

to establish a national park. These lands are transferred to Canada and the establishment of the park is made formal by Parliament.

In 1971, *A national parks system planning manual* was published, in recognition that new and comprehensive measures are needed to preserve Canada's natural heritage. With a view to protecting not only unique and outstanding areas of the Canadian land and seascapes but also those representative of its physical, biological, and oceanographic characteristics, 48 distinctive natural regions were identified for which natural history themes were defined.

From April 1, 1976 to March 31, 1977, there were 16.5 million visits to the national parks. Visitors to the parks can participate in activities ranging from guided walks and canoeing in summer to cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in winter.

A detailed list of national parks was included in the 1972 and 1973 editions of the *Canada Year Book*, and a location map and details of these parks are available in *Canada's national parks* published by Parks Canada.

**National marine parks.** Canada is bounded by three oceans and has the largest volume of fresh water in the world. The national parks system will be extended to represent the Pacific, Arctic and Atlantic coasts and inland waters, with identification of the marine natural regions and marine natural history themes.

**National landmarks.** Preservation of specific natural wonders, such as the Chub crater in Northern Quebec, the frozen pingoes of the Arctic, semi-desert and eroded hills of the Prairies and mountain caves and seascapes, allow on-site interpretation of Canada's natural evolution.

**Agreements for Recreation and Conservation (ARC).** Public agencies, organizations and individuals are actively protecting and preserving heritage resources. To provide Canadians new opportunities to appreciate and understand their natural, cultural and historical heritage, Parks Canada created a co-operative program, agreements for recreation and conservation, which focuses principally on heritage canals and co-operative heritage areas. Initiatives would be established, developed and managed according to terms and conditions of co-operative agreements between Parks Canada and other agencies.

Exemplified by the Rideau-Trent-Severn waterway, the contemporary importance of heritage canals as recreational waterways emphasizes not only navigation but also visitor participation in a diversity of recreational activities. Heritage canals have acquired new significance by illustrating historical development and early engineering technology.

Co-operative heritage areas contain natural and cultural heritage resources which are nationally significant. These resources must exist in a condition and setting permitting continued co-operative protection. Such initiatives may have a concentration of distinctive natural and cultural resources or display examples of one particular type of heritage resource such as historic land and water routes, urban conservation areas, rural cultural landscapes or wild rivers. Each agreement for a co-operative heritage area concentrates on a combination of resources and is designed to achieve the joint objectives of the participants.

**Gatineau Park.** In addition to the national parks a 356 km<sup>2</sup> recreation area, Gatineau Park north of Ottawa and Hull, is being developed by the federal government as part of the national capital region under the National Capital Commission. It is a wilderness area of great potential, extending northward from Hull for 56 km. With 40 km of parkway, magnificent lookouts, lakes, fishing streams, beaches, picnic areas, camping sites, skiing and walking trails it is one of the finest recreation areas in Canada, enjoyed by 1.8 million visitors each year. A master plan for further development is under way.

### Provincial parks

All provincial governments have established parks within their boundaries. Some are wilderness areas set aside so that portions of the country might be retained in their natural state. Most of them, however, are smaller areas of scenic interest, easily accessible and equipped or slated for future development as recreational parks with camping and picnic facilities.