

September 25, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

We are thrilled to present the third draft of *Parks for All: An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community* for your consideration. We are confident that the central message around our shared values has been expressed clearly, and we are very much looking forward to the next stages – where we will work together to achieve this collaborative vision!

To ensure we have achieved a level of comfort from which we can move forward as a community, we are having a final round of engagement with this draft. We have planned for small changes to the document between now and November. We are very interested in hearing about any red flags that might affect your level of comfort with this initiative. All voices in the parks community are important for *Parks for All* to succeed, and we will do our best to address any concerns you may have.

We ask that your feedback at this stage be guided by the following parameters:

- Please focus on red flags that could compromise the vision of *Parks for All*, especially future collaborative work (i.e. contents that will prevent your endorsement);
- We ask that you think big picture, avoiding fine details and word adjustments;
- The overall length of the document must remain the same;
- Please provide any comments before **November 10th, 2017**.

Because we in the Parks Community are a broad and diverse group, the level of specificity in the actions is purposeful and meant to be non-prescriptive. Room to innovate is consciously built in to this project – we are striving for collective impact. The beauty of *Parks for All* is that all actions are valid, and we will see the most value added by interpreting the strategic directions from our varied vantage points. This will be captured in the interactive Action Planner (page 29), which will be completed in the next version.

Thank you for your continued support on this exciting initiative.

Sincerely,



Parks for All Initiative Co-Chairs
Dawn Carr, Executive Director, CPC
Murray Kopp, Chair, Parks Task Group, CPRA



PARKS FOR ALL



**AN ACTION PLAN FOR
CANADA'S PARKS COMMUNITY.**

DRAFT



**#NATURE
FOR ALL**



PARKS FOR ALL – An Action Plan for Canada’s Parks Community is the result of a collaboration involving authors who care deeply about parks in Canada. It was initiated and supported by a partnership between the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and the Canadian Parks Council (CPC).

Its content is framed by well-documented, existing commitments to conserve land and connect people with Nature in Canada within the parks community. Specific actions, priorities, and strategic directions come directly from the outcomes of extensive collaboration by many individuals and organizations.

Citation

© 2017 Parks Canada Agency on behalf of the Canadian Parks Council and Canadian Parks and Recreation Association

Parks Canada, 2017. *Parks for All: An Action Plan for Canada’s Parks Community*. Ottawa, ON: Parks Canada. 36 pp.

ISBN

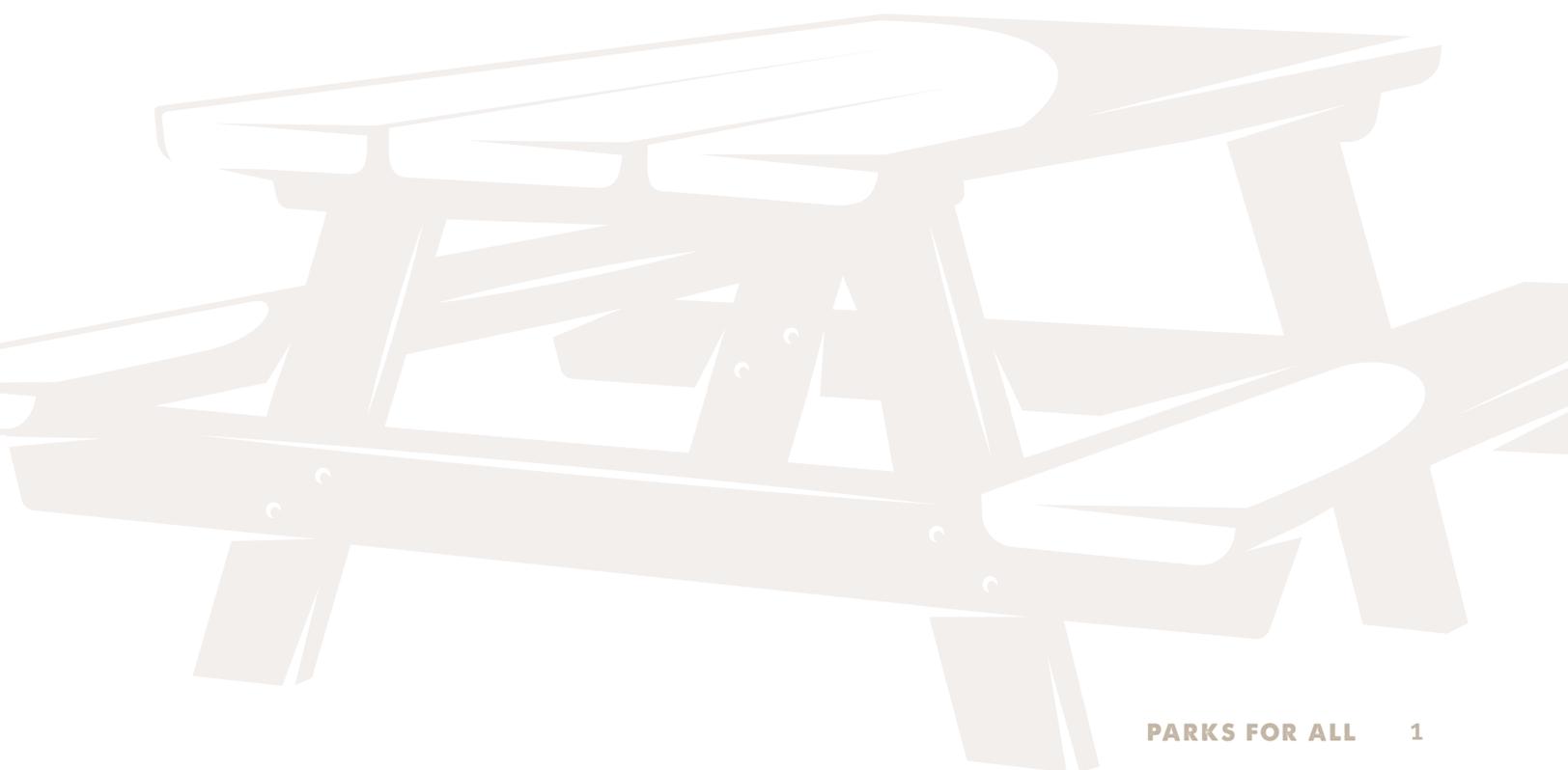
R62-543/2018E

978-0-660-09742-8



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PARKS COMMUNITY

IN THE CANADIAN PARKS COMMUNITY, our common belief is that parks and Nature are essential to a long-term vision of success for everyone in Canada. The *Parks for All* action plan means to bring together parks professionals, their many partners, and all those interested in the future of Canadian parks under the shared goals of healthy Nature and healthy people, so that we can align our efforts and achieve more together.

Parks offer natural solutions to many of our current environmental and societal problems. They sustain wildlife and make room for healthy ecosystems that self-regulate and help control the climate, supplying plentiful, clean water and food to all species. They provide spaces that can inspire creativity and energize us through play and recreation. As they protect Nature, they also protect people. Land conservation is thus essential for everyone.

Parks have the potential to bring people together into a more cohesive future. To get there, we must first open our ears to listen, open our hearts to understand, and open our minds to work together – for our well-being, our happiness, our communities, our societies, our survival, and the survival of all other life forms with whom we share this Earth.



INDIGENOUS VOICES IN PARKS

WHEN BORDERS WERE RIVERS, cities were forests, and the continent of North American was known in Creation stories to be the back of a turtle; natural law prevailed. Many nations of people lived on this continent. They loved, they collaborated, and they fought. Through all this, they lived in harmony with the land.

This harmony was maintained mindfully through complex knowledge systems that drew guidelines from the natural world. From these systems came practices of reciprocity. The teaching of reciprocity is; when you take from Nature, you give something back to maintain balance. This respectful way of interacting enabled nations to thrive here.

Any who connect with the land understand the relationship between themselves and Nature. All life is connected; it is intertwined and dependent on all other. Oral knowledges from Indigenous Peoples tell us stories of their depth of understanding this concept.

Reciprocity can be a bridge to understanding parks. Though parks are islands of biodiversity and Nature, they are also anchors of life, relationship, and reciprocity. This is the key to understanding the potential of *Parks for All*. Parks today can represent relationships between all systems, species, and therefore, between all people.

"Reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth."

-What we have learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation, page 123.



Today, though reconciliation is on our minds and in the news, colonialism is an ongoing reality, not confined to a past time period. This presents realistic challenges for Parks for All. These are positive and necessary challenges. Every generation has struggles progressing past its barriers, and difficulties are a part of any new relationship.

Relationships with Indigenous peoples in Canada require truth and they require reconciliation. The truth: the history of parks includes dispossession and violence. This chapter in parks history and the impacts that persist require conscious attention from everyone in the parks community. *Parks for All* provides a framework that encourages parks to strengthen relationships with Indigenous partners, leading to actions built on the basic laws of reciprocity: gratitude, respect and generosity. Indigenous knowledges, a shared passion for the protection of parks, and shared management are our future; a future of strengthened relationships and shared purpose.

There are a few terms that will be important to understand for this action plan, as they are used in the actions put forward by the parks community. Note that some of these concepts are still being defined in our current reality.



– Eli Enns, Co-Chair of Indigenous Circle of Experts, Pathway to Canada Target 1

They require deliberate processes and innovation to properly develop within a parks context.

TREATY AND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS: Section 35 of the Canadian constitution recognizes and affirms treaty rights to land, culture, and self-determination that were established by mutual agreements between Europeans and Indigenous nations.

INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE: Self-determining governments led by Indigenous nations. Governance structures among communities are at different stages of (re) development.

NATION-TO-NATION MODELS: Governance models wherein Indigenous nations are recognized as equal sovereign nations when dealing with other nations, for instance Canada.

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF LIFE: The manifestation of Indigenous traditional and contemporary culture into all actions, practices, and knowledge.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES: Complex technologies and understandings (“ways of knowing”) developed and





sustained by Indigenous societies, passed on by stories, modeling, and practice.

INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS:

Natural areas that are established and managed by Indigenous peoples, under their jurisdiction.

Principles that guide original stewardship practices can lead us to a positive shared future for parks. There is much hope. The land, when properly stewarded, provides us with all we need. Those of us that connect with the beauty and intention of parks have common values – Indigenous and non-Indigenous shared responsibilities will guide our pathways together. Parks for All is an action plan for our shared future in the management and stewardship of parks in this country.

“Traditional knowledge to me is not how we manage wildlife or other things; it’s how we live with the environment, the relationship that we have with one another, how we interact with all living organisms.”

– Steve Buyck, from *Traditional Knowledge Research Guidelines: A guide for researchers in the Yukon*



“There is real movement right now in Canada around both Indigenous-led conservation and cultural revitalization. It is an exciting time! Through Parks for All, we can work together to help keep momentum going toward building a shared and equitable future in Canada.”

– Chloe Dragon Smith, Project Executive, Canadian Parks Council; Youth and Indigenous Appointee, National Advisory Panel, Pathway to Canada Target 1

“Every park has a story that’s been evolving since the beginning of time. As Indigenous people, we are the keepers and interpreters of those stories. That is why our representatives need to help to lead the charge with parks and protected areas.”

–Steven Nitah, Indigenous Leadership Initiative Advisor

Indigenous responsibilities and connection to the management of parks land will benefit the parks community as a whole. Indigenous peoples have a right to share their voices and have them be heard; honouring of these rights will lead Parks for All to success. In our shared future the renewal of reciprocity begins by ensuring governance structures of parks are re-examined and Indigenous inclusion is assured. This can lead to the affirmation of relationships with Nature and all people.

VISION

CONNECTED CANADIAN PARK LANDS AND WATERS

that support healthy Nature and healthy people in harmony for generations to come, backed by an active, diverse parks community that cultivates shared goals, mutual respect, and collective action.

PARKS FOR ALL means working together to realize shared goals through a variety of perspectives, resulting in distinct practices and individual responsibilities. As humans, our worldview shapes how we see, learn, speak, and hear—how we interact with each other, with other species, and with the land. The parks community is built on the essential acceptance of this truth. Though our perspectives may vary, we are all Nature, and that connects us. We all benefit from healthy parks and natural areas and the quality of life they provide.



Facts in this section and throughout *Parks for All* are embedded within *Connecting Canadians with Nature: An Investment in the Well-being of Our Citizens* and *A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 – Pathways to Wellbeing*, two documents that motivated this work.



FACTS THAT GUIDE THE PARKS FOR ALL VISION

Nature, including intact, robust ecosystems, is required for our continued survival and livelihood and that of all other species.



Connecting with Nature is good for Canadians.



Connecting with Nature begins a relationship that can lead to support for the conservation of Nature.



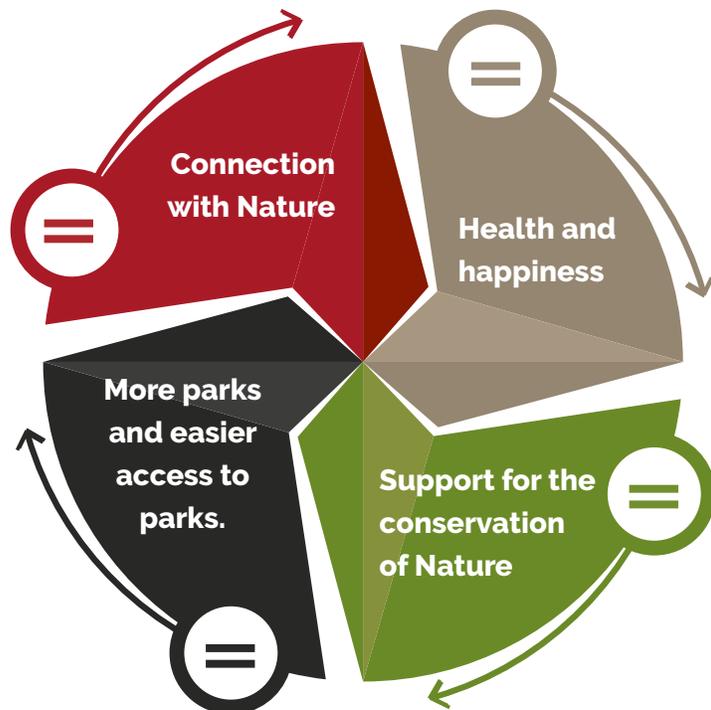
Parks are places where Nature can thrive, and humans can connect with the land.



Connected, healthy parks are better for people, plants, and animals.



THE BENEFITS OF NATURE
SPAN OUR ECONOMY, our physical and mental health, our personal development, culture, spirit and identity, our communities, and our environment. People have an inherent need to connect with the natural world, as we are part of it.



DEFINITIONS

THREE DEFINITIONS are relevant to the understanding of this action plan – parks, parks continuum, and parks community.

PARKS:

For the purposes of this action plan, “parks” refer to any land and water that exists on the parks continuum, defined below.

PARKS CONTINUUM:

The parks continuum refers to places reserved for conserving and experiencing Nature, with varying

objectives but important complementary goals—land trusts and private preserves, urban streams, community and regional parks, city parks, playgrounds, trails, ravines, local parks, territorial and provincial parks, marine parks, protected areas, Indigenous protected and conserved areas, national parks, and wilderness areas. This range of parks is needed for human health, happiness, and prosperity.

NATURE – whether for the purpose of conservation, recreation, or sustenance—is the common ground for the parks continuum.



PARKS COMMUNITY:

The parks community includes those with an interest in the Canadian parks continuum. It is a self-defined concept. Everyone in the parks community shares the base-level goals of healthy Nature and healthy people, and believes that they can be achieved by working together.

If you care about Nature, you are welcome to be active in the Canadian parks community.

WHAT IS **YOUR** ROLE IN THE PARKS COMMUNITY?



THE COMMUNITY IS MADE UP OF MANY GROUPS:

Health and medical practitioners,
Media, Architects and city planners,
Educators, Young leaders, Conservationists,
Recreationalists, Natural and cultural tourism
operators, Activists, Outdoor play specialists,
Consultants, Park managers and staff,
Professionals, Government representatives,
Natural and social scientists, Trail custodians,
Non-governmental organizations, Indigenous
governments and organizations

And more....



STRATEGIC DIR

COLLABORATE. CONNECT. CONSERVE. LEAD.

The four strategic directions are tightly interwoven. They span the parks continuum and present unified guidelines upon which the parks community can act.

The *Parks for All* action plan views conservation and connection as symbiotic in the journey towards healthy Nature and healthy people. In this way, conservation and connection are the drivers of the *Parks for All* vision, while collaboration and leadership are critical behaviours to sustain the vision. Actions can and will overlap and weave through the four strategic directions.

The actions are broad and meant to be interpreted from one's point of view and position in the community. Each of us is free to determine how best to act based on our own perspective and context!



The **PARKS FOR ALL** **ACTION PLANNER**

is a simple goal-setting tool that challenges each of us in the parks community to commit to actions under each strategic direction that help realize the *Parks for All* vision (see page 29 for more detail).



ACTIONS



Healthy Nature and healthy people!

COLLABORATE.
CONNECT.
CONSERVE.
LEAD.

COLLABORATE

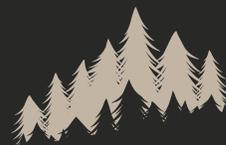
RIVERS, STREAMS, AND CREEKS

flow across the land to the oceans, touching all reaches of the country. Many towns and cities are situated on or near water, and animals are drawn to water. It brings us together and gives life. The parks community can operate in a connected network, much like Canada's water systems.

For many years, parks community members focused on their specialities, often working in isolation. While many benefits accrued from specialization, a significant quality was lost. *Parks for All* emerged when friends in the parks community awakened to the fact that the current had stopped flowing. By expanding the parks community and changing the way we work together, we can find practical solutions that empower the entire community.

There are challenges when collaborating—partners require time and commitment to gain an understanding of each other's motivations. The parks community is dedicated to this important work by learning together and sharing knowledge with open minds.

Parks for All is an attempt to restructure the relationship between governments, communities, and individual Canadians. River valleys swell and flow in the springtime, much like a network of understanding and connection. If we see our networks running together like rivers, our actions will flow through converging deltas and into the oceans—coming together to construct a bigger picture.



COLLABORATION IS CENTRAL TO THE PARKS FOR ALL VISION.

The development of **shared goals, mutual respect, and collective action** depends on successful collaboration. The goal is to create more opportunities to work together—to share our strengths across the parks continuum.

In this way, we can elevate everyone. Just like in Nature, diversity holds the key to success.

PRIORITY: Nurturing partnerships between Indigenous organizations and the broader parks community

- ❑ **TRAIN** all parks employees and members of the parks community about the history of parks in Canada, the local history of their area, and truth and reconciliation.
- ❑ **INTEGRATE** lessons from the past to meet environmental challenges of the present and future by giving voice to Indigenous knowledge holders.
- ❑ **STRENGTHEN** the conservation economy generated from parks tourism by collaborating to support and facilitate Indigenous-led cultural tourism in Canada's parks, especially high-volume parks.



- ❑ **SUPPORT** the growing leadership and governance of Indigenous nations in establishing protected and conserved areas, and develop a diversity of tools and processes to enhance these efforts such as cultural landscapes, tribal parks, cooperatively managed parks, land-use planning, and land claims agreements.

A CONSERVATION ECONOMY is an ideal wherein a society thrives economically without depleting the environment. It fundamentally seeks to live in harmony with Nature while continuing to generate capital.



- ❑ **ADOPT AND ENCOURAGE** nation-to-nation relationships with local Indigenous governments in the spirit of reconciliation.

PRIORITY: Collaborating with new and diverse sectors

- ❑ **CAPITALIZE** on the opportunity to use parks as natural classrooms in public and private schools and post-secondary educational institutions.
- ❑ **SEEK OUT** new initiatives and partnerships with the health sector taking into account that Nature has a positive impact on mental and physical health.
- ❑ **FORGE** research partnerships with universities and other knowledge institutions.
- ❑ **ENCOURAGE** creativity by engaging artists, musicians, dancers, and actors to help promote and redefine our relationship with parks, while continually exploring the link between arts and science in an outdoor setting.
- ❑ **BUILD** lines of communication across the parks continuum and community to share best practices and to build on each other's expertise.
- ❑ **CREATE, REDESIGN, AND CONFIRM** park governance models, together with governments, local communities, land trusts, conservancies, private landowners, and other partners to share power and decision-making.

PRIORITY: Strategizing beyond park boundaries

- ❑ **ENHANCE AND DEVELOP** connections between Canada's wilderness areas and urban natural spaces, using gateways like visitor centres, recreation centres, museums, and conservatories, so that people can understand that they are connected and part of the same system.
- ❑ **WORK** with gateway communities to support the visitor facilities needed for Nature-based tourism in parks.
- ❑ **WORK** with partners on the periphery of park boundaries to create and maintain buffer zones to restore and sustain ecosystem integrity and connectivity.
- ❑ **REACH OUT** to unconventional partners and organizations that could creatively contribute to the *Parks for All* vision.





**USE THE PARKS FOR ALL
ACTION PLANNER (SAMPLE
ON PAGE 29) TO SET YOUR
COLLABORATION GOALS.**

CONNECT

WHILE TREES ARE ALIVE,

they grow in their unique ways. They can live from decades to thousands of years; then they die and return the soil to sustain the new growth that comes in their place. Like trees, people have a life cycle. The parks community can look to the circle of life in forests to help understand ourselves.

People in Nature are better—they are healthy, happy, and growing. Today, over 80% of Canadians live in cities, where connecting with Nature is not always easy or convenient. A goal of *Parks for All* is to empower new audiences outside the traditional parks community to connect with Nature and to help them maintain that relationship, eventually raising public support for conservation.

Parks today remain one of the most important ways by which Canadians experience the outdoors. These natural spaces can elevate our understanding of our place in the world and within Canada. They can foster healing, collaboration, reconciliation, hope, inspiration, and growth.

New growth is the sign of a thriving ecosystem. People all over the country can benefit from regularly connecting with oceans, rivers, lakes and the land. How and where can we plant new seedlings?



CONNECTION AS A CONCEPT

has been traditionally led by one side of the parks community; it tends to be seen in terms of recreation and parks usage. In the *Parks for All* vision where parks result in healthy Nature and **healthy humans living in harmony**, it is vital that connection be given strategic consideration throughout the community.

If you do not usually think about partnering to connect new audiences with Nature, this section is for you. If connecting people with Nature is central to your framework, this section might round out your thinking to provide broader context.

PRIORITY: Raising public awareness of our parks

- ❑ **USE TARGETED** communications, outreach, and marketing campaigns throughout the parks community that highlight the benefits of Nature.
- ❑ **ACTIVELY** invite and welcome international visitors to experience Canadian parks using a variety of methods and platforms.
- ❑ **CREATE** connections between community parks and less accessible wilderness parks by sharing information and coordinating activities and campaigns.
- ❑ **INCREASE** access to *Parks for All* Canadians using various means, including public transportation connections to urban and near-urban parks.
- ❑ **CREATE** connections between families, schools, and parks that highlight the benefits of being outdoors in Nature for the new generation.



PRIORITY: Facilitating experiences which connect visitors with Nature

- ❑ **ENGAGE** with Nature-based interpretive programming and experiential learning as powerful environmental education tools for building a culture of conservation.



USE THE PARKS FOR ALL ACTION PLANNER (SAMPLE ON PAGE 29) TO SET YOUR CONNECTION GOALS.

- ❑ **PROVIDE** a variety of inclusive experiences suitable to Canada's diversity of interests to ensure that everyone feels welcome in our parks.
- ❑ **INCREASE** opportunities for child-directed play in parks.
- ❑ **OFFER** wilderness skills and training opportunities to urban and community park visitors.
- ❑ **THROUGH** cultural tourism and collaboration with local Indigenous organizations, promote shared experiences that impart knowledge about Indigenous ways of life. Provide safe, culturally appropriate spaces for exchange and understanding.



- ❑ **ENSURE** social science capacity and expertise is available to park managers across Canada to support evidence-based approaches to connecting people with Nature.
- ❑ **SUPPORT** the creation of new parks and the expansion of current parks to offer more opportunities for local connections.

PRIORITY: Sharing stories and successes to inspire more engagement

- ❑ **SHOWCASE** stories and successes of parks community members and partners.
- ❑ **FACILITATE** opportunities for children, youth, and families to develop and share their stories with their peers, to encourage others and validate their experiences.
- ❑ **EMBRACE** new technology and join forces with technology partners to connect people with Nature and facilitate learning.
- ❑ **SHARE** knowledge about parks as natural solutions to environmental issues and accessible means by which the public can contribute to solutions.
- ❑ **NURTURE** a culture of citizen-based stewardship of Nature by recruiting, educating, and empowering volunteers.



CONSERVE

NATURE IS THE SUPPORT SYSTEM of our planet for all species (including, of course, people). It is the solid bedrock upon which the parks continuum and the parks community rest.

Nature is struggling, and loss of habitat is a leading cause. More and better parks are needed to hold the line, with the parks community playing a vital role.

Our population continues to grow, and cities continue to expand. To act as a counterweight, the parks community can work together to establish an active, connected

network of protected lands, freshwater ecosystems, and oceans that will sustain a thriving environment into the future. Without this system of parks to keep the space needed for Nature to flourish and produce the clean air, water, food, and other elements that people need, none of the strategic directions can be accomplished.

In the coming years, we have an opportunity to strengthen the firm foundation upon which our parks continuum sits. In a time of rapid climate change, it is more important than ever to have a safe and stable place for Nature. By expanding long-term conservation opportunities, the community can grow from all directions. It can experiment, innovate, and adapt from a solid base.



NATURE CONSERVATION has traditionally occupied a large and established corner of the parks community. It goes back to the very conception of parks and is more important than ever today. In our vision of harmony between healthy humans and healthy Nature, conservation is everyone's concern.

For *Parks for All* to succeed, we need to conserve more land in Canada, and the locations must be strategic and well-connected.

PRIORITY: Expanding Canada's park system

- ❑ **CONTRIBUTE** to achieving Canada's commitment to protect at least 17% of Canada's land and inland waters and 10% of our oceans by 2020 and beyond.
- ❑ **THROUGH** collaboration, identify areas that are most valuable to protect, and implement tailored strategies, based on western science and traditional knowledge, that ensure adequate protection.
- ❑ **ESTABLISH** new parks across Canada in all jurisdictions through collaboration with neighbours in the parks community.
- ❑ **CONVERT** underused urban spaces into parks and green spaces that strengthen connectivity between urban parks, provide better support for wildlife, and improve urban resilience and livability.
- ❑ **STAY** informed about global conservation discussions and Canada's contribution to the global movement, while supporting long-term goals going beyond current park-creation targets and adhering to international designation standards.





- ❑ **SUPPORT** efforts that connect Canadians with Nature to garner long-term public support for conservation.

PRIORITY: Enhancing parks planning and management

- ❑ **BASE** all management decisions on balanced input from the evidence produced by both western science and traditional knowledge.
- ❑ **APPLY** internationally recognized tools and designations to review governance and management effectiveness of parks, and implement findings to achieve conservation goals.

- ❑ **SUPPORT** and build evidence-based ecological monitoring and public reporting systems in parks.
- ❑ **SHARE** expertise and best practices among the parks community.
- ❑ **USE** conservation planning tools to identify the areas across the parks continuum that are critical to conserving biodiversity and species at risk.
- ❑ **LINK** community and wilderness park management strategies to enhance public information and understanding of the parks continuum, and create awareness of the need for conservation action in existing community parks programming.

PRIORITY: Enhancing ecosystem service benefits from parks

- ❑ **REFLECT** and share the importance and human benefits of Nature as the fundamental message across the parks community.



BIODIVERSITY IS THE VARIETY OF SPECIES IN ANY GIVEN ECOSYSTEM.

Widespread healthy biodiversity forms a secure foundation for the success of ecosystems that benefit all life.

- ❑ **PROMOTE** the economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits provided by healthy ecosystems. Ensure these are accounted for in decision-making.
- ❑ **COLLABORATE** with partners to integrate parks into climate-change strategies and reflect the impact of climate change in parks policies, planning, and management.

- ❑ **ENSURE** restoration activities respect future change, adapting to opportunities that new climates may bring.
- ❑ **DEVELOP** an integrated urban parks system strategy for Canada, drawing connections and relationships across the parks community.



**USE THE PARKS FOR ALL
ACTION PLANNER (SAMPLE
ON PAGE 29) TO SET YOUR
CONSERVATION GOALS!**



LEAD

FIRE RENEWS NATURE; IT INVIGORATES THE LAND AND CREATES SPACE FOR NEW GROWTH AND REBIRTH.

As the parks community focuses on leading into the future, we can channel the power of fire through leadership.

Blazing ambition has been a part of this action plan from its conception. The time is right in Canada and in the world for the Canadian parks community to seize this opportunity and enhance our work, while leading others in the process. What will the outcomes of *Parks for All* look like in the future? How will the actions be implemented and sustained? We can each decide the role we want to play.

Fires can burn brightly or smoulder dimly as embers. Leadership can come in many forms, but what is clear is that our light is shining and that energy can be deliberately shared. Fire is beneficial when its force is understood and controlled.



LEADERSHIP WILL SUPPLY STAYING POWER TO THE PARKS FOR ALL VISION

of success for generations to come.

By sharing our pride in successes and moving forward with ambition, we will contribute to the longevity of *Parks for All* and extend its influence. We can inspire others—in Canada and abroad—to join the parks community and put their shoulder to the wheel.



PRIORITY: Setting ambitious examples that can pave the way for others, in Canada and internationally

- ❑ **NURTURE** healthy and positive communities through connections to land and water, and help to share their stories widely.
- ❑ **WORK** to meet and exceed international conservation targets, then share that success both internally in the parks community, and across borders.
- ❑ **SHOWCASE** sustainability targets, given that parks are often leaders in these areas, through initiatives such as green infrastructure, recycling, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- ❑ **LEAD** on the world scene through progressive and open governance arrangements between Indigenous governments and public authorities respecting Indigenous and constitutional treaty rights.
- ❑ **ELEVATE** the significant role community and regional governments play in establishing parks, growing and connecting their systems to provincial, territorial, and national parks, and engaging with residents.
- ❑ **INCREASE** parks governance research at Canadian universities related to Indigenous and non-Indigenous governance in Canada and look for positive examples that can be adapted to a parks context.

PRIORITY: Building the capability of current and future leaders

- ❑ **DEVELOP** grassroots Nature-based programs and services that will nurture generations of invested and passionate parks supporters and protectors.
- ❑ **CONSISTENTLY** include youth and young professionals in intergenerational dialogues for parks decision-making.
- ❑ **INVEST** time and money in employees for the development of high-performing, dynamic, and caring leaders.
- ❑ **PROMOTE** social equity, diversity, and inclusion in staffing and leadership across the parks community.



❑ **CREATE** employment and professional development opportunities for Indigenous people, especially in parks on or near their traditional lands. Work consistently to implement objectives that embody traditional principles of practice of local Indigenous peoples.

❑ **ESTABLISH** research chairs at Canadian universities to encourage faculty and students to lead and coordinate research about parks in Canada, as well as encourage parks to communicate their immediate concerns and issues.

❑ **DEVELOP** a National Centre of Excellence in park management, in which the parks community can convene to share knowledge and best practices and deliver training.

PRIORITY: Developing and maintain systems, tools, and resources to support leaders

❑ **INVEST** in mentoring frameworks so that young professionals and current leaders, as well as retired leaders, can benefit and learn from each other.

❑ **SHARE** research linking the use of parks to increased positive outcomes for all Canadians.

❑ **ESTABLISH** practical, robust, and accessible platforms for sharing and supporting information about parks, with options for sharing traditional knowledge. Such platforms should facilitate local community monitoring and Indigenous guardian programs to report on the condition within parks.

- ❑ **DEVELOP** and maintain systematic processes for park governance and management, including monitoring and public reporting. Regularly assess effectiveness based on international best practices and commitments.
- ❑ **ENSURE** that park management bodies have sufficient financial and human resources to fulfill both their conservation and visitor experience mandates.
- ❑ **CREATE** regular opportunities to gather the parks community in whole or in part to report on the momentum of the *Parks for All*.



**USE THE PARKS FOR ALL
ACTION PLANNER (SAMPLE
ON PAGE 29) TO SET YOUR
LEADERSHIP GOALS!**



MOVING FORWARD

AS MEMBERS OF THE PARKS COMMUNITY,

we are the voices of millions of Canadians—those absent, those present, and even those not yet heard. We believe in the importance of Nature for human well-being, and we are prepared to represent with respect all other species that now rely on us for their continued existence. Each special place reserved for experiencing and conserving nature along the parks continuum plays a critical role in our path forward.

Our community has accepted a sacred trust as stewards of Canada's lands and waters. Through this commitment, we will work together across knowledge systems with all Canadians to establish parks that care for the walkers, crawlers, swimmers, and flyers of Turtle Island, and to create corridors that connect these parks. In doing so, we will continue nation-building efforts to connect our natural and human-made communities. We will reach out in our humanness and vulnerability to understand how we are all connected and part of everything and everyone.

We live in a changing world. Parks can serve as reflections of our compassion, knowledge, and hope for young people. Parks embody a model of existence necessary to protect our planet and ourselves. With our guidance and commitment, they can shine brightly as beacons of harmony and reciprocity.

As we act on *Parks for All*, we will take every opportunity to report back on our progress. We intend to see actions through to fruition based on this valuable collaborative effort. As we celebrate our vision, we invite our colleagues and friends to open new doors for sharing.



SAMPLE ACTION PLANNER

THE PARKS COMMUNITY invites you to plan your actions for each strategic direction. It is important to act on all four—the success of each direction depends on the strength of the others. As in all successful systems, balance and diversity are key.

Choose a concrete action from *Parks for All – An Action Plan for Canada’s Parks Community*, adapt it to fit your capabilities, or come up with your own that fits into the strategic direction. Once you have completed an action, you can check it off in the document, and choose a new one on which to focus your efforts. By recording your progress, you can easily share it with others!

Action planner poster to come.

ABOUT PARKS FOR ALL

PARKS FOR ALL is a collaborative effort led by two organizations: the **Canadian Parks Council (CPC)**, and the **Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)**. The CPC and the CPRA worked within their membership to collaboratively build the parks community and the actions within *Parks for All*.

CANADIAN PARKS COUNCIL

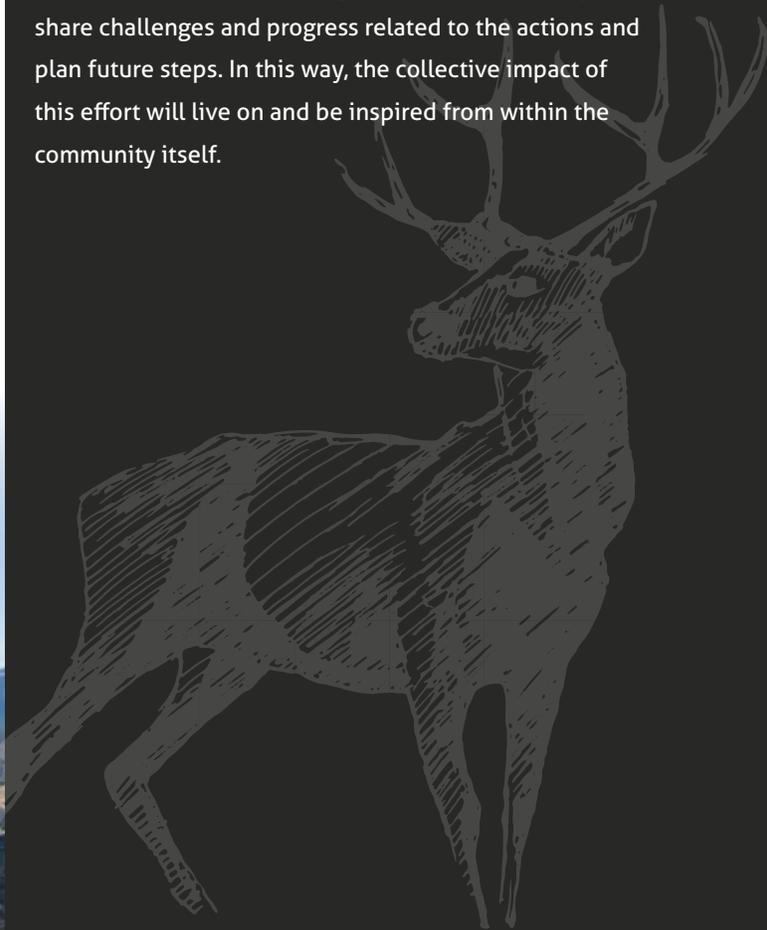
The CPC provides a Canada-wide forum for information sharing and collaborative action on parks and protected areas among federal, provincial, and territorial governments. Through the CPC, park agencies work together to ensure that Canadians can continue to be proud of and enjoy the role parks play in preserving our country's natural capital. The CPC published *Connecting Canadians with Nature: An Investment in the Well-being of Our Citizens* in 2014, which provided inspiration and motivation for *Parks for All*.

CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

The CPRA is a national organization dedicated to realizing the full potential of parks and recreation as major contributors to community health and vibrancy. Membership includes the 13 provincial and territorial parks and recreation associations and their extensive networks of service providers. The CPRA published the *Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 – Pathways to Wellbeing*. *Parks for All* was created in response to Goal 3 of this document: Connecting People and Nature.

In June 2015, the CPRA and CPC with the support of the Alberta Parks and Recreation Association mobilized the existing parks community through the establishment of a multi-sector National Advisory Committee (NAC). The NAC is comprised of stakeholders throughout the community that advised the CPRA and the CPC on the early development of *Parks for All*. A first draft was workshopped at the Canadian Parks Summit in 2016, and again at the Canadian Parks Conference in 2017. An open engagement process was subsequently conducted to reach the public. The final action plan is a result of this collaborative and open process. It expresses our shared goals and our ambition to move forward together.

Parks for All will continue to be a uniting topic at each subsequent national meeting. The parks community will share challenges and progress related to the actions and plan future steps. In this way, the collective impact of this effort will live on and be inspired from within the community itself.



RECOMMENDED REFERENCES

THE REFERENCES below can provide background to help understand from where *Parks for All* came. To learn more about the history of parks in Canada, see references **1, 5, 7, and 10**. To read about Indigenous traditional practices and engaging ethically across cultures, see references **6 and 10**. To understand national and international conservation targets, see references **3 and 9**. To expand on the importance of connecting with Nature and discover how you can do more, see references **2, 4, and 8**.

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PHOTO

CREDITS

- Cover. **Burke, V.** Parks Canada. Rouge National Urban Park
- Inside cover. **Munn, S.** Parks Canada. Rouge National Urban Park
- p. 2. **Unknown.** Park People, Regent Park
- p. 3. **Wilson, D.** Parks Canada. Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada
- p. 4. **Unknown.** Nunavut Parks
- p. 5. **Feldgajer, J.** Dehcho Region, NWT
- p. 6. **Unknown.** Prince Edward Island, Northumberland
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- p. 32. **Burke, V.** Parks Canada. Rouge National Urban Park

