

development as recreational parks with camping and picnic facilities. (For details see Table 1.9.)

Newfoundland. The first park was established in 1954 in western Newfoundland. Then camping and picnicking areas were developed along the Trans-Canada Highway. Later parks were extended to outlying parts along the coast. The system includes natural environment parks and outdoor recreation parks, which have camping and day-use facilities. Natural scenic attraction parks provide viewing points and day-use facilities. Wilderness and ecological reserves preserve and protect significant lands and features; waterway parks and park reserves protect lands for future use.

Prince Edward Island. The provincial park system is a diversified network of 31 unique parks. Ranging in size from simple picnic areas to large resort complexes, the parks are mostly situated along the coast and provide excellent beaches. All parks are easily accessible and several offer organized recreation and interpretive programs.

Nova Scotia. The provincial parks system started in the late 1950s with roadside sites. This has expanded to overnight campgrounds, day-use picnic and roadside parks, day-use beach parks and wildlife parks. Many of the parks have facilities designed to meet the needs of the handicapped and most of the parks are easily accessible from main highways.

New Brunswick. The provincial system includes recreational parks, picnic parks, campgrounds, and beach and resource parks. McGaw Hill winter park, near St. Stephen, is the newest park — downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and sleigh rides are offered in the area. Several parks have organized activity and interpretation programs. Sugarloaf, Mactaquac and Mount Carleton parks are open year-round.

Quebec. The Quebec government administers two large park systems: conservation parks and wildlife reserves. There are also a number of recreational and tourism facilities. Depending on the type of park, a wide range of activities and services are available to visitors.

Ontario. The provincial system, begun in 1893, has 270 parks; features an extraordinary variety of landscapes and resources; and provides countless recreational opportunities. Algonquin, the first provincial park, continues to be world renown. Petroglyphs contains the largest concentration of prehistoric Indian rock carvings in Canada; Ouimet is the grand canyon of the North; Quetico offers one of the best lake canoeing areas in North America; and Sandbanks features an extensive freshwater dune system. The Mattawa

River offers the experience of paddling the same waters as the voyageurs.

Manitoba. The provincial system consists of 9 natural parks, 10 heritage parks, 1 wilderness park, 4 special-use parks, 39 recreation parks and 76 wayside parks. Some of the recreation and wayside parks are operated privately, under leases from the Department of Natural Resources.

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. The Alberta Provincial Park System established its first park, Aspen Beach Provincial Park, in 1932. It has since expanded to include 61 provincial parks, 48 provincial recreation areas, 3 wilderness areas, 11 ecological reserves and 2 integrated-use areas. The major provincial parks include Cypress Hills, Lesser Slave Lake, Dinosaur, Writing-On-Stone and Peter Lougheed. Other important components of the provincial outdoor recreation and conservation system are the large Wilmore Wilderness Park and several forest land-use zones throughout the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains which supply multi-use recreation opportunities.

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, a canoe circuit, wildlife sanctuaries, and outstanding examples of the province's physical features.

1.7.4 The National Capital Region

The National Capital Region, with a population of approximately 715,000, is an area of 4662 km², extending around the two core cities of Ottawa and Hull. It includes 27 municipal jurisdictions and two important wilderness and recreational areas: Gatineau Park (25 600 ha), stretching to the north and west of Hull; and the Greenbelt (17 600 ha), encircling Ottawa to the west, south and east. The meeting of three rivers, the Ottawa, Rideau and Gatineau, as well as the Rideau Canal, have been major factors in determining the development of Canada's capital region over the years.