



# **PARKS** FOR ALL



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



**#NATURE  
FOR ALL**



## **PARKS FOR ALL**

is the result of a collaboration involving people who care deeply about parks in Canada. It was initiated and supported through 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 lands and waters while connecting Canadians with Nature. Specific actions, priorities, and strategic directions come directly from the outcomes of extensive collaboration by many individuals and organizations.

Parks for All is meant to be a dynamic and living piece of work. We invite you to reach out to the CPRA ([cp.ra.ca](http://cp.ra.ca)) and the CPC ([parks-parcs.ca](http://parks-parcs.ca)) for more information, questions, ideas, and suggestions.

### Citation

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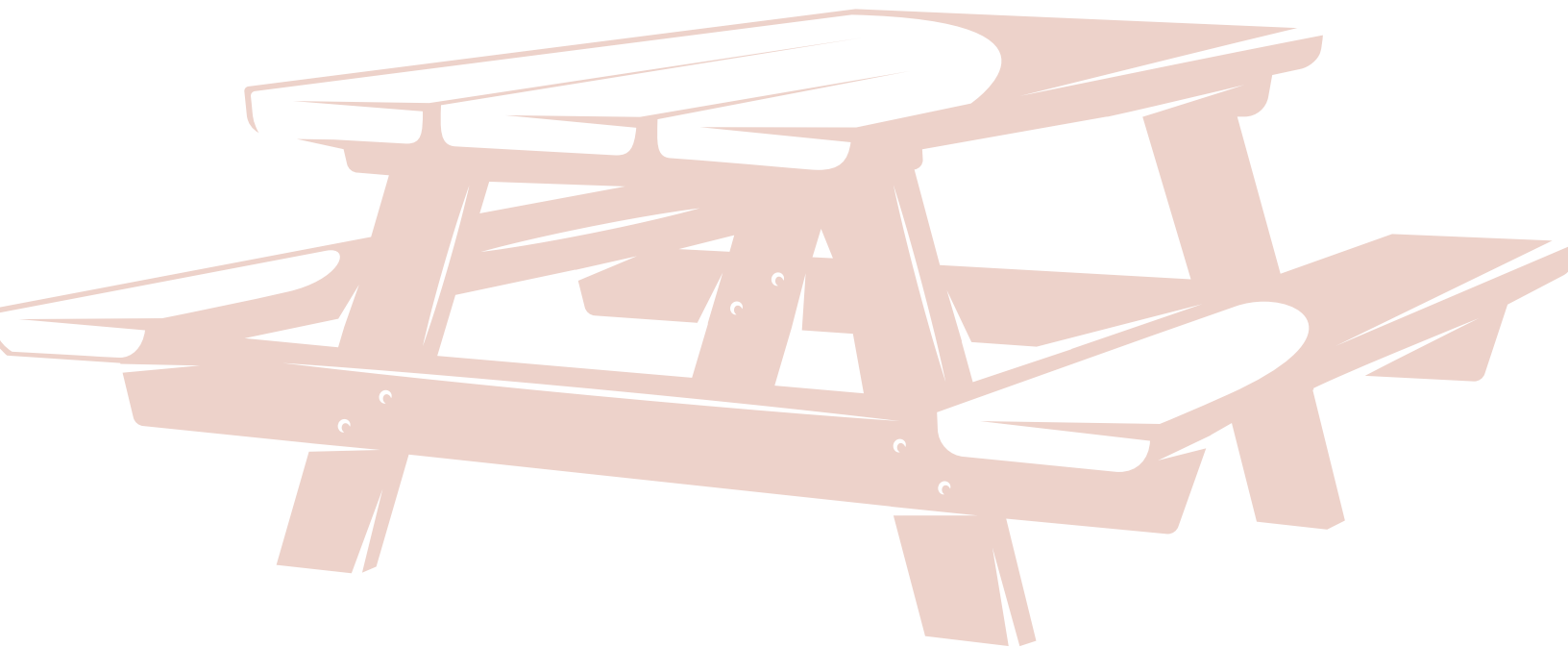
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#NATURE  
FOR ALL

To learn more, visit [www.NatureForAll.global](http://www.NatureForAll.global)

#NatureForAll is a global movement to inspire a love of Nature to increase support and action for Nature conservation.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CANADIAN PARKS COMMUNITY

*OUR COMMON BELIEF IS THAT PARKS IN ALL FORMS—from city green spaces to wilderness areas—are essential to a long-term vision of success for everyone in Canada. Parks for All means to bring together parks professionals, their many partners, and engaged citizens under the shared goal of healthy Nature and healthy people, so that we can align our efforts and achieve more together.*

**W**e believe our future lies in sustainable communities wherein society thrives economically without depleting the environment. We can live in harmony with Nature while continuing to benefit from our relationship with the land and generating capital.

Parks offer natural solutions to many of our current environmental and societal problems. They sustain animals 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. Parks act as a shelter for Nature, and we are all part of Nature. We can connect with ourselves there.

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





**"N"**

*Did you notice the uppercase "N"? Spelling Nature with a capital reminds us of its importance as the one thing that connects us all, and what that means for our relationship with parks. When you see this capital letter, remember that you too are Nature.*

# 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. For those who want to delve deeper into these issues, a list of helpful and related references appears on page 35.





## FACTS GUIDING THE PARKS FOR ALL VISION

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

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Connecting with Nature is good for Canadians, for personal, community, and societal enrichment.

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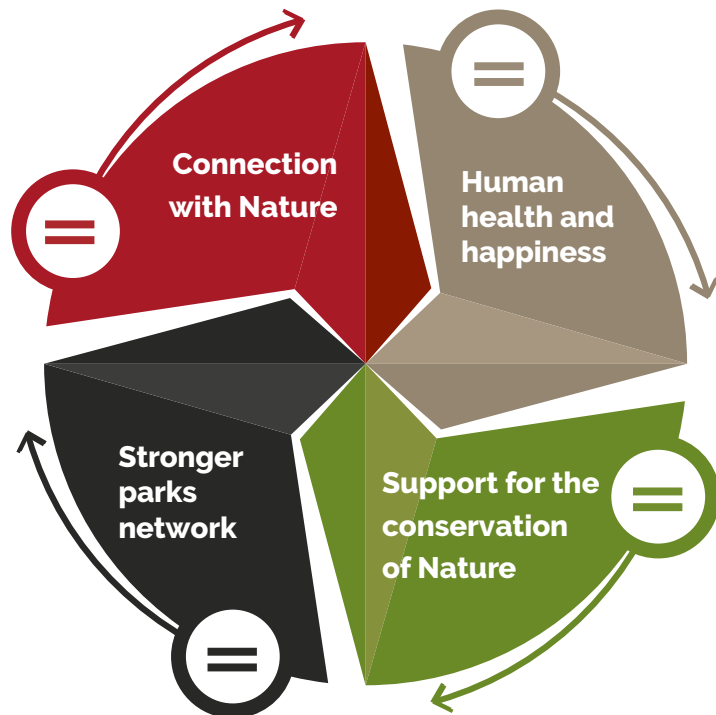
Connecting with Nature begins a relationship that can lead to support for the conservation of Nature.

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

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



# DEFINITIONS

Three definitions are relevant to the understanding of this action plan: **PARKS CONTINUUM**, **PARKS**, and **PARKS COMMUNITY**.

## 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, migratory bird sanctuaries, biosphere reserves, Indigenous protected and conserved areas, national parks, and wilderness areas.

Having this full range of parks is essential to promote human health, happiness, and prosperity. Nature—whether for conservation, recreation, or sustenance—is the common ground for the parks continuum.





## PARKS

We refer to "parks" as any land and water that exists on 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 baseline goals of healthy Nature and healthy people, and believes that they can be achieved by working together.



# THE PARKS CONTINUUM



# WHO CAN BE PART OF THE PARKS COMMUNITY?

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





## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE PARKS COMMUNITY?

# THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIGENOUS VOICES IN PARKS

*WHEN BORDERS WERE RIVERS, cities were forests, and the continent of North America was known in Creation stories to be the back of a turtle, natural and Indigenous law prevailed. Many nations lived on this continent. They loved, they collaborated, and they were sometimes rivals. Through all this, they lived in a balanced relationship with the land.*

This balance 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 as follows: when you take from Nature, you give something back to maintain harmony. This respectful way of interacting enabled nations to thrive here.



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



*“Reconciliation will never occur unless we are also reconciled with the earth.”*

— *What we have learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, page 123



Anyone who connects with the land understands the relationship they have with Nature. All life is connected; it is intertwined and interdependent on all others. Through oral traditions and knowledge, Indigenous peoples tell us stories of their depth of understanding of this concept.

Reciprocity can be a bridge to understanding parks and our work in the parks community. Though parks are islands of biodiversity and Nature, they are also anchors of life, relationships, economies, 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.

**Parks for All provides a framework that encourages parks at all levels to strengthen relationships with Indigenous peoples, leading to actions built on the basic and effective principles of reciprocity: gratitude, respect, and generosity.**

Relationships between First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada require truth as well as reconciliation. The truth is that the history of parks across the continuum includes denial, dispossession, and violence. This chapter in our history and the impacts that persist demand the conscious attention from everyone within the parks community.

Today, though reconciliation is on our minds and in the news, colonialism is an ongoing reality not confined to a past time. It presents positive and necessary challenges for Parks for All. A few terms will be helpful to develop some mutual understanding. Some of these concepts are still being defined in our current reality. They require deliberate processes and innovation to properly develop within a parks context.

**INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and treaty rights to land, culture, and self-determination that, in some cases, have been established by agreement between settlers and Indigenous nations. Rights and responsibilities are affirmed in other instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**NATION-TO-NATION RELATIONSHIPS:** Governance models wherein the sovereignty of Indigenous nations is recognized when dealing with other nations, Canada for instance.

*“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*





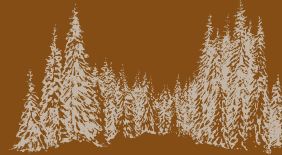
**INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE:** Self-determining governments led by Indigenous nations. Governance structures among communities are at different stages of (re)development.

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

**INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS:** Complex technologies and understandings (“ways of knowing”) developed and sustained by Indigenous societies, passed on by stories, modelling, and practice.

**INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS:** Lands and waters where Indigenous governments and peoples lead in conserving culture and ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems.

We have plenty of reasons to hope. Principles that guide original stewardship practices can lead us to a positive shared future for parks. Those of us who connect with the beauty and intention of parks have common values— Indigenous and non-Indigenous shared responsibilities can open common pathways to the success of Parks for All and the affirmation of relationships with Nature and among ourselves.

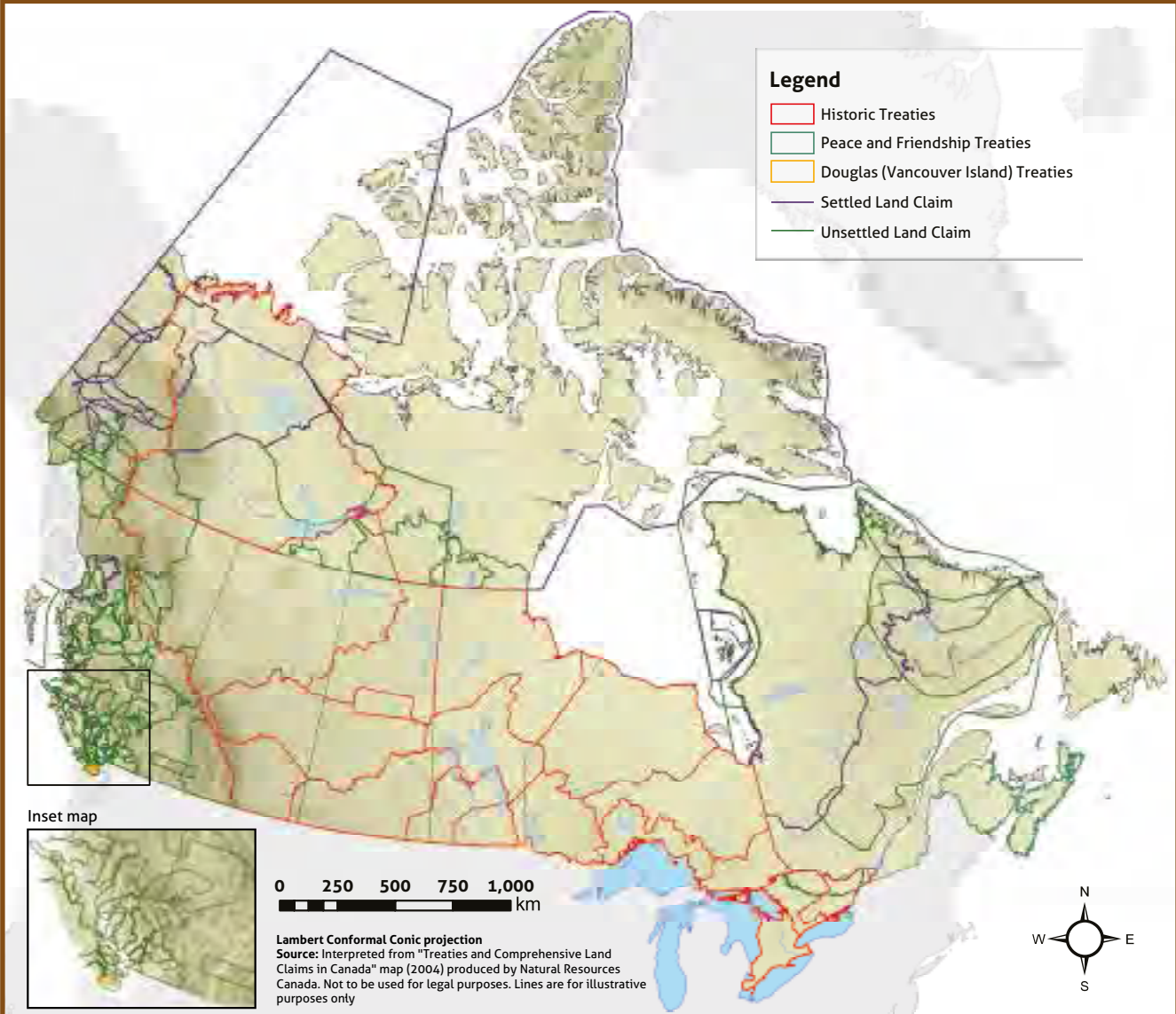


*“There is real movement right now in Canada around both Indigenous-led conservation and cultural revitalization. It is an exciting time! Through Parks for All, we can work together to help keep momentum going toward building a shared and equitable future in Canada.”*

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

To arrive at this shared future, we must restore balance. The renewal of reciprocity begins by ensuring Indigenous leadership and inclusion at all levels in the parks community.

This map of treaties and land claims shows how the boundaries of traditional territories of Canada's many Indigenous nations have something in common. They follow natural contours of the land, like rivers and mountains. Such is the power of natural law and Indigenous law. The environment guides them; they stem from worldviews centered on the rhythms of the land. These boundaries show a way of life that has shaped our country for many thousands of years.



These treaty and land claim areas represent the traditional territories of 110 Indigenous nations in Canada. Where do you fit on this map?

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

# COLLABORATE. CONNECT.

*THE FOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS are tightly interwoven. They span the parks continuum and present unified guidelines upon which the parks community can act.*

**T**he Parks for All action plan views conservation and connection as symbiotic in the journey towards healthy Nature and healthy people, and seeks to redefine how they can complement each other in practice.

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 that help realize the Parks for All vision and our mutual goals.  
(See page 33 for more details.)





CONSERVE. LEAD.



Healthy Nature and Healthy People!

COLLABORATE.  
CONNECT.  
CONSERVE.  
LEAD.

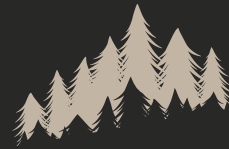
# COLLABORATE

*RIVERS, STREAMS, AND CREEKS flow across the land to the oceans, touching all reaches of the country. Many towns and cities lie 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 specialties, 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 us all.

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

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 Indigenous history of parks in Canada, the local history of their area, and the importance of continued truth on the path to reconciliation and shared vision moving forward.
- ❑ **INTEGRATE** lessons from the past to meet environmental challenges of the present and future by giving voice to Indigenous knowledge holders.
- ❑ **STRENGTHEN** sustainable economies generated from parks tourism by collaborating to support and facilitate Indigenous-led cultural tourism across the parks continuum.



- ❑ **SUPPORT** the growing leadership, governance, and management of Indigenous nations in parks across the continuum, and develop a diversity of tools and processes to enhance these efforts.
- ❑ **RESPECT 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.
- ❑ **ENHANCE** initiatives and partnerships with the health sector taking into account that Nature has a positive impact on mental and physical health.
- ❑ **PARTNER** with the tourism sector to increase economic benefits from parks.
- ❑ **CONTINUE FORGING** 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** more 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.
- ❑ **TEAM UP** 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 ACTION PLANNER  
to set your collaboration goals  
(sample on page 33).**

# CONNECT

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

**W**e are all Nature—people in Nature are healthy, happy, and growing. Natural spaces can foster healing, collaboration, reconciliation, hope, inspiration, and growth. A goal of Parks for All is to empower new audiences outside the traditional parks community to grow their relationships with Nature.

Today, over 80% of Canadians live in cities, where connecting with Nature is not always easy or convenient, and parks today remain one of the most important ways by which Canadians experience the outdoors. Connecting with Nature can include participating in interpretation and conservation activities or common community recreation activities, such as sporting events in urban park settings; we all have our way.

New growth is the sign of a thriving ecosystem. People everywhere can benefit from regularly connecting with oceans, rivers, lakes and the land. Economies can flourish. 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 and business communities that highlight the benefits of Nature.
- ❑ **INVITE AND WELCOME** international visitors to experience Canadian parks using a variety of methods and platforms.
- ❑ **INTEGRATE** indoor and outdoor public spaces by blurring the transition between each and introducing Nature into non-traditional spaces such as rooftops, boulevards, and living walls.
- ❑ **FORGE** connections between community parks and less accessible wilderness parks by sharing information and coordinating activities and campaigns.
- ❑ **INCREASE** access to Nature for all Canadians using various means, including public transportation connections to urban and near-urban parks.
- ❑ **CREATE** families, schools, and parks that highlight the benefits of being outdoors in Nature for young people.



**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.

□ **PROVIDE** a variety of recreational, interpretive, and creative 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.

□ **PROMOTE** cultural tourism and collaboration with local Indigenous peoples to provide experiences that share Indigenous ways of life, with the goal of deepening connection for non-Indigenous visitors.



**Use the ACTION PLANNER  
to set your connection goals  
(sample on page 33).**





❑ **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, social, and economic issues that every Canadian can be a part of.

❑ **NURTURE** a culture of citizen-based stewardship of Nature by recruiting, educating, and empowering volunteers.



# CONSERVE

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

Today, Nature is struggling, and loss of space is a leading cause. More and better parks are needed, with the parks community playing a vital role.

Our population continues to grow, and so does urban development. As part of a balanced solution, the parks community can work together to establish a connected network of lands, freshwater ecosystems, and oceans that

will sustain a thriving environment into the future. In a time of rapid climate change, it is more important than ever to conserve safe and stable places for Nature to flourish and produce the clean air, water, food, and other elements that people need.

In the coming years, we have an opportunity to strengthen the firm foundation upon which our parks continuum sits. By expanding long-term conservation opportunities, the community can grow from all directions. It can experiment, innovate, and adapt from a solid base.



## 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.

To achieve success, 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 go beyond.
- ❑ **COLLABORATE** to identify valuable areas, and implement tailored strategies, based on western science and various sources of traditional knowledge, to ensure sound conservation.
- ❑ **ESTABLISH** new parks of all kinds 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.
- ❑ **SUPPORT** efforts that connect Canadians with Nature to garner long-term public support for conservation. Share knowledge about how Nature can bolster individual and community health and well-being.



## **PRIORITY: Enhancing parks planning and management**

- ❑ **INFORM** management decisions with balanced input from the evidence produced by the wellspring of 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 to include conservation actions in the programming of existing urban parks.



## **BIODIVERSITY**

**is the variety of life on Earth**  
—like the many species in  
an ecosystem and the range  
of ecosystems within a  
single landscape. It is the  
foundation of all life.

## **PRIORITY: Enhancing ecosystem service benefits from parks**

- ❑ **REFLECT** and share the importance of the benefits that Nature provides to humans as the fundamental message across the parks community.
- ❑ **CHAMPION** the economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits provided by healthy ecosystems. Ensure these are accounted for in decision-making as contributing to stronger economies.

- ❑ **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 park system strategy for Canada, drawing connections and relationships across the parks community.



**Use the ACTION PLANNER  
to set your conservation goals  
(sample on page 33).**



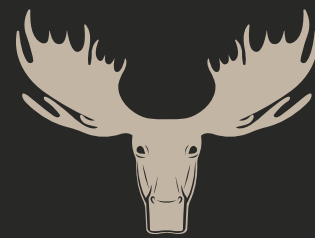
# LEAD

**FIRE RENEWS NATURE.** *It invigorates the land and creates space for new growth and rebirth.*

**A**s 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.



## LEADERSHIP

will supply staying power  
to the Parks for All vision  
**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 motivate 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, sharing 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 Aboriginal and 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 park context.

### **PRIORITY: Building the capability of current and future leaders**

- ❑ **DEVELOP** grassroots Nature-based programs and services, as well as special events to attract various audiences, to nurture generations of invested and passionate parks supporters.
- ❑ **INCLUDE** as a matter of course 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.



- ❑ **SUPPORT** and help create opportunities for economic diversification and professional development for Indigenous peoples, especially in parks on or near their traditional lands.
- ❑ **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.
- ❑ **GENERATE** and share research that establishes a link between conservation and connection with Nature and better outcomes for all Canadians.
- ❑ **ESTABLISH** practical, robust, and accessible platforms for sharing and supporting information about parks, with options for sharing all forms of traditional knowledge. Such platforms should facilitate local community monitoring and Indigenous guardian programs to report on the condition of 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 holistic Parks for All mandates that include reconciliation, conservation, culture, and economic development.
- ❑ **CREATE** regular opportunities to gather the parks community in whole or in part to report on the momentum of Parks for All.



**Use the ACTION PLANNER  
to set your leadership goals  
(sample on page 33).**



# MOVING FORWARD

**AS MEMBERS OF THE PARKS COMMUNITY,** we carry the voices of millions of Canadians. Our community has accepted the 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; part of everything and everyone in Nature.

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 for 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 share our progress. We intend to see actions through to fruition. As we celebrate our vision, we invite our colleagues and friends to open new doors for relationship building, wherever we can.



# SAMPLE ACTION PLANNER

**THE PARKS COMMUNITY** invites you to plan actions for each strategic direction. **The success of each direction depends on the strength of the others, so we try to act on all four together.** As in all successful systems, balance and diversity are key.

To use the Action Planner, print a copy or make your own, and let it guide you towards mutual parks community goals and collective action.

Remember, the actions are broad and meant to be interpreted from your point of view and position in the community. Each of us knows how best to act based on our own perspective and context.



# 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 unite the parks community and build the actions within Parks for All.

## CANADIAN PARKS COUNCIL

The CPC provides a Canada-wide forum for information sharing and collaborative action on parks 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 conserving Nature. 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

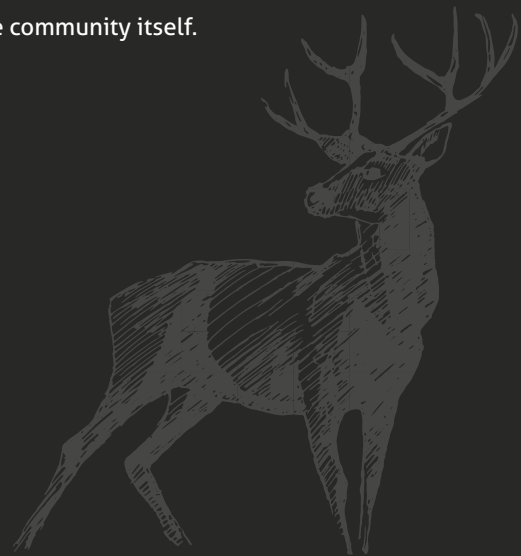
The CPRA is a national organization dedicated to realizing the full potential of parks and recreation as major contributors to individual and community health and vibrancy. Membership includes the 13 provincial and territorial parks and recreation associations and their extensive networks of service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

A public engagement process was subsequently conducted. 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 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.



*"Quebec develops its own network of parks on its territory and it determines its own policies and priorities in this area. Therefore, although Quebec shares many of the principles underlying the Parks for All initiative, it will not participate in the deployment and implementation of this initiative as part of this action plan. Québec will, however, continue to share and exchange information with other governments regarding, among other things, best practices in the administration and promotion of parks."*



# RECOMMENDED REFERENCES

**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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10. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 1 Origins to 1939*. Chapter 4. McGill-Queen's University Press.

# PHOTO

# CREDITS

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