

Ontario.—The development of provincial parklands in Ontario continues at a rapid rate. In 1954 there were only eight provincial parks in the province while today there are 96 such parks available for public use. In addition, several new parks are in process of development and 56 other areas encompassing almost 748 sq. miles are reserved for future development. The total area in the Ontario Provincial Park system is about 5,909 sq. miles.

The four largest provincial parks—Algonquin, Quetico, Lake Superior and Sibley—together have an area of about 5,200 sq. miles. Algonquin Park, the largest in the system, is a beautiful area 2,910 sq. miles in extent, 180 miles north of Toronto and 105 miles west of Ottawa; it has 14 picnic and camp grounds which are accessible by car from Highway 60 and offers particularly fine canoeing opportunities within its interior. Quetico Park, covering 1,750 sq. miles, is accessible by Highway 11 at the Dawson Trail Campground on French Lake and also by water via Basswood Lake in the south. Highway 17 north from Sault Ste. Marie provides access to Lake Superior Park, and Sibley Park may be reached by road from Highway 17 east from Port Arthur.

In 1966 a new policy of park classification and park land zoning was announced to achieve a balanced park system and to establish a policy framework for positive and effective development and management. Five park classes were established—primitive, natural environment or heritage, wild river, nature reserve, and recreation. Comparable zones within parks were also established—primitive, natural, historic, multiple use, and recreation.

Under the Wilderness Areas Act, which came into effect in 1959, 42 areas have been established. These areas, widely distributed across the province, vary in size, character and significance but all are regarded as important for their historic, scientific, aesthetic or cultural values. The largest is a 938-sq. mile block covering the Pukaskwa area on the north shore of Lake Superior and the second largest is a 225-sq. mile area of treeless tundra in the northeastern tip of the province at the point where Cape Henrietta-Maria juts out into Hudson Bay; this area is the most southern arctic tundra in the world and its primitive unspoiled landscapes and characteristically arctic wildlife are being preserved for scientific study and as unique features of the province. All other wilderness areas are one square mile or less in size.

Ontario has made another advance in meeting the rising pressures for recreational space by applying the concept of the recreational reserve. The recently created North Georgian Bay Recreational Reserve covers 4,500 sq. miles of interesting country lying generally between Algoma and Parry Sound on the north shore of Georgian Bay and including the channel between Manitoulin Island and the mainland, the 30,000 Islands, the famous route of the voyageurs via the French River, the remaining shoreline of Lake Nipissing and the LaCloche Mountains. The Reserve is not a National Park nor is it a Wilderness Area but an area following a normal course of development which is already used extensively for recreation. The plan is, by guiding the evolution of the area, to realize its full potential as a recreational paradise serving all types of needs and co-existing with a landscape of normal activity.

Ontario's vast lakeland areas make this province a vacation paradise and the number of park visitors increases year by year. Attendance in 1966 was 9,791,671 persons and campers numbered 994,787. Charges for vehicle entry are \$1 a day or \$5 a year and camping charges are \$1.50 a night or \$9 a week. At supervised tent and trailer campsites, picnic tables, fireplaces, tested drinking water and washrooms are provided. New campsites are being added at the rate of 500 to 1,000 a year and in 1966 numbered approximately 17,000.

Interpretative and naturalist programs are being continually expanded and such services as museums, outdoor exhibits, conducted trips, illustrated talks and labelled nature trails were available in 25 parks in 1966.