

Quebec. The parks and reserves system administered by the Quebec government comprises parks and wilderness reserves, inns, campgrounds, golf courses, picnic areas, nautical parks and other recreational and tourist sites. Visitors are able to camp, canoe, hike and in winter go cross-country skiing or snowshoeing.

Ontario. The provincial system, begun in 1893, has six categories of parks: wilderness, natural environment, recreation, nature reserve, waterway and historical. Examples: Algonquin is a natural environment park with 17 picnic and camping areas and vast canoeing and hiking opportunities; Peterborough Petroglyphs contains one of the largest examples of prehistoric rock carving in Canada.

Manitoba. The system includes natural parks, heritage parks, provincial recreation parks, and wayside parks and campgrounds throughout the province. Resource-based parks and related land-use areas are maintained for the enjoyment and recreation of Manitoba citizens and visitors.

Saskatchewan. In 1931 Duck Mountain, Cypress Hills and Moose Mountain became the first provincial parks. Now parks and recreation sites represent all ecological segments, classified as wilderness, natural environment or recreation. The social importance of outdoor recreation and heritage appreciation is reflected in regional parks designed for recreational use and historic parks as monuments to early trade, conflict and settlement.

Alberta provincial parks, started in 1932, include about 60 provincial parks and wilderness areas: Whitegoat, Siffleur and Ghost River. Other areas have been proposed as ecological reserves or natural areas. Major provincial parks include Kananaskis, Cypress Hills, Dinosaur, Lesser Slave Lake and Writing-on-Stone.

British Columbia has the largest number of provincial parks among the provinces. The system began in 1911 with Strathcona Park in central Vancouver Island and has expanded to include wilderness areas, camping and picnicking sites, downhill and cross-country ski areas, a marine park system, historic parks and sites, a canoe circuit, wildlife sanctuaries, and outstanding examples of the province's physical features.

1.7.4 The national capital region

Canada's capital lies on the Ottawa River below the Chaudière Falls and just above the mouths of the Rideau River and Gatineau River. The name Ottawa comes from Outaouac or Outaouais, an Indian tribe from Lake Huron which controlled trade on the river.

Ottawa, Ont. and Hull, Que. comprise the core of the 24-municipality national capital region, an area of about 4 662 km² with 2 719.5 km² in Ontario and 1 942.5 km² in Quebec and a population of about 715,000. Industrial development in the region is

limited. A large proportion of the work force is employed by the federal government.

The National Capital Commission (NCC) prepares plans for and assists in the development, conservation and improvement of the national capital region but does not have jurisdiction over any municipal or regional authorities or the two provincial governments concerned. Most matters affecting planning, zoning, land use, building density, public transit, parking and construction of streets, arterial roads and highways are within municipal jurisdiction, subject only to provincial government approval. In its development efforts the NCC depends essentially upon the co-operation of each municipality and provincial government.

The commission has established seasonal recreation activities with skating on the Rideau Canal, bicycle paths, and events such as Winterlude and outdoor summer entertainment. Nature interpretation programs were inaugurated in Gatineau Park and the greenbelt, a strip of land about 3 km wide designed to prevent haphazard urban sprawl and protect farming and conservation areas.

Gatineau Park is a 351 km² recreation area north of Ottawa and Hull being developed by the federal government as part of the national capital region under the NCC. 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 enjoyed by about 1.8 million visitors a year. A master plan for further development is now completed and may take 15 to 20 years to implement.

1.8 Environment

Environment Canada has a mandate to foster harmony between society and the environment for the economic, social and cultural benefits of present and future generations of Canadians.

1.8.1 Environmental quality

In its strategic planning in 1982 the department identified eight priorities for action during the next several years:

Toxic substances released into the environment, especially if persistent, can have a cumulative effect on all living things, including humans. The department is undertaking to identify threats as early as feasible. It has proposed that responsibility should be shared among governments and actual or potential polluters, that action should be taken to prevent or mitigate adverse consequences, and that public consultations should be held on the environmental and socio-economic trade-offs in using polluting substances.

Acid rain is caused by emissions of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide in Canada and the United States.