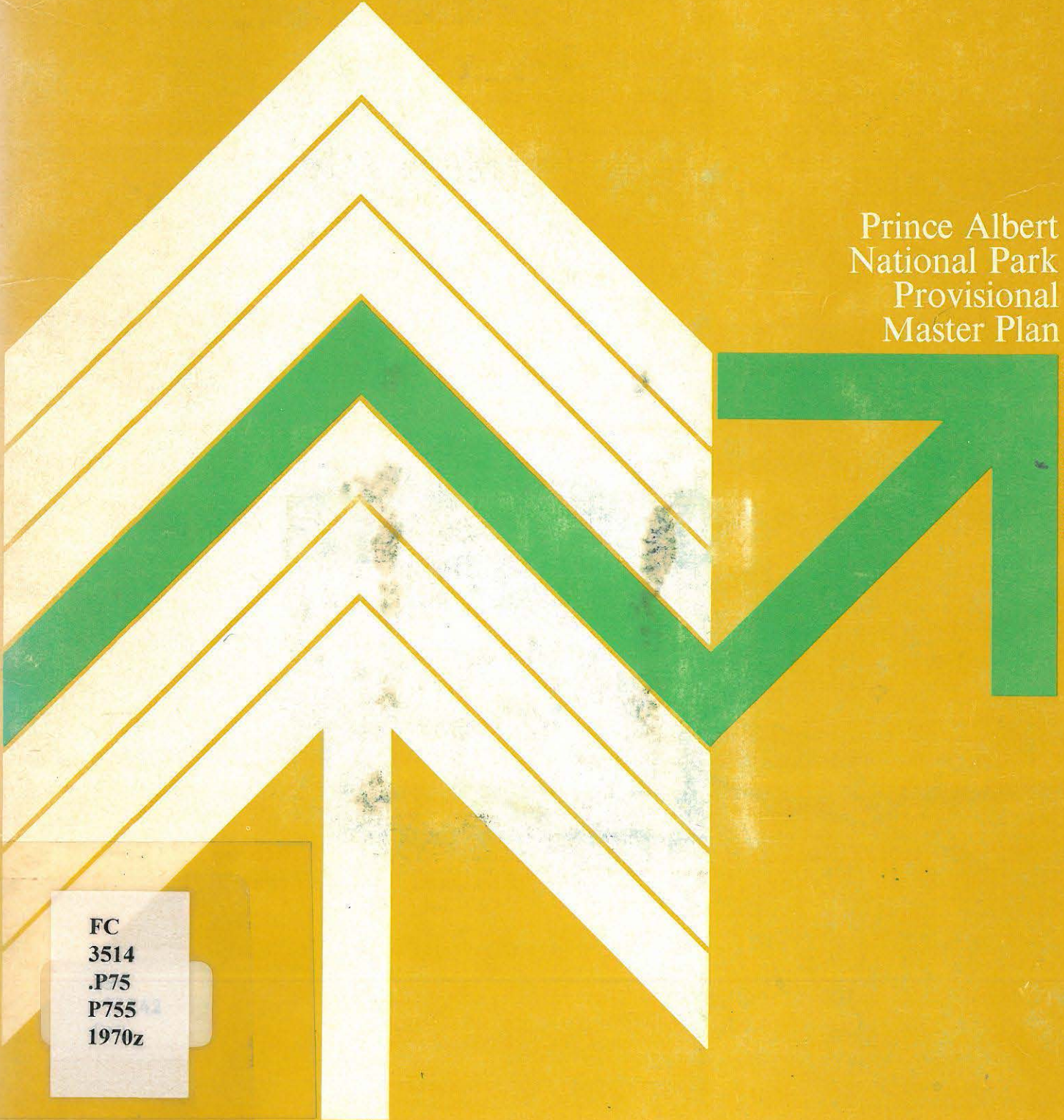


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Prince Albert
National Park
Provisional
Master Plan

Public Hearings on Provisional
Master Plans for
Canada's National Parks



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Contents



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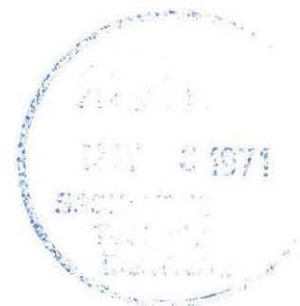
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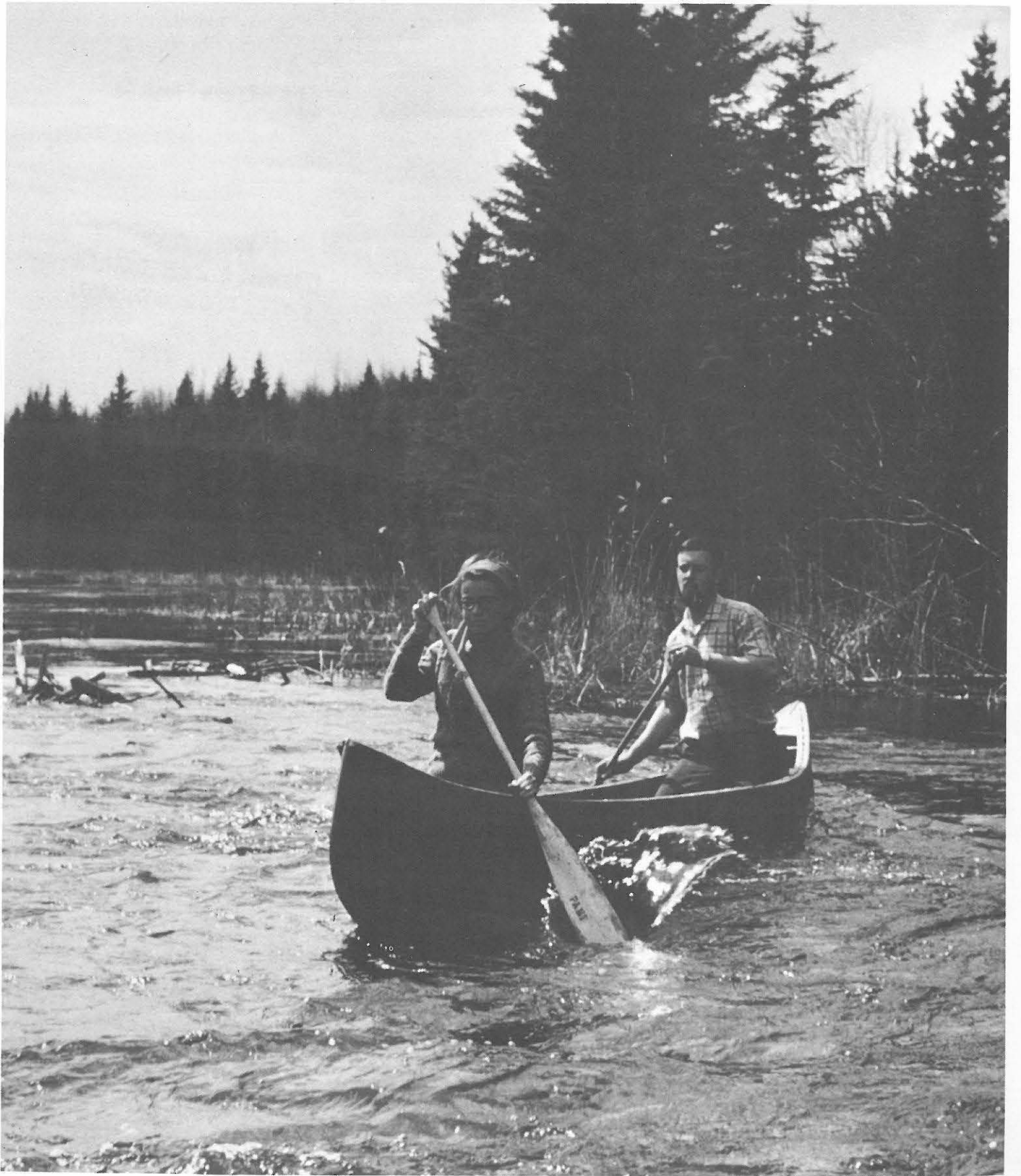
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.P75
P765
19702

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
National Parks Act	4
National Parks Policy	4
Purpose of Prince Albert National Park	4
Summary of Proposals	5
Part I – Background	5
Regional setting	5
History	5
Present development	7
Present use	7
Natural resources	8
Climate	8
Topography and geomorphology	8
Soils	8
Vegetation	8
Mammals	9
Fish	10
Birds	10
Part II – The Land-use Plan	11
Plan objectives	11
Concept	11
Zoning	11
Purpose of zoning	11
Zoning criteria	11
Definitions and examples of land-use classes	12
Land-use classification summary	15
Part III – The Park Program	16
Resource conservation	16
Plants	16
Animals	17
Conservation and the wardens	17
Environmental protection	17
Interpretation	18
Interpretive process	18
Interpretive theme	18
Interpretation facilities	19
Interpretive literature	19
Development	19
Criteria and guidelines for development	19
Access and circulation	19
Trails and footpaths	20
Boating	20
Campground development summary	21
Visitor accommodation	21
Campgrounds	21
Guidelines for campground development	21
Campground location and capacities	21
Group camping	21
Primitive shelters	21
Future campground construction	21

Outdoor activities	21
Winter recreation	22
Park boundaries	22
Future Planning Studies	23
Bibliography	24

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Canoeing on the Waskesiu River.

“Of the great system of public reservations set aside in our National Parks, we as Canadians may be justly proud. They are preserving for future generations typical examples of our original Canada and providing for the people of to-day vast playgrounds of unspoiled nature where wild animal and plant life is protected and where people are free to camp and fish and enjoy those healing and vitalizing influences of Nature which in our increasingly strenuous and industrialized life become more and more necessary to well-being.

The latest addition to this system is the Prince Albert National Park, which sets aside a typical example of that rich lake and woodland region lying in the northern part of the Province of Saskatchewan. Rich in historic interest and the romance of the early days of pioneer exploration and the fur trade, the new park possesses, in its chain of beautiful lakes and streams, opportunities for giving health and enjoyment to thousands while as the gateway to that vast maze of waterways stretching away to two oceans, it seems destined to become a region presenting an irresistible lure to the canoeist and lover of the wilds.”

W.L. MacKenzie King,
(From Foreword to the first
Park Guide, 1928.)

The late Prime Minister MacKenzie King was the Member of Parliament for Prince Albert in 1927 when Prince Albert National Park was created by the transfer of Sturgeon River Forest Reserve land to the then Department of the Interior.)

This provisional master plan is an assessment of Prince Albert National Park in its present state and as it may appear in the future. Its purpose is to facilitate discussion and evaluation of the future preservation, development and operation of the park.

The provisional plan is the first phase in a continuing planning process. Some aspects of it may change as new information becomes available; however, it will provide the foundation for establishing detailed programs of preservation, development and activities that are the substance of day-to-day park operations. It will also indicate the need for additional research where current information and knowledge are inadequate.

A public hearing on this provisional plan is being held to stimulate reflection and comment by the people of Canada, the owners and beneficiaries of the national parks. The objective is to establish a working master plan after public opinion has been heard and considered. But even the master plan will require revision from time to time so that the park will truly reflect, at any given time, changes in philosophy and changes resulting from increased mobility and leisure. The basic reference in responding to changing conditions, however, must always be the National Parks Act, which has as its primary objective the preservation of the natural character of the landscapes and resources of the national parks.

Plans have to be kept up-to-date; yet, in order to give ample opportunity to the public to consider the contents of this plan, it was prepared several months in advance of the public hearing. It is quite possible, therefore, that between its completion and the time of the hearing, some matters which are mere speculation in this document will have been resolved while others may change under the scrutiny of continued study.

National Parks Act

The provisional master plan for Prince Albert National Park is based on the National Parks Act. The Act states the parks are "dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment... and such parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

National Parks Policy

The broad guidance of the National Parks Act was supplemented in 1964 when the Government of Canada approved the National Parks Policy. The policy provides a more detailed statement of the principles embodied in the Act and is used to guide the planning and administration of the parks.

Park policy, like park planning, needs to be dynamic to allow for flexibility in the role of national parks within a changing society. It is, however, a national policy and must be sufficiently general in scope to endure for a considerable time. It affirms that the primary objective is to preserve the natural character of the parks for the benefit of all Canadians.

Park planning, which provides the basis for conservation of natural environments, helps to direct the visitor's attention to the important features of the park. It also recognizes the wide range of visitor needs for services and movement within the park. Facilities are designed to allow the visitor to enjoy the park without impairing the natural features that attracted him in the first place.

Purpose of Prince Albert National Park

Prince Albert National Park, 1,496 square miles in area, is a representative sample of the transition area that occurs between the three ecosystems – the coniferous (boreal) forest (the first type of trees to grow on the land after the ice age); the aspen parkland and the prairie grassland, both of which came later.

The park's rolling topography and the height of land between the Churchill and Saskatchewan rivers are residual features laid down by the continental ice sheet of the Pleistocene period.

The purpose of the park is to preserve and interpret its rich variety of glacial landscapes and natural living communities. This includes significant examples of glacial deposition and geomorphology and samples of forest and plant communities with their associated native animals representative of the three biomes.

1. A land-use classification system, based on five land-use categories common to all national parks, will be introduced in Prince Albert National Park:

Class I — special areas (e.g. Lavallée Lake and its colony of breeding pelicans)

Class II — wilderness recreation areas (e.g. boreal wilderness)

Class III — natural environment areas (e.g. Crean Lake)

Class IV — general outdoor recreation areas (e.g. Lower Waskesiu Lake)

Class V — intensive-use areas (e.g. Waskesiu townsite)

2. The capacity of each zone to sustain visitor use will be established. Development of facilities will be limited to retain both natural features and the park atmosphere. Ultimately, it may be necessary to limit the number of visitors at a given time to certain parts of the park.

3. Four main activity centres will be developed — at Waskesiu, the First Narrows, Sandy Lake and Wabeno Lake.

4. Park interpretation (conducted outings, illustrated talks, interpretation centres, self-interpreting trails and on-site exhibits) will be expanded.

5. Architectural motifs in keeping with the character of the park will be used in the design of future buildings.

6. An expanded trail system will be developed for hiking, horseback riding and cycling.

7. A system of canoe routes will be established to encourage the traditional means of transportation in this area.

8. Primitive camping areas will be located to complement the trail system and canoe routes in remote areas.

9. Where road construction is necessary, routes will be carefully assessed in relation to natural resources, interpretive potential, scenic qualities and alternative means of access.

10. Studies of the park's land, plant and animal resources will be accelerated and will continue to be a vital part of the data gathering process. Such research will form the basis for resource management programs for the park.

11. Close liaison will be maintained with provincial and regional authorities to encourage development of campgrounds, visitor accommodation and related services outside the park.

Regional setting

Prince Albert National Park, an area of 1,496 square miles in central Saskatchewan, is approximately 40 miles north of the city of Prince Albert and 250 miles north of the Trans-Canada Highway.

The south and southwest sides of the park are predominantly surrounded by agricultural land. On the west, north and east sides are forested lands which have recently been made available to the Saskatchewan Pulp Co. for timber operations.

Approximately 3,500,000 people live within a 500-mile radius of the park but, due to its distance from major highways, heavy visitation has not been a serious problem to date.

Many recreational areas on provincial crown lands are within easy reach of the park and the main centres of population.

History

Prince Albert National Park was established in 1927. At first it contained an area of 1,377 square miles and was created "for the purpose of preserving in perpetuity a portion of the primitive forest and lake country of Northern Saskatchewan and to provide for the people of Saskatchewan, as well as other parts of the Dominion, a great recreational area." The reality of the park was particularly gratifying to the people of Prince Albert, for it had been conceived and promoted by citizens of that city.

Originally the park included all lands within the former Sturgeon River Forest Reserve, together with eight townships to the north containing Crean and Kingsmere Lakes and the western half of Waskesiu Lake, and a large area east of the Third Meridian, south and west of Montreal Lake.

Subsequent investigation led to the recommendation that the park be extended to the north and northwest to include several large lakes, one of which was Lavallée Lake. This addition was authorized by Order-in-Council in 1929 and increased the park's area to 1,869 square miles. In 1941 a bill was introduced in an attempt to withdraw lands surrounding the Montreal Lake Indian Reserve, as well as two small areas along the southern boundary of the park, but opposition led to abandonment of the bill. Following reconnaissance surveys of the disputed area, the proposed reduction was made by an



"Grey Owl" bottle-feeding an orphaned beaver.

amendment to the National Parks Act in 1947, leaving the park with its present area of 1,496 square miles.

Lying as it does between the Churchill and Saskatchewan rivers, the park area is associated with the historic water highways of early explorers and traders. A network of hundreds of lakes and ponds and streams provides an almost continuous waterway from the North Saskatchewan River to the Athabasca country by way of Lac Ile-à-la-Crosse, Lac La Loche and the historic Methye Portage, first crossed by Peter Pond in 1778. At the mouth of the Sturgeon River, which has its source in the park, once stood Sturgeon Fort. It is believed to have been founded by Pond in 1776 and was abandoned in 1779. In 1808

Alexander Henry noted in his journal the ruins of several old trading establishments near the mouth of the Sturgeon River.

The Hudson's Bay Company maintained a trading post on Red Deer (now Waskesiu) Lake from 1886 to 1892. This post, with Charles Garson in charge, was established as an outpost of Montreal Lake to compete with a free trader named Stevenson, whose headquarters were located on the south shore of the lake in 1887. By 1888 the company's Red Deer Lake post was considered to be an outpost of Prince Albert and, although it was not a financial success, its operation was continued in order to keep Indian furs from going further south to Prince Albert where they might be

obtained by private traders. With the opening of the West to settlement, the disappearance of those early posts was inevitable and most evidence of their existence has long since been obliterated.

Recollections of the history of Prince Albert National Park would be incomplete without a reference to Archibald Belaney, better known to thousands the world over as "Grey Owl".

Born in Hastings, England, Belaney came to Canada as a youth in 1905. He lived the life of an Indian in Northern Ontario, served overseas in the First World War and later trapped for a living in Quebec. Becoming a convert to wildlife conservation about 1929, Belaney wrote numerous articles under his adopted Indian

name, "Grey Owl". Many were accounts of the antics and habits of a pair of wild beaver which he had tamed.

Publication of these articles in Canada and England aroused much attention and he became a colorful and controversial figure. In 1931 Belaney was hired as a park naturalist to promote a wider interest in conservation. After a few months in Manitoba's Riding Mountain National Park he and his pet beavers were moved to a more suitable location on Ajawaan Lake in Prince Albert National Park. Here he continued his writings and assisted in the production of several wildlife films. He also undertook lecture tours in the United States and England, where he gave a performance for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

"Grey Owl" died in 1938 and was buried on the shore of Ajawaan Lake, close to the cabin he had occupied during his seven-year stay in the park. His pet beavers, Jelly Roll and Rawhide, were released to the wilderness and later investigation disclosed the existence of a substantial beaver population in the area surrounding the lake.

Present development

Prince Albert National Park is open year-round, but overnight facilities are only available between May and September. The principal area of development at present is the townsite of Waskesiu. (In view of its special situation in the context of the national park, the townsite has already been the subject of a separate report. It was prepared by consultants in 1965 and presented at a public hearing in 1967. The objectives of the townsite plan are still being implemented subject to a number of minor modifications.)

In addition to accommodation being available at Waskesiu, other areas providing overnight accommodation with access by car are: The Narrows (22 cabins and 60 tent sites); Sandy Lake (25 tent sites); Namekus Lake (25 tent sites); and Trappers Lake (5 tent sites). Park visitors can also make use of nine primitive campgrounds located around Kingsmere and Crean Lakes (access by boat only), or a group camping area located at South Bay on Waskesiu Lake.

Boat launching facilities are available at both the marina and the Narrows on Waskesiu Lake; also at Hanging Heart Lake,

Namekus Lake, Trappers Lake, Sandy Lake, Fish Lake and Camp 1 Lake.

There are many picnic sites in the park, particularly around Waskesiu Lake. In addition to the designated areas, with a total capacity of 500 people, picnicking is enjoyed throughout the park at primitive camping areas and other points of interest. With the construction of the new Provincial Highway No. 2 north from Prince Albert, most visitors enter the park from the east into Waskesiu. Entrance to the park is also gained by the old Highway No. 2 (now No. 263) through the south gate, as well as through a number of uncontrolled entrances along the south and west boundaries. Paved roads provide access to the Narrows and to Hanging Heart Lake from Waskesiu. A recently constructed gravel road provides access to Kingsmere River as an extension of the Hanging Heart Lake road. Gravel roads also provide public access to Trappers Lake, Namekus Lake, Anglin Lake, Fish Lake and, along the south and west boundaries, as far as Nesslin Lake, to a provincial campground just outside the park.

Recreational facilities including a golf course, tennis courts and bowling greens presently exist at Waskesiu. Future planning for these facilities will be related to the townsite development plan.

Present use

During the past 20 years annual visitation to the park has increased in a fluctuating manner from about 73,000 persons in 1950 to 138,000 persons in 1969. A survey carried out in 1967 indicated that through traffic accounted for about 20 per cent of total visitation figures and true park visitors amounted to only 61 per cent of all persons entering the park. In recent years, therefore, the number of true park visitors is estimated at about 110,000 persons. The per annum rate of increase has been about 2 per cent, considerably less than for the national parks system as a whole. The reasons for this low rate of increase are, no doubt, complex, but are probably largely explained by the distance of Prince Albert National Park from the Trans-Canada Highway and from major urban centres of population.

The 1967 visitor-use survey also found that 86 per cent of park visitors were from Saskatchewan, 10 per cent from the remainder of Canada and 4 per cent from the

United States. At the present time it appears that this park is providing a recreational outlet for a relatively regional market. It is, however, one of the objectives of this plan to re-emphasize certain natural aspects of the park in order to make park visitation a more meaningful experience for visitors and to encourage them to stay for longer periods than at present.

The local nature of visitation results in a strong tendency to week-end peaking of use, with 45 per cent of all visits being made on Saturdays or Sundays. Of the two days, Saturdays are generally the busiest for campground and other facility use, with the result that it is most difficult to plan for and serve with maximum efficiency and minimum cost.

Use of campgrounds is generally well below capacity, except in the Waskesiu trailer area, which is fully-serviced.

The Waskesiu tenting area, within the townsite, is poorly designed and use rarely exceeds 75 per cent of capacity. It has been in continuous operation since 1930 and is showing serious signs of deterioration. The new Beaver Glen campground, containing 214 sites, rarely exceeds 50 per cent of capacity and it is felt that it will be quite adequate to meet demands for the foreseeable future — even with the closing of the Waskesiu tenting area. The Narrows campground is quite well used with capacity reached on weekends once or twice a year.

During 1969 slightly more than 1,000 people used the nine primitive camping areas around Kingsmere and Crean Lakes. This represents about one per cent of the total camper days recorded in the park.

The 1967 survey further indicated that the most sought out activities of the park are relaxing, swimming, sight-seeing, fishing and boating. Undoubtedly such uses reflect, to a certain extent, the type of facilities that are available and that have been encouraged in the past. This should not, however, necessarily be a rigid guide to the uses that will be emphasized in the future.

During the 1970 visitor season, 12,200 persons visited the interpretation centre; 2,100 participated in conducted outings, including walks and car caravans; and 5,900 attended evening slide-talk presentations. The new outdoor theatre at Beaver Glen campground was in operation for the first time during the 1970 season.

Natural resources

Climate

Prince Albert National Park lies just within the sub-Arctic climatic region, which the Atlas of Canada describes as having "cool, short summers, with only one to three months with a mean temperature above 50 degrees F."

The park's peripheral location, with respect to the southern limit of this climatic region, enhances its environment by offering a significant yet pleasant change for visitors from other climatic regions.

July temperatures average 67 degrees F. In January they average -15 degrees F., while the mean annual temperature is 33 degrees F.

Lying as it does within one of the drier forested areas of the world, the park receives a mean annual precipitation of 18 inches, most of which falls during the growing season (165 days). There is a mean annual snowfall of 45 inches. Periodic droughts give rise to hazardous forest fire conditions within the park at those times.

Topography and geomorphology

The park lands are generally undulating, with an average elevation of about 1,800 feet above sea level. These undulations are very slight in the southwest and northeast corners and are greatest around Delworth Hill. This area, just south of Waskesiu Lake, is the highest point in the park and affords a magnificent view over Shady Lake and the Beartrap Creek area. To the north of the lake, waters flow to the Churchill River system; to the south they flow to the North Saskatchewan River.

The landscape of the park has been formed since the last glacial recession. During the Cretaceous period, some 100 million years ago, shales, calcareous shales and limestones were deposited in shallow seas forming the bedrock. Little of that bedrock is now exposed, however. It is buried beneath thick deposits of glacial till left by the glaciers when they receded from the area 10,000 years or so ago. The rolling hills and ridges and the many lakes, ponds, streams and bogs in the park today are the legacy of that glacial recession.

In general, these glacial sediments have been relatively stable as witnessed by the existing pattern of drainage with wide stream valleys and meandering streams. However, where finer surface sediments have been cut by roads or game trails they have been subject to immediate erosion.

Lakes, streams, sloughs and bogs constitute the park's water resource. Their differing characteristics present a representative cross-section of the water resources of this region of Canada and provide a variety of natural environments. Two major watersheds are involved, each differing significantly from the other. The northern half lies within the Churchill River watershed and is characterized by a few large lakes, numerous smaller but relatively deep lakes, and several bogs and streams. The southern half of the park, part of the North Saskatchewan River watershed, is characterized by many small sloughs, some of them slightly alkaline, a few small lakes, and two meandering streams.

The differing character of these two watersheds has led to the northern half of the park being developed for such recreational uses as boating, swimming and fishing.

Soils

The two main soil groups found in the park are the grey wooded soils and the degraded black soils.

The grey wooded soils are formed through podzolization; a process which reaches its optimum development in a cool, moist climate with a natural vegetation of coniferous forest. Because of the relatively low rainfall of the forest area the podzolization process is not as intense as in more humid areas in Eastern Canada. Most of the geologic parent materials have a high lime content, so that the soil is neutral to slightly alkaline in reaction. For this reason the grey wooded soils are generally superior to the true podzols in natural fertility.

The degraded black soils were originally developed as grassland soils and have subsequently been invaded by trees, when the process of podzolization became operative. The fertility rating for these is higher than for grey wooded soils. In the southern areas the two soil types are in close association depending on the relief and drainage, with many areas being transitional.

The type of soil found in any area has a profound effect on the type and quality of the vegetation of the area. White spruce is best suited to the loamy till plains, while tamarack and willows are found on the wetter sites. Jack pine is the dominant species growing on sandy soils, while black spruce prefers the heavy clays.

Vegetation

In "Forest Regions of Canada" (1959), J.S. Rowe places the park in the mixed wood section of the boreal forest. The characteristic forest association of the well-drained upland is a mixture in varying proportions of aspen and balsam poplar, white birch, white spruce and balsam fir, the last two species being especially prominent in old stands.

This mixed wood forest is often the result of forest fires and early logging. The aspen is the first to become re-established after a disturbance, followed by varying proportions of spruce which form the understory. The spruce proportion becomes predominant over the long-term due to its longer life and shade tolerance. The mixed wood formation is not a climax forest and will therefore have a complement of balsam fir and lesser amounts of hardwood.

The aspen-dominated mixed forest contains a wide variety of plants in the understory. Among the more abundant medium shrubs are the mooseberry, Saskatoon berry, red osier dogwood, red raspberry and, in drier areas, hazel and buffalo-berry. The lower shrubs commonly include the prickly rose, currants, honeysuckle and snowberry. Twin-flower, bunchberry, strawberry, horsetail, and wintergreen are among the many low herb species.

The floor of the spruce-dominated mixed wood forest is characterized by the presence of mosses. Among the more successful and persistent shrubs rooted in the moss cover are alder, mooseberry and prickly rose. The most extensive colonies of dwarf shrubs and low herbs are dominated by bunchberry, twin-flower, horsetail, wintergreen, wild lily-of-the-valley, cowberry and northern comandra.

Much of the southwest portion of the park is characterized by stands of aspen and balsam poplar and open grasslands. The area of grasslands, however, is diminishing as the aspen regenerates readily in areas of no-shade. Surveys have shown that only 25 per cent of grasslands present in 1947 were still identifiable as grasslands in 1962. Rough fescue exceeds 40 per cent of total plant cover in all the grassland region. Species composition in the grasslands regions varies with soil texture, slope, exposure, soil moisture, proximity to aspen stands and, probably, a variety of other factors. The grasslands contain a variety of



Scattered grasslands appear throughout the aspen forest.

herbs including northern bedstraw, meadow rue, yarrow, American vetch, various asters, goldenrod and prairie sage. Birch, aspen and willow are common, mainly around the periphery of the grasslands. Prickly rose, Saskatoon berry and western snowberry are scattered throughout the drier grassland area.

Mammals

Seventy-seven species of mammals are listed for Saskatchewan and, of these, at least 47 are known to occur in Prince Albert National Park. Because of the park's

generally dense vegetative cover and the secretive habits of some mammals, many of the species are not readily observed.

Six different species of hoofed mammals occur in the park. Of these moose have the widest distribution being found throughout the park. Latest census figures (1968) resulted in population estimates of one moose per square mile. Although this species is widely distributed, local concentrations exist where favourable habitat occurs such as the burned-over areas (northern sections of the park), the moist areas with heavy willow growth (northwest corner of the park) and the favourable

aquatic feeding localities (central portion of the park). Shrubs and small trees are heavily browsed in such places.

Wapiti and white-tailed deer are common in the aspen-dominated and grassland areas of the southern section of the park. White-tailed deer have only recently extended their range into the park with the first sighting being reported in 1926. Mule deer frequent the central and northern areas.

Wapiti are grazers and periodically herds leave the park and damage crops in adjoining agricultural areas. Such seasonal movements and emigration are common phenomena amongst mammals and, whenever possible, should not be hindered. Many Saskatchewan hunters and trappers take advantage of this movement out of the park into provincial areas to harvest game and fur-bearing mammals according to provincial regulations.

Small bands of woodland caribou are known to frequent the coniferous forest areas in the central and northern portions of the park. Little is known about the status of this species at the present time, but studies will be carried out in the near future. With increased lumbering activities outside the park in provincial areas, the park's mature forest will undoubtedly be increasingly more important in the preservation of this species.

A small herd of bison are maintained in paddocks within the park. Recently, though, a few free roaming bison have been sighted along the Amyot Lake meadows and in rough fescue prairies. These were originally released by provincial authorities in an area northeast of the park.

Timber wolves are another important component of the park's fauna. The population in 1970 was estimated at a minimum of 40 animals. Wolves travel widely and frequently cross park boundaries where they become vulnerable to provincial predator control programs.

Black bear are common and there are several unconfirmed reports of cougar in the park.

The lynx population fluctuates with the varying hare cycle. Varying hare populations reached a peak in 1970 and a crash in the population is anticipated in 1971. Similarly other predators such as coyote, fox, badgers, skunks, fisher, mink, marten, ermine and otters fluctuate in numbers with availability of prey populations. The

river otter is a rare fur-bearing animal. Heavy sport fishing pressures on the park's small lakes are detrimental to this species. Mink, too, are common and are often seen along the shores of the larger lakes.

Wolverine are not resident in the park, but stragglers from northern regions have been reported in the past. Badgers, persecuted in areas adjacent to the park, seek suitable refuge along the hillsides of the Sturgeon River and the grassland areas in the southwestern portion of the park. Other mammals restricted to the grassland areas are pocket gophers, Richardson's and thirteen-lined ground squirrels. Franklin's ground squirrels are uncommon but have a wider distribution than the other two ground species. Procupine are distributed in the wooded areas of the park.

Beaver are found throughout the park. The damming of creeks by this species has a significant effect on the fauna and flora in areas surrounding water bodies. Woodchucks, porcupine, muskrats, flying squirrels, red-squirrels, least chipmunks, together with four species of shrews, four species of bats and seven species of small rodents complete the mammal list for the park. There is a paucity of information on the abundance, distribution and status of the smaller mammals.

Fish

Prince Albert National Park has long been noted for its excellent fishing opportunities. Over the years various fisheries programs have introduced fish and have also stocked lakes. Common game fish found in the park's lakes include lake trout, walleye, pike, yellow perch, whitefish and cisco.

Birds

With the meeting of three contrasting ecological areas—boreal forest, aspen parkland and grasslands — in Prince Albert National Park, the bird population, particularly in summer, is extremely varied. Many interesting species of birds are drawn as well from eastern and western North America, particularly during migrations, because the park lies directly in the path of the central migratory flyway. In all, more than 175 species have been recorded in the park.

Extensive breeding conditions for waterfowl do not exist within Prince Albert National Park like in the pothole country of the open prairies to the south. Several

species of waterfowl, however, do find satisfactory breeding conditions on Hanging Heart and Crean lakes and in the marshes around Lavallée and Amyot lakes. The larger lakes are well suited to other kinds of waterfowl such as the common loon, common merganser, white pelican, double-crested cormorant, common tern, grebes and gulls. The common golden-eye is also plentiful in some areas.

In the northern portion of the park the most common birds include the spruce grouse, pileated woodpecker, black-backed and northern three-toed woodpeckers, gray jay, common raven, boreal chickadee, hermit and Swainson's thrushes, Cape May, myrtle and blackpool warblers, and white-throated and Lincoln's sparrows. The intrusion of aspen grove-grassland conditions in the southern part of the park accounts for the presence of several interesting species such as the black-billed magpie, clay-coloured sparrow and the greater prairie chicken. Other species common to this area are the catbird, cedar waxwing, red-eyed and warbling vireos, yellow warbler, Baltimore oriole, vesper sparrow and great blue heron.

The birds of prey resident in the park are the red-tailed hawk, bald eagle, pigeon hawk, and great horned and great grey owls.

Plan objectives

The National Parks System is designed to represent the full range of Canadian landscapes and associated physiographic regions and ecological environments. In preserving these landscapes, the National and Historic Parks Branch has a responsibility for interpreting the features and for providing compatible activities for the park visitor. Planning objectives can be summarized as follows:

1. To ensure the protection and preservation of key features and representative park areas and features for future generations.
2. To ensure, through a zoning and development plan, that the character of each national park is maintained.
3. To provide a basis for the management and operations of the parks.
4. To provide the facilities necessary to stimulate a program for visitor enjoyment of the natural attractiveness of the park.
5. To provide the necessary facilities such as campgrounds, picnic areas, roads and trails to enhance visitor stay in the park.

Concept

The overall concept for Prince Albert National Park is to provide a natural wildland park with activity centres located to permit the visitor adequate access to the park's three major biomes — the boreal forest, the aspen parkland and the scattered southern grasslands.

The plan provides for the main recreation areas to be located close to the major roadways of the park at Waskesiu, the Narrows and Sandy Lake. A fourth centre would be located at Wabeno Lake, if that area is included within the park as a result of proposed boundary changes. Access would be provided from the new Saskatchewan Pulp Company road which branches northwest from Highway No. 2.

In view of the many purely recreational centres provided across the three Prairie Provinces (such as at Emma Lake, Lac La Ronge, Anglin Lake and Nesslin Lake, to name but a few in Saskatchewan), it is considered highly appropriate within the context of the National Parks Act, that large areas in each of the major biomes of Prince Albert National Park be retained for wilderness travel and experience. These will be:

1. "The Boreal Wilderness" in the north of the park, including a "Grey Owl wilderness canoe area" encompassing Kingsmere Lake and a chain of smaller lakes and creeks to the west. The Lavallée Lake pelican colony designated as a special area will also be protected within this wilderness.

2. "The Aspen Wilderness" encompassing a large portion of the southern half of the park, including numerous small lakes and sloughs and the headwaters of many creeks and rivers.

3. "The Grassland Wilderness" in the southwest corner of the park includes a number of grassland tracts and is a small area of special significance.

Roads will lead to the edge of these wilderness areas to allow visitors initial access to trails and canoe routes. The historic significance of Grey Owl's cabin is being recognized by the inclusion of Ajawaan Lake in a special area and, in order to encourage access to this area by canoe, Kingsmere Lake is to be included in the wilderness zone. In view of the size of the lake, however, it is also proposed to operate a tour boat in the form of a "canoe ferry". This will enable hikers and canoeists to be dropped off at the primitive camping areas and will also provide a means of access to Grey Owl's cabin for those people who could otherwise be unable to get there.

Zoning

In the national parks the space requirements of development and preservation compete for the same resource — the natural landscape. The zoning plan, therefore, is the means by which different areas are allocated to specific uses. Five basic land-use classes have been established: Class I — special areas; Class II — wilderness recreation areas; Class III — natural environment areas; Class IV — general outdoor recreation areas; and Class V — intensive-use areas. The allocation of these land-use classes within Prince Albert National Park is illustrated by Map 2.

Purpose of zoning

The purpose of zoning is to define land areas which have characteristics requiring specific management. For example, management methods applied to Waskesiu visitor services centre (Class V) and to the

wilderness recreation areas (Class II) differ considerably from each other. Waskesiu caters to a heavy influx of visitors interested in a variety of outdoor activities. As a result, a wildland environment is not retained.

In wilderness recreation areas, the objective is to provide activities such as canoeing, fishing and hiking. Access will only be available by trail and canoe.

As more information is obtained about the effects of visitors on plant and animal communities, land-use allocations can be refined and management practices improved for wildlife, forest and ground cover.

Zoning criteria

The following criteria have been used to allocate specific areas to a particular land-use class:

1. The foundation of the classification system is the identification of the natural and cultural features of the park, their locations, size and quality.
2. Topographic or hydrographic boundaries are used for all special areas and the majority of wilderness recreation areas (Class I and II).
3. Natural environment areas (Class III) are designated to provide a visual background to access routes and recreation areas.
4. General outdoor recreation areas (Class IV) include land required for the construction of campgrounds and other facilities.
5. The intensive-use area (Class V) includes land required for the continued development of the Waskesiu visitor services centre.
6. Present development or lack of development as illustrated on Map 1 is considered in classifying each part of the park.
7. Future developments and transportation patterns will be regulated to preclude conflicts in land-use.
8. Road, trail and canoe access to highly protected lands (Class I and II) may be routed through areas of a lesser degree of protection. However, access to Class III and IV areas will not be permitted through Class I or II lands.

Definitions and examples of land-use classes

Class I, Special areas: (54.0 sq. miles, 3.6 per cent of the park)

Special areas are those having unique or otherwise valuable qualities worthy of preservation and protection. They are of two general types: special ecological areas and areas with special historical or cultural features.

Ecological areas may contain major plant types, entire watersheds, animal habitats or research areas. Management and use will be directed with a minimum of interference to life cycles of plant and animal communities. Management may be restricted to the prevention of a natural disaster or of an unacceptable hazard which would seriously impair the features of the zone. Vehicles will not be permitted in these areas and, in certain sections, there will be no trail access. Where trails are provided uses may be limited to nature observation and interpretation or hiking trips in daylight hours. In some large areas overnight stops at primitive camping areas may be permitted.

Historical or cultural features are those which have played a significant role in some aspect of human history or culture. Unlike special ecological areas, suitable means of access will be provided to historical or cultural areas to encourage visitation.

Not all Class I areas have been identified yet. However, three areas comprising 54 square miles have so far been designated. One is at the north end of the park around Lavallée Lake and includes the second largest breeding colony of white pelicans in Canada. (The largest colony is at Primrose Lake near the Saskatchewan-Alberta border.) These birds require an area undisturbed by man, therefore entry will not be allowed except by special permit. Strictly controlled observation through binoculars from the shores of Lavallée Lake may be permitted in the future as part of the interpretation program. As a further measure to ensure complete protection of this breeding colony, an extension of the park to include the north boundary of Lavallée Lake is the highest priority item in current boundary discussions between the department and the province.

The area between the Sturgeon River and Rabbit Creek at the southwest corner of the park contains a number of good examples of upland prairie. Its inclusion as an area for research under the International Biological Programme necessitates the special protection afforded by a Class I zone and it is hoped that a boundary adjustment will permit an extension of the park to the south as far as the confluence of the Sturgeon River and Rabbit Creek to include it.

Studies by the Canadian Wildlife Service have shown concentrations of wolves in the Moose Creek area. The relationship between these concentrations and wolf denning areas is still not fully understood; however, it is felt that this feature is worthy of the protection afforded by Class I zoning. It is, therefore, the third area within Prince Albert Park to so far be identified as a special area.

The wolf has suffered severe losses of numbers and habitat throughout the Canadian West, hence the wolf population within the park is an important part of the environment. Conducted outings to hear wolves howling may become part of an expanded interpretive program. If further studies identify additional wolf rendezvous areas within the park they may be re-zoned as Class I.

In order to make historical or cultural features within the park available for public viewing, transportation may be provided in certain instances where such features would otherwise be difficult to reach. Grey Owl's cabin on Ajawaan Lake, which is to be restored as a cultural feature, is one such site. There will be three means of access to it — by canoe, the historical means of transport in that area; by tour boat across Kingsmere Lake for people wishing to visit the cabin but who do not have either the inclination or the capability to canoe; and, thirdly, by hiking trail around the east side of Kingsmere Lake. In order to achieve these objectives Ajawaan Lake is to be included in a Class I zone and power boating, with the exception of the tour boat, will no longer be permitted on Kingsmere Lake.

It is recognized that there may be certain features of the park not yet fully

Breeding colony of white pelicans on north shore of Lavallée Lake.



"Grey Owl's" cabin at Ajawaan Lake.





Waskesiu Beach — Class V Zone.

understood in terms of their uniqueness. As additional studies are carried out, new areas may be assigned Class I status. These might include particularly outstanding samples of the park's geomorphology and forest types.

Class II, Wilderness recreation areas (1,136.1 sq. miles, 76.0 per cent of the park)

In Class II areas the primary purpose is preservation of a wilderness recreation environment. Hiking trails, canoe routes, primitive campgrounds and wildlife habitat

are typical features. This class takes in the largest portion of the park and for purposes of description can be divided into two main areas:

1. The Aspen Wilderness — the many small lakes and the height of land in the southern section of the park.
2. The Boreal Wilderness — the northern half of the park with larger lakes connected by possible canoe routes. Kingsmere Lake, with its wilderness atmosphere, could be the starting off point for a possible circular canoe route, which would, among other things, provide access to Grey Owl's cabin on Ajawaan Lake.

It is proposed that the area west of Kingsmere Lake be designated "The Grey Owl Wilderness Canoe Area". Since 1927 when the park was first opened this area has been used for canoeing, but in recent years participation in this activity has waned and the portages have become overgrown. Considerable work will be needed in this area to re-establish canoe routes and open up suitable portages.

A second major canoe route exists between Tourist Lake and the park's eastern boundary, using the MacLennan River.

The department will prepare a canoeist's guide to the park and surrounding areas to encourage this means of travel.

Class III, Natural environment areas (250.0 sq. miles, 16.7 per cent of the park)

The concept of a wilderness threshold best describes these areas. They serve as buffers between wild areas and more developed areas, form a natural backdrop to many features and are essential to the preservation of the wildland character of the park. Class III lands are, in many ways, the most complex to define. Some portions may be regarded as a land bank. As knowledge increases, some areas may be reclassified as Class I or Class II. It is unlikely they will be reclassified as Class IV areas. Uses such as fishing, hiking and primitive camping will be permitted as in Class II lands, but at higher rates of intensity. Class III lands may also include internal park access roads, roadside exhibits, interpretation centres, interpretive trails and picnic sites.

This zone includes Crean Lake, Hanging Heart Lake, a portion of upper Waskesiu Lake along Highway 264, as well as a section in the southeast corner of the park.

developments, however, are not suited to a national park and alternative sites are available for their relocation in the many recreation areas within the surrounding region. Proposals for the development of Waskesiu as a visitor services centre oriented to the national park have already been

the subject of a consultant's report prepared in 1965. The majority of the report's proposals are now in the process of being carried out. Updating of the plan will continue as alterations are deemed necessary in the light of changing circumstances.

Land-use classification summary

Class		Area in square miles	Percentage of park area	Examples
I	Special	54.0	3.6	Lavallée Lake
II	Wilderness recreation	1136.1	76.0	Grey Owl Wilderness Canoe Area
III	Natural environment	250.0	16.7	Sandy Lake
IV	General outdoor recreation	50.7	3.4	Lower Waskesiu Lake
V	Intensive-use	5.2	0.3	Waskesiu
		1496	100.0	

Class IV - General outdoor recreation areas (50.7 sq. miles, 3.4 per cent of the park)

These areas define the limits within which existing and potential facilities will be developed. They include major highway corridors, campgrounds and other outdoor activity areas.

Examples include the proposed circular drive around lower Waskesiu Lake, the three proposed activity centres at the Narrows, Sandy Lake and Wabeno Lake, and Sturgeon River Crossing area headquarters.

Class V - Intensive-use area (5.2 sq. miles, 0.3 per cent of the park)

In view of the park's long distance from centres of population, the townsite of Waskesiu developed over the years to meet the need for visitor facilities. Some of the

Class	Name	Definition	Compatible uses	Compatible development
I	Special	Natural, historical or otherwise unique areas	Environmental, ecological or historical study, observation and appreciation.	Interpretation
II	Wilderness recreation	Natural zones	Hiking, canoeing nature observation, viewing, fishing.	Wilderness camp sites
III	Natural environment	Natural zones with some modifications by man	Swimming, boating, picnicking, camping, riding, viewing, fishing	Semi-serviced camp sites, picnic sites, scenic roads.
IV	General outdoor recreation	Visitor activity zones designed for relatively heavy use	Camping, swimming, boating, picnicking, fishing, major road corridor.	Campgrounds, visitor activity centres, major roads.
V	Intensive-use	Urban environment within a park	Shopping, entertainment, visitor services, administration complex.	Hotels, motels, stores, housing.

Three main functions make up the park program – resource conservation, interpretation and development. These reflect policy objectives for preserving a natural heritage, making it available to visitors and promoting an awareness of the natural environment through increased understanding and appreciation of the landscape. The program can be summarized as follows:

- to bring park visitors into contact with the surroundings in a manner that will encourage understanding of the forces that shaped the land and awareness of the park's ecology;
- to develop and present programs to inform visitors about park features and to foster an interest in and an appreciation of outdoor life and natural history;
- to encourage outdoor activities compatible with park purposes;
- to provide adequate road, trail and canoe systems to disperse visitors throughout the park, consistent with zoning policies.
- to provide the necessary facilities and services to visitors; and
- to protect park features from impairment.

Resource conservation

The objective of the conservation function is to protect the natural resources from impairment. This will be achieved through the land-use plan, enforcement of national parks regulations for the protection of wildlife and other resources, management programs directed towards the maintenance of balanced plant and animal communities and measures to control disease in given plant and animal species.

The program must also coordinate the protection of the natural aspects of the park with projected uses and proposed developments, to provide optimum public use and enjoyment. The aim is to maintain a balanced natural community wherever practicable.

There are two main approaches to resource conservation; namely, the "evolutionary concept" and the "era concept". To retain the necessary degree of flexibility neither concept is applied rigidly to all lands.

The area encompassed by Prince Albert National Park displays the results of glacial deposition with the occurrence of numerous lakes in all stages of infilling, together with

glacial till, eskers and recessional moraines. Subsequent vegetative growth due to the climatic conditions of the area has resulted in the existence of boreal and aspen forest with interspersed, scattered remnants of grasslands. In some areas of the park man-introduced activities like lumbering and grazing have resulted in an altered landscape. In applying the evolutionary concept, therefore, the process of lake infilling or the natural succession of plants toward a climax vegetation would be allowed to proceed without further interference by man. Such natural procession will have particular application in Class I and II areas.

Management by the era concept, on the other hand, requires that resources be managed to retain the character of the park as it appeared at a given time. In Prince Albert National Park a number of specific features will be preserved in this way. For example, areas of prairie vegetation could disappear if the periodic fires needed to retain their characteristics are not permitted. In order to maintain these areas within the park, some form of controlled burn may be required periodically. The influence of modern man interferes to a varying degree with the natural equilibrium and atmosphere of a park. For example, changes to lands outside but surrounding a park tend to make it an island and have a detrimental effect on wildlife species. Due to the absence of large population centres near Prince Albert National Park this effect has, fortunately, been minimal because the lands adjacent to the park have not been subject to major exploitation.

There are indications that the park will become increasingly important as a wildlife sanctuary as land clearance for farming increases in the south and for recreational use to the east. As well, there are indications that most of the forest surrounding the northern half of the park will be cut for pulpwood.

Within the park, the effect imposed on natural conditions by roads, campgrounds, visitor services and growing numbers of visitors are major influencing factors. Zoning of the park and care in the location and design of essential developments can minimize but not eliminate disturbance of the natural course of events. The development and maintenance of an inventory of the natural resources of the park is basic to any resource conservation program. Much

is already known about the park, but a complete inventory is an urgent requirement.

Cyclical fluctuations in mammal populations are well known. Populations of certain animals resident in the park have changed considerably over the years in response to changes in availability of food. The present policy of protection of the flora tends to encourage the increase of coniferous forests with a corresponding reduction in the deciduous trees and shrubs on which some species depend for food.

The proposed land-use zoning system includes areas under total protection and preservation. Within these are smaller areas where natural forces are allowed to exert their influence with minimum interference from man. Other areas may be set aside where, under the era concept of management, communities which contain specific examples of plants and animal associations will be preserved and perpetuated at a certain stage in their natural progression.

The park's plant and animal communities require considerable mapping and further study involving aspects of their origins, trends in growth changes, stability and response to management. These studies will assist in examination of the present land-use zones, the impact of existing and proposed roads, camp sites, and other developments outlined in this plan. Such research will also provide points of reference for evaluating man's influence on the environment and may emphasize the importance of preserving examples of important unaltered plant and animal communities for comparison with other areas which have changed under the impact of civilization.

Plants

The vegetative cover – trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses – is a living, changing part of the park's resources. Its condition and balance can be seriously affected by man. Insufficient protection from fire can result in unacceptably large portions of the park being burned at one time. On the other hand, the absence of natural fire may result in an undesirable imbalance in the ecosystems represented in the park. The possibility of widespread destruction of forest cover by disease or insects must also be appraised.

Such occurrences could be considered typical examples of natural disasters in

large wilderness areas, but they would be unacceptable in Class III, IV and V lands. Although a forest burnt black by fire or denuded by an insect or disease infestation may be an interesting interpretive feature, it does not make an attractive site for a campground.

In Prince Albert National Park, as in other national parks, the emphasis has been on maximum protection of the forest land from fire, insects and disease. Prior to the establishment of the park, however, fire was a major influencing factor on the landscape. The vegetative cover is witness of it today. The wide variety of habitats and the diversity of plant communities are part of the park's value and contribute to its aesthetic appeal. It may become necessary to allow these naturally destructive forces to operate more freely or, alternatively, to introduce artificial controls, particularly where prairie communities are to be maintained.

Animals

The study of animal populations in the park is a continuous task. Such studies investigate animals native to the park, populations of the various species in relation to the available habitat, and actions necessary to control populations in balance with the available habitat. For example, beaver had been trapped to extinction in this area but were re-introduced into the park by Grey Owl during the 1930's and are now widely distributed.

Similarly, an exhibition herd of about 20 bison roam a paddock near the south gate. The possible exclusion of this portion of the park as part of the proposed boundary adjustment along the Cookson Road would require relocation of the herd. A study will therefore be carried out to determine whether free-ranging bison would be desirable in the grassland areas.

In the past, fish stocking has been largely determined by demand for fishing opportunities. A more scientific approach will be adopted to provide a greater variety of native species in balance with the aquatic environment and available feed. Consistent with the concept of preserving wild areas, some water bodies will be retained in a natural state with no stocking or fishing permitted. It is proposed to eliminate the present fish hatchery. Any future stocking program will be carried out in co-operation with the Province of Saskatchewan.

Additional research will be conducted on all water bodies throughout the park to determine water capacities, natural feed, fish growth and fishing demand. As a result, other management measures may be implemented.

Birds are an integral part of the fauna of the park and are characteristic of this part of the boreal forest and its aspen grassland associations. Their requirements for habitat, therefore, must be recognized and understood in any proposed park development. The Lavallée Lake pelican reserve has already been recognized and set aside as a special area. With study, other areas important as bird habitat, resting and feeding places may be determined.

Conservation and the wardens

The resource conservation program mentioned thus far is carried out primarily by the park wardens, with advice and assistance from specialists within the department and other government agencies. The Canadian Wildlife Service, the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, the Meteorological Branch of the Department of Transport and the National Research Council are the main sources of such specialist support.

Conservation is the wardens' primary role. They provide knowledgeable and practical advice during the planning phase of resource conservation programs, check on problem areas, and identify special conditions which require remedial action. The wardens also play a prominent part in public relations. They give general information to the park visitor, enforce safety regulations and control travel in hazardous areas. They conduct search and rescue operations for visitors lost or injured in the park. Finding lost visitors in forested areas, safeguarding swimmers and assisting boat operators in trouble are major responsibilities for the wardens. The enforcement of regulations to protect wildlife from poachers or molestation by park visitors is another of their responsibilities. Similarly, they ensure that owners of such domestic animals as dogs, cats or straying livestock comply with park regulations.

Environmental protection

Any development activity by man affects the natural state of the park environment. However, man as an observer and a participant is an important part of the park scene. The onus rests on the National Parks

Service to prevent over-use of the park by controlling both development and use.

An architectural motif will be established for all park and private buildings. Care will be exercised in the design of facilities to ensure conformity with the motif, harmony with the natural surroundings, and control of pollution.

Noise from machines is a growing problem throughout the country; it is particularly important that it be controlled in national parks to preserve their quiet atmosphere. Power boating will continue to be permitted on certain lakes within Prince Albert National Park, but no vehicles will be allowed in Class I and Class II areas other than the proposed tour boat on Kingsmere Lake. Elsewhere, rigid control will be maintained over the degree and manner of use of motor-equipped vehicles, including snowmobiles.

Interpretation

Through conducted outings, slide-illustrated talks, films, self-interpreting trails, exhibits, interpretation centres and publications, park interpretation is designed to encourage a visitor's awareness, understanding and appreciation of the park environment and to help him discover his natural environment and his place in it. Although the basic purpose of the National Parks System is preservation and protection of examples of Canada's landscapes, the setting aside of such parks is not enough. Park interpretation, therefore, attempts to form the contact with the visitor in order to help him gain an appreciation of the natural values being preserved in the national parks. Through the interpretive programs, it is hoped that the park and its environment — its geology, landforms, plants, animals and human history — will give the visitor a greater understanding of his natural heritage.

Interpretive process

To be effective, interpretation must be based on knowledge. Data on the biological, geological, and historical aspects of the park are compiled under a continuous inventory program carried out by the park wardens, park naturalists and consultants. Compiled data are assessed and interpreted to the visitor through various media. Thus the interpretive program consists of two essential elements — information and interpretation.

Interpretive theme

The provisional master plans set out the interpretive theme for each national park. Around these themes, programs are developed and installations constructed to interpret the natural characteristics of a particular park.

Prince Albert National Park, located in the broad transitional belt stretching across the Prairie Provinces between the Rocky Mountains and the Canadian Shield, is an area of special interest. To the north lies the true boreal forest; to the south, the true short grass prairies. In between lies a broad belt of mixed aspen and boreal forest, interspersed with smaller areas of grasslands, examples of which are found in the southwest corner of the park.



A park naturalist conducts interpretive trail walk.

Physiographically, the park consists of an undulating plateau at a height of about 1,800 feet above sea level with glacial till ridges and moraines rising to a maximum of about 2,300 feet above sea level.

Each national park is a living outdoor museum with a unique central theme. In Prince Albert National Park the diversity of the natural vegetation is most apparent, suggesting a theme of "Transition from Forests to Grasslands".

Interpretation facilities

Park interpretation is an expanding function and a developing art. New methods, facilities, equipment and approaches are constantly being sought.

Interpretation facilities in current use are interpretation centres, outdoor theatres, on-site exhibits, self-interpreting trails, interpreting signs and publications. The interpretation centre in Waskesiu will require redevelopment and relocation to a more desirable location in the future but, in the meantime, it is serving a valuable role in introducing the visitor to the natural features of the park.

Outdoor theatres are already in existence at the major campgrounds of Beaver Glen in Waskesiu and the Narrows, where interpretive slide talks and films are presented.

It is expected that construction will start in the fall of 1971 on an interpretive facility at the height of land overlooking Sandy Lake. The facilities will include a self-guiding nature trail, on-site exhibit and a 40-foot viewing tower.

On-site exhibits and signs will interpret specific features and areas. These structures will be comparatively small, without staff or facilities, and will eventually be provided at many points throughout the park. They are intended to deal, not only with the permanent features, but also with recent developments such as fires, floods, storm damage and changes of all kinds, to show that nature is not static, but rather is dynamic and subject to natural change.

On-site exhibits and signs will interpret:

- a) the grassland environment
- b) the aspen parkland environment
- c) the boreal forest environment
- d) ice push ridges on Waskesiu Lake
- e) Grey Owl's story
- f) the height of land
- g) the glacial morphology of the park.

Many of these on-site exhibits will be associated with short interpretive trails permitting detailed examination of the features.

Interpretive trails are designed to lead the visitor through areas especially interesting in natural features. Usually they return to their point of origin without retracing their route. Short and easy to travel, they are suitable for use by people of all ages and abilities. Some nature trails are self-interpreting in that a brochure or signs along the path interpret the features seen. Other trails are described to visitors by the park naturalist during scheduled tours.

Existing self-interpreting trails and trails used for naturalist-conducted outings are located at Mud Creek, Running Pine, Teapail and Two Rivers, all in the vicinity of Waskesiu Lake. Development of several new interpretive trails is being studied by the park naturalist staff.

A start has also been made to provide interpretive boat tours using the tour boat on Waskesiu Lake. This program could also be extended to Crean and Kingsmere lakes when tour boats are provided. On Kingsmere Lake, in particular, the need for a tour boat to provide access to Grey Owl's cabin is particularly desirable once power boats are prohibited from using the lake.

Interpretive literature

Interpretive literature is available to the visitor from the park interpretive staff. Presented in several forms, the literature not only expands the visitor's knowledge of the many natural and cultural features of the park, but provides him with an informative record of his visit.

Development

The provision of facilities for visitors or for departmental use constitutes development. The capacity of each zone to sustain use will control the scale of development. This capacity will be determined by the physical capability of each site and the environmental qualities of the area.

The use of standards based on a specific development capacity for each area requires that, as capacity for a facility is approached, new locations will have to be established. Thus the distribution of facilities is important to the plan. As visitor use increases, a maximum level may be reached at which point further expansion of facilities would impair the park's environment. A number of solutions are available, including park expansion, establishment of new parks, or the encouragement of development by commercial interests outside the park. It may eventually become necessary to limit the number of visitors at any given time in certain zones of the park.

Criteria and guidelines for development

1. Developments will be compatible with the land-use zone in which they occur.
2. Road design and construction will emphasize contact with the park landscape and not dominance of the road.
3. Viewpoints will be developed at appropriate locations to emphasize the park's environmental characteristics.
4. Trails and canoe routes will be integrated into an overall system and will take full advantage of the viewing potentials and natural features of the park.
5. Day-use facilities will be separate from, but in the general vicinity of, camping facilities.
6. Architectural and landscape design controls will be placed on facility development. A characteristic motif will be designed for all such facilities

Access and circulation

The principal access routes to Prince Albert National Park are from the east and the south along Highways 264 and 263 respectively. Minor access points to the edge of the park will be provided from the north and the west.

Park road locations are in Class III and IV zones as shown on Map 2.

No major road building program is proposed for the park, but an upgrading of some existing roads will be required to

make them more compatible with the surrounding natural environment. A number of long straight stretches of road need to be rebuilt to introduce more scenic qualities.

A connection is proposed across the First Narrows, possibly by means of a small vehicle ferry, to permit a circular drive around Lower Waskesiu Lake. The existing road to Kingsmere River will be terminated at the top end of Waskesiu Lake by a modest boat launching facility and day-use area.

A one-way circular drive is proposed for the interpretation of the aspen parkland and upland prairies. It would begin at the Sandy Lake activity centre and provide access, by means of the Elk Trail, to Fish Lake, Camp I Lake, Hunters Lake and Rabbit Creek returning to Sandy Lake by way of the grasslands along the southern boundary of the park.

The present warden service road along the west side of the park is to be converted into a hiking and horseback riding trail west of the Cookson Road, in order to eliminate vehicular traffic from the Sturgeon River valley. Future access to the Nesslin Lake Provincial Park will be provided outside the park.

Vehicular access to Trappers Lake and Namekus Lake will be maintained, but

access to Anglin Lake will be eliminated upon completion of the proposed boundary adjustments. With the exception of the Cookson Road and the Big River Road, access to Sturgeon River warden station and the numerous entrances to the park along the south and west boundaries are to be eliminated to permit more adequate control over the park and to reduce poaching incidents.

Trails and footpaths

Trail use is an important part of the total circulation plan of the park. Most of the remote areas of the park are accessible by trail.

To date hiking has not been a major activity in the park; perhaps, partly due to the lack of information and lack of signs on potential trails. There are, however, many areas in which a variety of trails can be laid out and greater emphasis will be placed on this aspect of park use in the future. Layout of trails will make separate provision for hiking, horseback riding and bicycling.

It is proposed to lay out trails in the following areas initially:

- (a) hiking, horseback riding and bicycle trails around Waskesiu Lake;
- (b) hiking trail along the Spruce River;
- (c) bicycle and horseback riding trail

between Waskesiu and Sandy Lake activity centre;

- (d) hiking trail around Amyot Lake;
- (e) hiking trail on the east side of Kingsmere Lake to Grey Owl's cabin, and then north to Wabeno Lake;
- (f) use of Moose, Lofthouse, '56', '57' and Boundary trails for hiking and horseback riding.

The development of new trails, a sign program and primitive camping areas will encourage use of the back-country areas of the park.

Boating

Two of the major activities in this park are boating and fishing. In the past little control has been exercised over the types of boats permitted to use the park's various lakes with the result that virtually all lakes within access of a road are used by power boats. These include Waskesiu Lake, Hanging Heart Lake, Crean Lake, Lost Lake, Kingsmere Lake, Bagwa Lake, Lily Lake, Namekus Lake, Trappers Lake, Anglin Lake, Sandy Lake, Fish Lake and Camp I Lake.

It is considered highly desirable that Prince Albert National Park provide a number of reasonably accessible lakes free from the noise and disturbance of power boats, since almost limitless power boating and fishing opportunities are available elsewhere on accessible lakes throughout the province. In view of the historic association of Kingsmere Lake with Grey Owl, and because it is also to be the starting point for a circular canoe route using the smaller lakes to the west, it is proposed to retain Kingsmere Lake as a semi-wilderness lake with no individual power boats permitted. It is recognized, however, that due to the size of the lake, and the desire of many people to visit Grey Owl's cabin and grave at Ajawaan Lake, a tour boat operating on the lake would give a greater degree of access to the primitive camping areas around the lake and to Ajawaan Portage. The light railway by the side of Kingsmere Lake will continue to be used so that non-powered boats can gain access to the lake. It is further proposed that power boats be restricted from using Trappers Lake, Fish Lake and Camp I Lake. In the future, therefore, power boats will only be allowed on Waskesiu Lake, Hanging Heart Lake, Crean Lake, Lost Lake, Namekus Lake and Sandy Lake — a total area of 78 square miles.

First Narrows, Waskesiu Lake. A connection is proposed here (possibly small vehicle ferry) to permit a circular drive around Lower Waskesiu Lake.



Campground development summary

Campgrounds with road access	Existing camp sites	Proposed campsites
Waskesiu tenting area	58	- - -
Waskesiu trailer area	120	160
Beaver Glen	214	214
The Narrows	60 (redevelop)	100
Sandy Lake	25 (redevelop)	50
Namekus Lake	25	25
Trappers Lake	5	5
Wabeno Lake	- -	50
Group camp sites (Namekus)	- -	40
	<hr/> 507	<hr/> 644

Visitor accommodation

In view of the distance of Prince Albert National Park from centres of settlement it was necessary in the early days of the park to develop facilities within the park boundaries.

Waskesiu is the principal centre of visitor activity and accommodation. Its development will increasingly be oriented to uses compatible with a national park.

Overnight accommodation facilities, other than camping, also exist at the Narrows. The only other type of commercial overnight facilities currently being considered are modest-sized youth hostels for each of the activity centres.

Campgrounds

Camping techniques constantly change and improve and the demand for facilities is rapidly increasing. Some years ago camping was an experience enjoyed by a relatively small number of enthusiasts. In recent years, however, it has become one of the most popular and enjoyable means of travelling and vacationing. The use of compact mobile trailers or self-propelled "campers" increases annually. Many campers come from urban centres and, while some expect special services, others, using modern camping vehicles, have almost self-contained facilities.

Guidelines for campground development

The following guidelines are used in establishing a campground development program for the park:

1. Campground development will be in response to apparent need up to the maximum capacities shown in the summary.
2. Campground locations and services, to provide a variety of camping experiences, will range from the primitive back-country type to the medium-sized, partially-serviced type, adjoining lakeshore activity areas.
3. Major campgrounds will be designed to accommodate both tenting and trailer camping. Because an increasing number of modern trailer units are self-contained, no special facilities will be provided for new trailer campgrounds.
4. An initial minimum provision will be made for winter camping and may be expanded in relation to use.
5. Standards will be established for the number and type of facilities at the different kinds of campgrounds.

Campground location and capacities

The above Table shows the location and capacity of present and proposed campgrounds accessible by road. Locations of each are illustrated on Maps 1 and 2.

With the increase in the number of provincial camping areas outside the park

and a better distribution of campsites in the park, it is anticipated that existing and proposed sites as indicated above will be sufficient for the foreseeable future.

Concurrent with the development of a comprehensive trail and canoe system it is anticipated that additional primitive camping areas will be necessary. Their location and size will be determined after further study of the routes to be laid out.

The existing primitive camping areas on Crean and Kingsmere lakes will be retained.

Group camping

Group camping is one of the most characteristic forms of park use and is encouraged throughout the National Parks System. Campground locations, suitable for organized group camping in tents or bed rolls, will be designated for the use of organizations with programs which include the type of camping and outdoor activities compatible with the natural areas of the park. A group campground to accommodate approximately 40 persons is proposed for Namekus Lake close to, but separated from, the existing campground. This would take the place of the present group camping area at South Bay, which is poorly located in relation to the Mud Creek Nature Trail.

Primitive shelters

Primitive shelters will be provided in the remote areas of the park in conjunction with the trail system. Since these structures will generally be in wilderness and natural environment lands, locations will be selected to minimize damage to the landscape. Where possible unused warden patrol cabins will be renovated for this purpose — for example, the cabin at the junction of the Moose and '57' trails.

Future campground construction

Additional campground needs, with the exception of primitive camping areas, will require development outside the park. Close co-operation with provincial authorities will be directed towards the encouragement of privately or provincially-operated campgrounds.

Outdoor activities

In addition to the popular camping experience and the variety of interests offered by the interpretive program, the visitor to Prince Albert National Park has a wide selection of outdoor activities to choose

from. Relaxing, swimming, fishing, picnicking and sightseeing are the most popular. Most of these require some form of development such as picnic sites, viewpoints or information signs.

Picnic sites and viewpoints are complementary to many of the proposed road improvements and their locations will depend upon traffic patterns within the park. The trail system will be developed to make many of the park's outstanding features more accessible.

Although each outdoor activity or program has been reviewed separately, the master plan must integrate the activities and other facilities (trails and roadside car-parks, points of interest, primitive camping areas and fishing waters) with the overall interpretive program. This will provide the visitor with a choice of activities or interests and make more efficient use of the same facilities.

Winter recreation

As winter travel becomes easier, an increasing number of visitors can be expected

to come to the park during the December-March period. However, no special facilities for winter recreation are planned.

Two snowmobile trails were laid out in the winter of 1968-69. One, in the vicinity of Waskesiu, covers a distance of three miles and the other, running from Sandy Lake to Waskesiu Lake, is approximately 15 miles long.

Less than half a dozen parties used the 15-mile trail in the winter of 1969-70 and of these the majority did not comply with the rules set out for snowmobile use. The apparent lack of interest in snowmobiling in the park is probably due to several factors: an abundance of alternative sites in relation to the total demand in the area; distance of the park from Prince Albert; and soft snow conditions which make snowmobiling difficult.

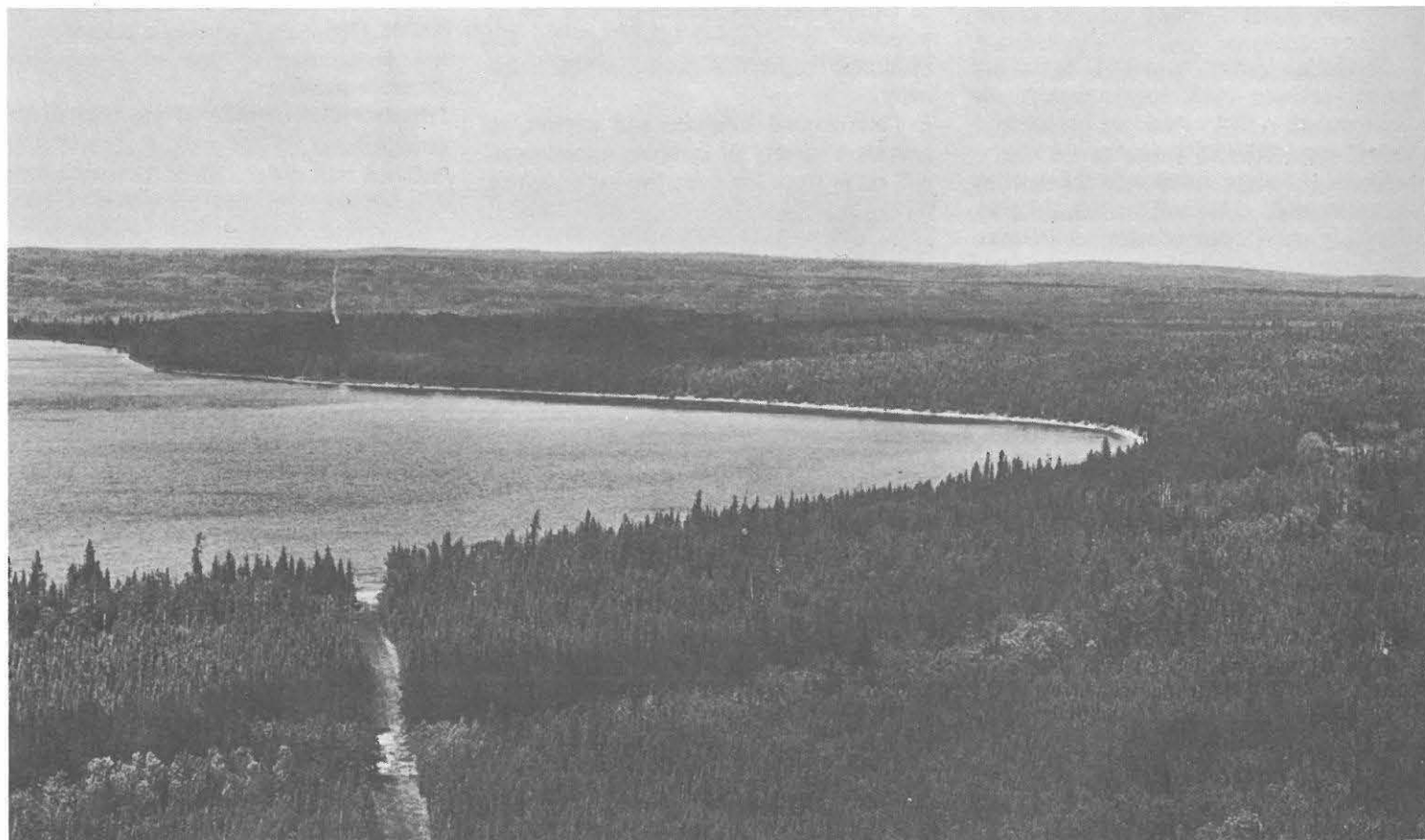
Due to minimal use of trails to date, possible damage to vegetation and potential disruption of park wildlife, trails for snowmobiles will be abandoned after the winter of 1970-71.

Park boundaries

Discussions have been taking place between the federal and provincial governments on a number of changes to the boundaries of Prince Albert National Park. These negotiations are aimed at including parts of some lakes and river systems and excluding others which are presently dissected by the boundary.

Of prime importance is the inclusion of two areas — the land to the north of Lavallée Lake to give greater protection to the pelican breeding grounds, and the grasslands in the southwest corner of the park. Lakes being discussed are Wabeno, Tourist, Namekus, Anglin, Nova, Osten and Strange. It is also proposed to exclude the Cookson Road because of its function as a non-park road. The retention of the whole of the Sturgeon River valley as a natural area in view of its potential for canoeing and hiking will also be a subject for discussion.

Eastern boundary line of the park (slightly left of centre) cuts across Namekus Lake. It is proposed that boundary be extended east to take in entire lake.



This provisional master plan is only one stage in the overall planning process. It amends the original development concept in response to increasing information and constantly changing techniques of planning and management of the park's resources. Changes in the understanding of park resources are often rapid and complex. A continuing program of research and the testing of results must be maintained if the park's resources are to be used effectively. These studies will be conducted as rapidly as resources permit, and as conveniently as possible, with minimal disturbance to the park, its resources and its users. The following list is not exhaustive, but does illustrate the range and nature of essential future studies:

- a) public hearing – assessment of public reaction;
- b) inventory of geomorphological features of the park;
- c) archeological studies of past settlement in the park;
- d) resource study – soil and ground cover mapping;
- e) character study of Grey Owl from contemporaries;
- f) studies of the wolf, caribou, elk and bison populations for management and interpretation purposes;
- g) study of pelican breeding requirements and reasons why the birds have left other areas;
- h) fish and stream studies for management and interpretation;
- i) continuing visitor-use and campground studies;
- j) up-dating of plan for Waskesiu visitor services centre;
- k) detailed studies to provide necessary information for the development of such specific programs as the Grey Owl wilderness canoe area, and the Narrows, Sandy Lake and Wabeno Lake activity areas.

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Ce plan-cadre provisoire n'est qu'une étape du processus général de planification. Il modifie le concept de développement original en raison d'un afflux additionnel de renseignements et du progrès constant des techniques de planification et de gestion des ressources du parc. Les changements dans la compréhension des ressources des parcs sont souvent rapides et complexes. Un programme de recherche continue et une mise à l'épreuve des résultats doivent être maintenus si l'on veut utiliser efficacement ces ressources. Ces études seront entreprises aussi rapidement que les moyens le permettent et de façon à créer le moins d'inconvénients possibles aux usagers et de perturbations dans le parc lui-même. La liste suivante n'est pas complète, mais elle illustre l'ampleur et la nature des futures études essentielles.

- a) audiences publiques — évaluation des réactions du public;
- b) inventaire des caractéristiques géomorphologiques du parc;
- c) études archéologiques sur les anciennes colonies à l'intérieur du parc;
- d) étude des ressources — cartographie du sol et de la couverture;
- e) étude sur la personnalité de Grey Owl, basée sur les souvenirs de ses contemporains;
- f) études sur les populations de loups, de caribous, d'élans et de bisons pour fins de gestion et d'interprétation;
- g) études sur les conditions de reproduction des pélicans et des raisons qui ont poussé leurs congénères à fuir d'autres régions;
- h) études sur la gestion et l'interprétation des poissons et des cours d'eau;
- i) études sur la fréquentation des visiteurs et celle des terrains de camping;
- j) mise à jour du plan du centre d'accueil aux visiteurs de Waskesiu;
- k) études détaillées pour recueillir des informations afin d'instaurer des programmes spécifiques concernant la région de canotage en milieu sauvage de Grey Owl et les zones d'activités situées autour de Narrows et des lacs Sandy et Wabeno.