 set aside in April 1970. The South Nahanni is Canada's most spectacular wild river and the best of it is now protected within the park, which includes Virginia Falls (twice as high as Niagara), three major canyons reaching 4,000 feet in height, and a vast number of caves and sulphur hot-springs.

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