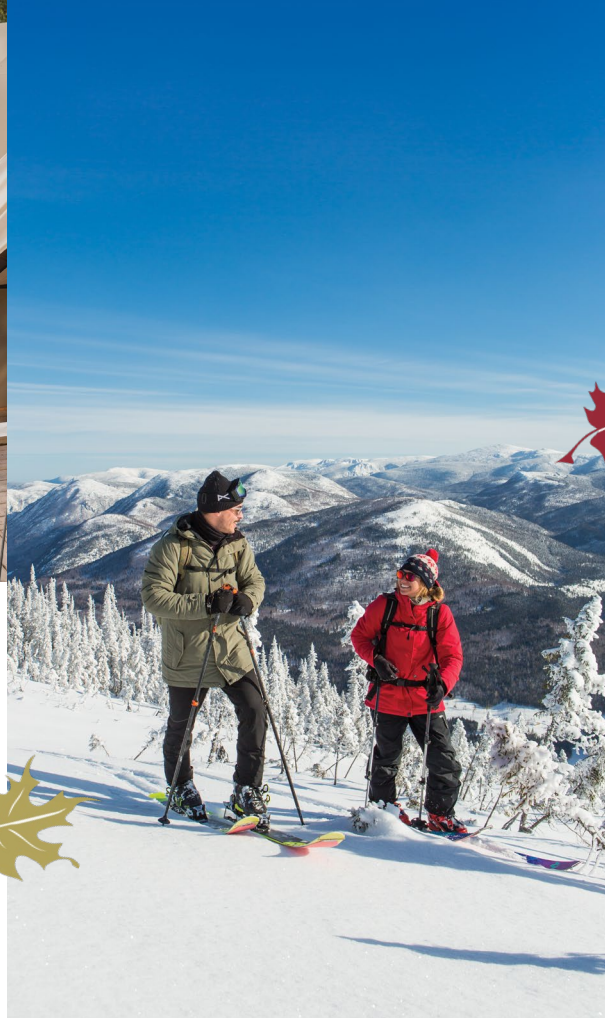




# Strategic Framework 2020-2024



# Canada's Parks

**Parks are places that exemplify outstanding opportunities for people to appreciate life on Earth.** The experiences parks provide spark joy, new capabilities, and pride. They are rich in culture and biodiversity and they offer us an opportunity to understand our history<sup>1</sup>, ourselves and the significance of our interdependence with all living things. As natural solutions to climate change they support vital ecosystem services, and Nature's contribution to the health and well-being of all Canadians continues to expand research and evidence to support the economic and social value of parks to society. We are Nature and parks are places for all Nature to thrive.

In Canada there are networks of park and protected area systems that exist at all levels of government (federal, Indigenous, municipal, provincial, regional and territorial), and on privately held lands, representing an estimated 2 million km<sup>2</sup> of protected lands and fresh waters nationally<sup>2</sup>. While there are many terms used to describe the places along this continuum, all are reserved for conserving and experiencing Nature, with varying objectives and complementary goals. In recent years, individuals and organizations have worked together to produce a shared Action Plan<sup>3</sup> in an effort to better understand each other's unique contribution to a common vision that cultivates shared goals, mutual respect and collective action. Ultimately, the parks community in Canada is striving to establish connected networks of park lands and waters that support sustainable livelihoods and the conservation of Nature. **The places represented by the member organizations of the Canadian Parks Council are part of the whole parks story, which is much greater than the sum of its extraordinary parts.**

<sup>1</sup>The Canadian Parks Council acknowledges there are past wrongdoings involving Indigenous Peoples in the establishment and management of Canada's national, provincial and territorial parks, and within its work, the Canadian Parks Council recognizes the integral role of Indigenous Peoples as conservation leaders and colleagues by working toward and within ethical space in order to further reconcile our relationships with the land and each other [Environment Canada and Climate Change. (2019). *One with Nature: A renewed approach to land and freshwater conservation in Canada*. Ottawa: Author].

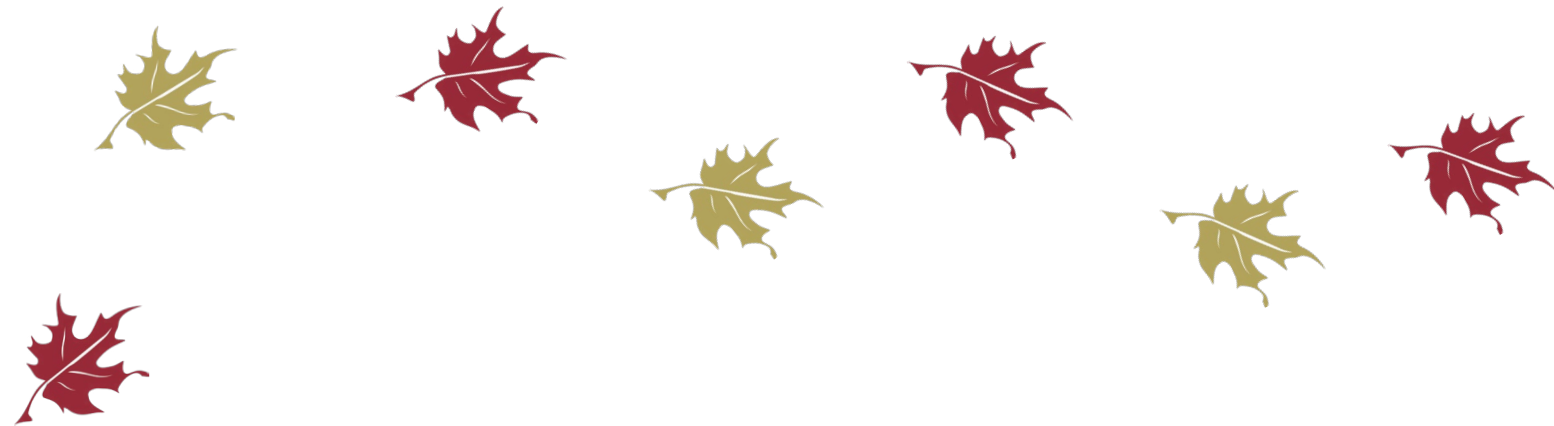
<sup>2</sup>Environment Canada and Climate Change. (October, 2019). *Protecting our Nature: Canada's story*. Retrieved from [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/about.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/about.html)

<sup>3</sup>Parks Canada Agency (on behalf of the Canadian Parks Council and Canadian Parks and Recreation Association). (2017). *Parks for All: An Action Plan for the Parks Community*. Ottawa: Author.



**SPELLING NATURE WITH A CAPITAL "N" reminds us of its function as a proper noun and that Nature is the one thing that connects us all. Our relationship with Nature is a defining purpose for national, provincial and territorial parks today.**

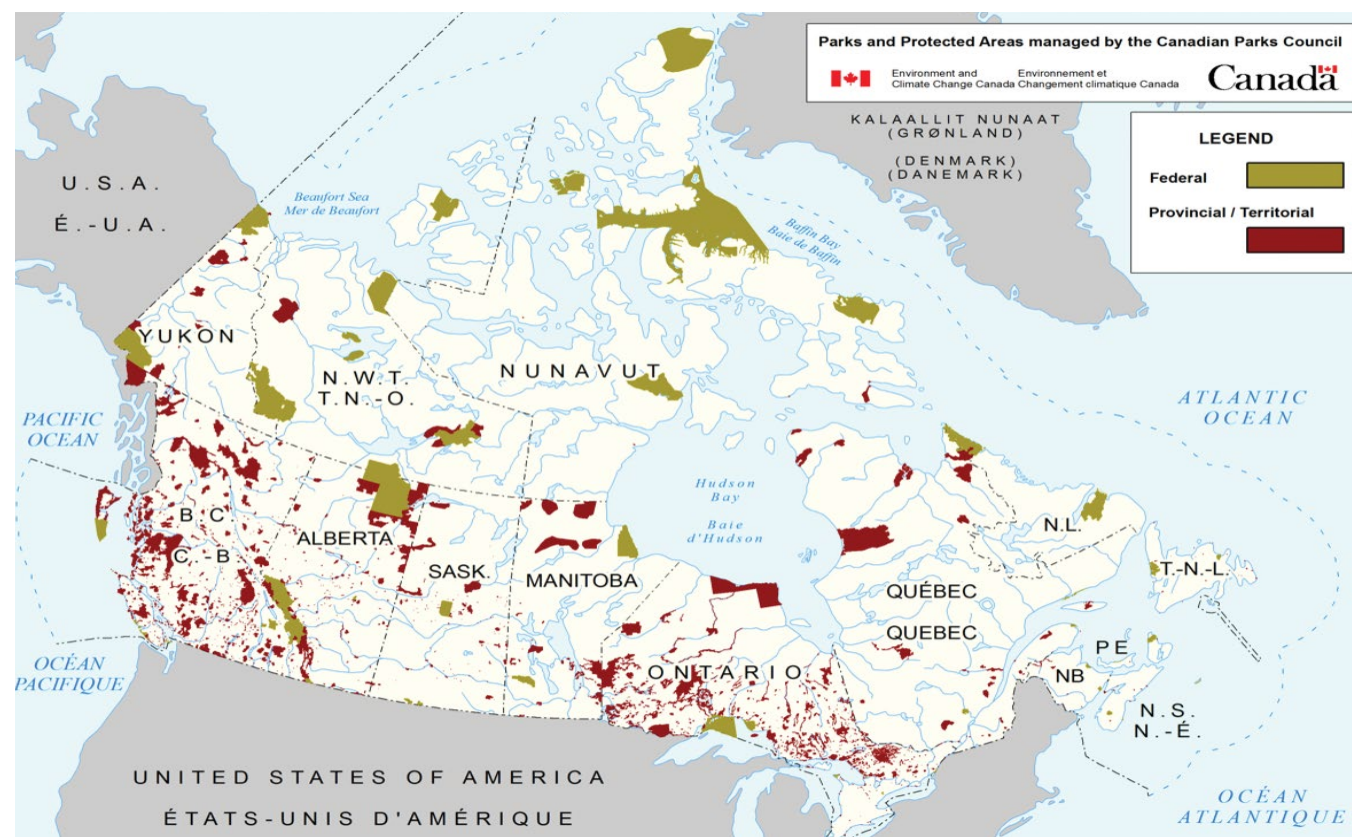




The Canadian Parks Council is an intergovernmental leadership forum focused on actions that help national, provincial and territorial park organizations have a greater positive impact throughout Canada.

# Who We Are

The Canadian Parks Council exists to connect and coordinate action among Canada's federal, provincial and territorial park agencies. Since 1962, park agency leaders have served the Canadian Parks Council as board members to convene and advance collective action for the purpose of making each park agency more effective at achieving their respective goals. Together, the Canadian Parks Council represents the interests of 14 governments, over 2,700 parks, and a shared mandate to enhance the environmental, social and economic values of national, provincial and territorial parks throughout Canada. The unique contribution of the Canadian Parks Council within the greater parks community is scale and a deeply rooted history of open information sharing to maximize efficiencies, learning and coordination. Throughout its history, the Canadian Parks Council has been focused on leveraging opportunities to improve management effectiveness and the sustainability of national, provincial and territorial park operations for current and future generations.







# How We Work

The work of the Canadian Parks Council is grounded in mutual respect for each other and our Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners and colleagues who contribute to a vision where the health and well-being benefits of conservation and peoples' place in Nature are realized. Parks for All: An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community<sup>3</sup> exemplifies this ideal and the Canadian Parks Council's strategic framework is an articulation of how national, provincial and territorial parks will work together and with others to collaborate, connect, conserve and lead.

The work ethic of the Canadian Parks Council is to design for impact by always considering the benefits of parks within the context of larger systems<sup>4</sup>. Our way of working is to cultivate collective prosperity with other knowledge holders and sectors as a means to help more people experience the powerful benefits of Nature. By conducting our work in ways that align institutional interests, new partners and potential are discovered and streamlined. When the Canadian Parks Council is successful in achieving its strategic priorities, so too are other systems (local, national and international) that serve our economy, our health, our cultures and identities, our personal development, our communities and our environment<sup>5</sup>. Growing the voice of parks in Canada by working with others underscores how we work.

## VISION

To be a global leader in effective and innovative collective action for parks

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Environment Canada and Climate Change. (2019). *One with Nature: A renewed approach to land and freshwater conservation in Canada*. Ottawa: Author.

<sup>5</sup> This framework will contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which recognizes that collaborative action is needed to transform economic, social and financial models to serve and support the benefits of Nature.

<sup>6</sup> Parks Canada Agency on behalf of the Canadian Parks Council. (2014). *Connecting Canadians with Nature: An investment in the well-being of our citizens*. Ottawa: Author.

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES<sup>4</sup> FOR ALL INTERACTIONS AND INITIATIVES:

### RECONCILIATION

Recognition and support of Indigenous rights and responsibilities

### RESPECT

Accommodation of different perspectives, experiences, values and priorities

### INCLUSIVENESS

Active outreach and engagement to grow the voice of parks in Canada

### COLLABORATION

Intention to optimize the complimentary goals of all parties

### TRANSPARENCY

Openness with assumptions, plans, decisions, actions and results

### INNOVATION

Active curiosity and willingness to consider creative solutions

### EVIDENCE-BASED DECISIONS

Honouring different knowledge systems





# What We Do

**The Canadian Parks Council is both a community of practice and an intergovernmental forum that serves to advance the shared priorities of federal, provincial and territorial government park systems.** By convening often and with intent, board representatives work together to prioritize and direct resources to agreed-upon common interests across the country that can be served through parks. The 2020-2024 priority initiatives are aligned with direction provided by federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for parks, and are endorsed by Canada’s deputy ministers responsible for parks.

## MISSION

Working together, national, provincial and territorial park agencies deepen relationships with Nature through collaboration, connection, conservation and leadership.

| STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS | PRIORITY INITIATIVES  |
|----------------------|---|
| 4 AREAS OF FOCUS     | BETWEEN 2020-2024 THE CANADIAN PARKS COUNCIL WILL...  |
| COLLABORATION        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Better integrate Canada’s parks and the Canadian tourism sector by working with intergovernmental partners and industry leaders who drive Canada’s tourism economy</li><li>✦ Increase awareness and access to parks with educators and the outdoor play sector to help more families enjoy Canada’s parks and to make parks more relevant to Canadians</li><li>✦ Nurture and establish partnerships to help Canada’s park systems make greater contributions to the physical and mental health of Canadians in communities across the country</li></ul> |
| CONNECTION           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Improve communication channels to better benefit, celebrate and connect the members of the Canadian Parks Council</li><li>✦ Engage in and provide leadership that supports pan-Canadian opportunities that facilitate better alignment and action throughout the parks community</li></ul>  |
| CONSERVATION         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Advance the conservation of Canada’s bio-cultural diversity by contributing to national processes that enhance park management effectiveness and relationships across the landscape</li><li>✦ Expand communication and collaboration to raise awareness of parks as nature-based solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss</li></ul>  |
| LEADERSHIP           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ Lead the development of new practices that increase the financial sustainability and operational effectiveness of Canadian Parks Council member organizations</li><li>✦ Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and collaborate to grow a greater understanding of Indigenous cultures and history through parks</li><li>✦ Support the growth and development of an inclusive and connected network of professionals in the parks community who engage, learn and share expertise across boundaries</li></ul>                                    |



The work of the Canadian Parks Council is...  
**DESIGNED** for impact  
**GROWS** engagement  
**SHARED** to tell the greater parks story.

## ANNUAL PLANNING AND REPORTING

For each year of the Canadian Parks Council's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan an Annual Work Plan is produced along with a Yearly Report to share progress and activity. These documents are developed by the Canadian Parks Council and they are reviewed and endorsed by federal, provincial and territorial deputy ministers responsible for parks to ensure intergovernmental alignments. Federal, provincial and territorial Ministers responsible for parks, under advisement and direction from deputy ministers, will convene within the 2020-2024 program of work to advance actions that expand and improve the health and wellbeing of Canadians through parks.

## GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Canadian Parks Council membership comprises federal, provincial and territorial park agencies of Canada. The board members are the heads of federal, provincial and territorial park agencies (typically managing directors of park agencies or assistant deputy ministers), or a senior executive representative appointed by them.

Federal, provincial and territorial parks ministers come together from time to time to provide overall direction for Canadian Parks Council activities. Meetings of ministers responsible for parks are held at the request of the jurisdictional Chair, or as required to discuss issues of common concern. Similarly, deputy ministers meet to provide specific direction to the Council. Deputy ministers responsible for parks will meet at least once per year by teleconference and may meet more frequently by teleconference, or in person, to discuss issues of common concern.

The Canadian Parks Council is administered by an Executive Director, who manages the work of the Secretariat.

The Executive Director reports to the Chair and Executive Committee and is responsible to the Board of Directors.

Associate members are designated for a set term as appropriate to advance common interests.

To accomplish its strategic priorities, the Council relies on collaborative action by members. The Board of Directors operates in accordance with the Governance and Administrative Framework, which outlines the Canadian Parks Council's roles and responsibilities, institutional and financial arrangements, and key policies and programs. The other documents that guide the work of the Board include this Strategic Framework, as well as a Specified Purpose Account Agreement and Annual Budget that, together, outline the manner in which the Council's funds are managed and the purposes for which they are to be expended.

For more information visit:  
[parks-parcs.ca](https://parks-parcs.ca)

