

A Proposed Framework for Assessing the Appropriateness of Recreation Activities in Protected Heritage Areas



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Assessing the Appropriateness of
Recreation Activities in
Protected Heritage Areas**

National Parks
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The development of this framework would not have been possible without the professional advice and enthusiasm of many people within Parks Canada and our colleagues in the field of outdoor recreation.

Initial work on the topic of Appropriate Activity Assessments began in the early 1980s with the efforts of Grant Tayler and Dawn Bronson when they worked in the Visitor Activities Branch, National Parks, HQ. At this time, the basic concepts of Visitor Activity Management Process (VAMP) were being established and these concepts had a significant influence on the criteria for appropriate activity assessments at the national level. This was followed by pilot applications on activities such as trail bicycling, dog sledding and hang-gliding. Park/site level assessment work was also undertaken in Atlantic, Ontario and Western regions.

In response to public comments from the Parks Canada Policy Review and the resulting new direction in the Guiding Principles and Operational Policies of Parks Canada in the early 1990s, work was renewed in the area of park/site level appropriate activity assessments. Kevin Jones, currently a Senior Area Planner with the National Capital Commission, was instrumental in developing the current proposed framework while on assignment with Parks Canada in 1992. The proposed framework builds upon past experience and continues to be guided by VAMP. It has benefited from extensive regional and HQ review which emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach that could be easily adapted to a variety of situations.

Now the time has come to share the accumulated knowledge and experience more widely so that the framework can be tested in as many situations as possible and subsequently refined.

Per Nilsen

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PART 1

1.1 APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT: THE BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Introduction

The provision of opportunities for recreation activities is one important means of encouraging public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources. Such first-hand experiences are a key method of fostering protection of these areas through environmental citizenship and stewardship. This principle has been reaffirmed in the new *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies (1994)* [hereafter cited as *Parks Canada Policies*] (p. 18):

Opportunities will be provided to visitors that enhance public understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and protection of the national heritage and which are appropriate to the purpose of each park and historic site. Essential and basic services are provided while maintaining ecological and commemorative integrity and recognizing the effects of incremental and cumulative impacts.

Public opportunities are provided for in ways which contribute to heritage protection and national identity objectives, and which build public support for, and awareness of, Canadian heritage.

This commitment also presents challenges to protected area managers who must daily make informed decisions on the appropriateness and management of recreation activities. These decisions must recognize that protection of ecological and cultural integrity is of highest priority in the establishment and operation of designated heritage areas. *Parks Canada Policies* state:

Parks Canada recognizes the need for control and management of appropriate activities. Public demand alone is not sufficient justification for provision of facilities and services in support of appropriate activities.

Services, facilities and access for the public must directly complement the opportunities provided, be considered essential, take account of limits to growth, and not compromise ecological and commemorative integrity nor the quality of experiences. They must be consistent with approved management plans. Also, they must reflect national standards for environmental and

heritage protection and design, as well as high-quality services, the diversity of markets, equity of access considerations for disabled persons and visitors of various income levels (p. 18).

Often these decisions must be made quickly, using the best available knowledge and research while giving full consideration to both the short-term and long-term consequences. The decisions must also withstand public scrutiny and be defensible by the Minister.

To assist protected area managers in addressing these important challenges and to fulfil policy requirements, a flexible tool for assessing the appropriateness of recreation activities at field locations has been developed. The focus of this technical paper is on a field-level assessment to assist in determining whether an activity should take place in a particular protected area. It was developed using Parks Canada's considerable experience and expertise in managing diverse visitor activities. The framework is designed to complement and support implementation of the Visitor Activity Management (VAMP), Natural Resource Management, Management Planning, and Environmental Assessment and Review Processes (EARP).

1.1.2 History of Appropriate Activity Assessments in Protected Heritage Areas

The principle that only certain recreation activities are appropriate to the setting of protected spaces is well established. For example, resource harvesting has always been severely restricted in national parks. Tourism has also had a significant influence on the establishment and management of national parks and historic sites. We cannot forget that the first major facility of the park system was the Cave and Basin Pool and Hotspring in Banff. While recreation and tourism have provided the means for millions of visitors to experience heritage areas, this visitation has also caused significant impact upon the ecosystems and cultural resources of protected spaces. The growth in demand of activities such as alpine skiing and golfing, which require significant alterations to the natural environment, has made Parks Canada question which activities fulfil the mandate of creating opportunities for appreciation, understanding and enjoyment.

In the early 1980s, a process to assess the appropriateness of an activity on a national basis was developed and tested for several activities (e.g. hang-gliding and trail bicycling [Bronson, 1983]). The process involved bringing together a select group of Parks Canada employees and interested groups (hereafter referred to as activity stakeholders) in a workshop to develop a Parks Canada position on

the activity. At the same time it was proposed that the appropriateness of activities be assessed at the field level as part of the Visitor Activity Management Process (VAMP). The national assessment of new activities was never fully established and no assessments have taken place since 1987. The field-based approach was never fully developed.

1.2 SCOPE OF APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENTS

1.2.1 Intended Audience

This framework is designed for field and regional staff directly involved in the planning or management of recreation activities in heritage areas. It uses a checklist approach which can be adapted to suit a wide variety of issues and management contexts.

1.2.2 Considered Recreation Activities

The activities which will be considered for appropriate activity assessments are those, which on a national basis, are "allowable" in heritage areas. An **allowable activity** is defined as:

One which does not contravene the National Parks Act and Regulations or Parks Canada and which may also be appropriate to the conditions in a specific heritage area (Management Bulletin 4.6.15 — Draft, 1988).

*An **appropriate activity** is one which:*

- is consistent with these [Parks Canada Policies] and the protection of ecological and/or commemorative integrity of protected heritage areas;*
- is especially suited to the particular conditions of a specific protected heritage area, and*
- provides the means to appreciate, understand and enjoy protected heritage area themes, messages and stories (Parks Canada Policies, p. 118).*

For example, trail bicycling is an allowable recreation activity in national parks, yet it may not be **appropriate** to the setting of a particular national park such as St. Lawrence Islands. Figure 1 identifies **allowable** activities. This list (sourced from an earlier work on appropriate activities, Bronson 1983), while not exhaustive, covers all of the major recreation activities and represents a starting point for any appropriate activity assessment.

**Figure 1: Parks Canada Allowable
Outdoor Recreation Activities**

BACKPACKING - Casual - Expeditionary	HIKING/WALKING	GUIDED
BOATING - Day boating - Touring - Specialized recreation	HORSEBACK RIDING	BIKE TOURING
CAMPING - Primitive - Serviced - Group camping	ICE SKATING	BOAT TOURS - Sightseeing - Rafting - Canoeing/kayaking
CANOEING/KAYAKING - Day canoeing/kayaking - Tripping - Whitewater - Coastal paddling	KAYAKING	BUS TOURS Also Tundra buses, Snow Cats
CLIMBING - Mountaineering - Technical climbing - Scrambling	MOUNTAINEERING (see Climbing)	CLIMBING/ MOUNTAINEERING
CYCLING - Day cycling - Road touring - Trail biking	ORIENTEERING	DOGSLED TOURS
DOG SLEDDING	PICNICKING	FISHING
FIELD SPORTS (all)	PLAYGROUND ACTIVITY	HERITAGE APPRECIATION - Hiking/walking tours - Birdwatching - Art, Photography, etc. - Wildlife observation
FISHING	PLEASURE DRIVING	HORSEBACK TOURS
GOLFING	RAFTING	SKI TOURING
HERITAGE APPRECIATION - Art activities - Birdwatching - Photography - Sightseeing/experiencing heritage resources - Wildlife conservation	ROLLER SPORTS	
	RUNNING/RACE WALKING	
	SAILSPORTS - Day sailing - Cruising - Sailboarding	
	SKIING - Downhill - Cross-country	
	SKIN DIVING - SCUBA - Snorkelling	
	SLEDDING/ TOBOGGANING	
	SNOWMOBILING	
	SNOWSHOEING	
	SPECIAL EVENTS - Passive audience - Participatory audience	
	SURFING	
	SWIMMING	
	WATER SKIING (see Boating)	

(Draft, March 1994)

The preceding list of allowable activities is dynamic and will be brought up to date regularly as required by policy and changing recreational patterns. The main list of allowable activities shows activities that are almost entirely directed by and participated in by individuals or groups on their own.

"Guided Activities" are similar in profile to activities in the main list, but take place under a business licence and usually involve larger participant groups with slightly different benefits sought. Guided Activities are managed using the National Parks Regulations, Parks Canada Management Directive 4.5.5 — *Guided Tours* and Directive 4.6.40 — *Certification and Licensing of Guides in National Parks*, and park management plans.

Many activities have a competitive form similar to the activities described and field operations should look closely at these planned events on a case by case basis. Generally competitive activities are not encouraged. See Parks Canada Management Directive 4.1.1. — *Commercial Advertising and Promotion* and 4.6.1 — *Alpine and Freestyle Skiing Competitions in National Parks*, 1986.

All public activities supervised by Parks Canada staff such as interpretive walks and hikes are, by definition, allowable.

Two activities, hang-gliding and personal watercraft (jet skis), are under review.

1.2.3 Recreation Activities Not Considered

This assessment technique only deals with activities deemed allowable (see Figure 1). It is not designed to assess prohibited activities. These include such activities as sky diving, para-sailing, off-road motorcycling, etc., which are prohibited by specific regulations. The Appendices provide a listing of all of the pertinent sections of the National Parks Act, National Parks Regulations, Management Directives and Parks Canada Policies related to recreation activities. There are other activities which have no clear status (e.g. baseball, bicycle races, competitive orienteering, cricket, curling, personal watercraft [jet skis], lacrosse, lawn bowling, rodeos, running races and triathlons), but which either take place or have taken place at one time.

At present there is no official process for assessing activities which are not allowable on a national basis, however, this situation may change in the near future as the new Parks Canada Policies states that:

As new or modified forms of recreation emerge, each will be assessed for its appropriateness nationally before consideration in the park management planning process (Section 4.1.4, p. 37).

1.2.4 The Goal of an Assessment

The goal of an appropriate activity assessment is to develop a management position regarding a particular activity. There are three possible outcomes from an assessment.

- 1) An activity will be **actively supported**.
- 2) An activity will be **permitted** but **not actively supported**.
- 3) An activity will be **prohibited** from taking place.

1.2.5 Situations Requiring an Assessment

There are different situations which could generate the need for an Appropriate Activity Assessment:

- 1) **as part of the management planning process**
 - During or leading up to the development of a management plan or management plan review as part of a visitor activity concept.
- 2) **in conjunction with the development of a service plan, or**
- 3) **as an independent assessment done between management plans.** For example:
 - The proposed introduction of an activity which has never taken place in a particular heritage area, i.e. a proposal from the private sector or non-government organization.
 - A changing situation. An activity taking place in a heritage area may have evolved to the point that the motivations of visitors, visitor experience and/or the level of service required are significantly different from what the heritage area originally planned and now manages.
 - Similarly, a heritage area may acquire land supporting an activity that has never been offered or the establishment of a heritage area in an area where an activity has traditionally taken place.

1.2.6 Public Consultation

The National Parks Act (1989) states that:

The Minister shall, as appropriate, provide opportunities for public participation at the national, regional and local levels in

the development of parks policy, management plans and such matters as the Minister deems relevant (Section 5.1.4).

The principle of public involvement will play an integral role in most Appropriate Activity Assessments and will be used to “... *help ensure sound decision making, build public understanding, and provide opportunities for Canadians to contribute their knowledge, expertise and suggestions*” (Parks Canada Policies, p. 18). The manner of this involvement depends upon many factors and will vary with each particular situation. Forms of public consultation could include focus groups, meetings with special interest groups, public meetings, formal management and plan consultations. The points at which consultation could take place are highlighted throughout the framework. It is left to individual managers, however, to define their own public consultation process.

1.2.7 Benefits of an Assessment

There are many benefits from Appropriate Activity Assessments. These include:

- helping the superintendent and staff at individual heritage sites to make informed and documented management decisions about the types of recreation opportunities offered to the public.
- guiding the development of a management position regarding these specific opportunities.
- providing a consistent framework within which activities can be assessed for their ability to contribute to the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of heritage areas.
- assisting in the implementation of the Visitor Activity Management (VAMP), Natural Resource Management, Management Planning and Environmental Assessment and Review Processes (EARP).
- contributing to the protection of heritage resources by helping to apply EARP at the earliest possible stage consistent with Management Directive 2.4.2.
- pro-actively contributing to Visitor Risk Management.
- guiding the provision of services and facilities and the development of service standards.
- contributing to wise allocation of financial resources by only supporting activities which are consistent with the National Parks Act, Parks Canada Policies and the specific role of the heritage area.

- considering visitors needs within the context of the protection and conservation of heritage resources.
- assisting managers to quickly assess proposals for new offers of service by partners and stakeholders (e.g. guides, outfitters, tour operators) which will lead to improved service to the public and enhanced regional integration.
- adaptability to suit a wide variety of heritage area situations.



PART 2

2.1 APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT: THE STEPS

2.1.1 Steps to Completing an Assessment

There are five steps to completing an Appropriate Activity Assessment:

- 1) **Set the context.** This includes identifying the type of assessment being undertaken and its specific goal(s) and objectives.
- 2) **Identify all the issues and opportunities** related to supporting or not supporting the activity. This is accomplished by responding to a series of questions grouped under ten headings. Each heading represents a different area of potential management concern.
- 3) **Synthesis.** Analyze the issues defined in the second step. Identify key costs and benefits and develop a management position towards the activity (supported, permitted or prohibited).
- 4) **Describe the future service offer** that the heritage area will provide to support the activity (for activities which will be supported or permitted). This step begins with defining the conditions under which the activity will occur and the limits of acceptable change. It is also based upon the Service Planning Process.
- 5) **Implement and monitor.**

What follows is a description of each step, including a checklist of key questions managers and staff need to consider in developing a management position.

When beginning a assessment, make sure to review the questions once or twice to ensure that you have the background information and key informants (e.g. warden service, general works managers, stakeholders, visitor activities staff) available.

Document, in point form, answers to key questions. If you do not know the answer to a question, or need to find more information, pass it over and go on to the next question or step. Since this is a flexible, interactive process, you can always go back to an area.

2.2 STEP 1: SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR AN ASSESSMENT

Define the context of the activity assessment.

- 1) Is the activity new to the heritage area, an evolving activity or the result of a changing heritage area situation?
- 2) Outline the perceived issues relating to the activity.
- 3) Identify the goals and objectives of your assessment.

2.3 STEP 2: IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are ten headings under which all of the issues and opportunities associated with the assessment of an activity are to be identified. The headings can be viewed as a checklist.

- 1) Heritage Area Management Context
- 2) Visitor Experience Opportunities
- 3) Setting Opportunity
- 4) Heritage Theme Presentation
- 5) Market Expectations
- 6) Visitor Conflict
- 7) Visitor Risk Management
- 8) Heritage Area Services and Facilities
- 9) Co-operative Activities/Regional Integration
- 10) Environmental Impact

The headings are organized and presented using the basic VAMP concept as a foundation. The concept illustrates that the provision of visitor opportunities must be within the context of Parks Canada's mandate and objectives. In defining these opportunities, one must also respect natural and cultural resources features/values and give consideration to public needs and expectations. Once the visitor opportunities that the heritage area is capable of providing are defined, one can begin to determine the activities, services and facilities that are necessary to provide high-quality visitor experiences consistent with Parks Canada's mandate.

The assessment of recreation activities is based upon the framework in Figure 2 and follows a similar sequence. Questions related to the first three headings examine the **heritage area management context** and its relationship to **visitor experience** and **setting opportunities**. In essence: **Does the heritage area have the resource base to support the activity and do the visitor experience opportunities provided by the activity complement**

policy and long-term management orientation for the heritage area?

Questions grouped under the next six headings focus on assessing the suitability of the activity to the environment. They examine the ability of the activity to present **heritage themes** and support **visitor demand**, the potential for **visitor conflict**, **visitor risk management issues** related to the activity, **infrastructure needs/costs**, **co-operative activity potential** and **regional integration opportunities** and issues.

Once the relative scale of the potential service offer is understood, then the environmental impact of the activity can be assessed using the initial screening component of EARP. It must be remembered that appropriate activity assessments are just that, preliminary assessments. If the results of an assessment show that an activity has some merit for a heritage area, then a service offer can be outlined based upon the service planning principles found in *The Guide To Service Planning*, 1988.

2.3.1 Heritage Area Management Context

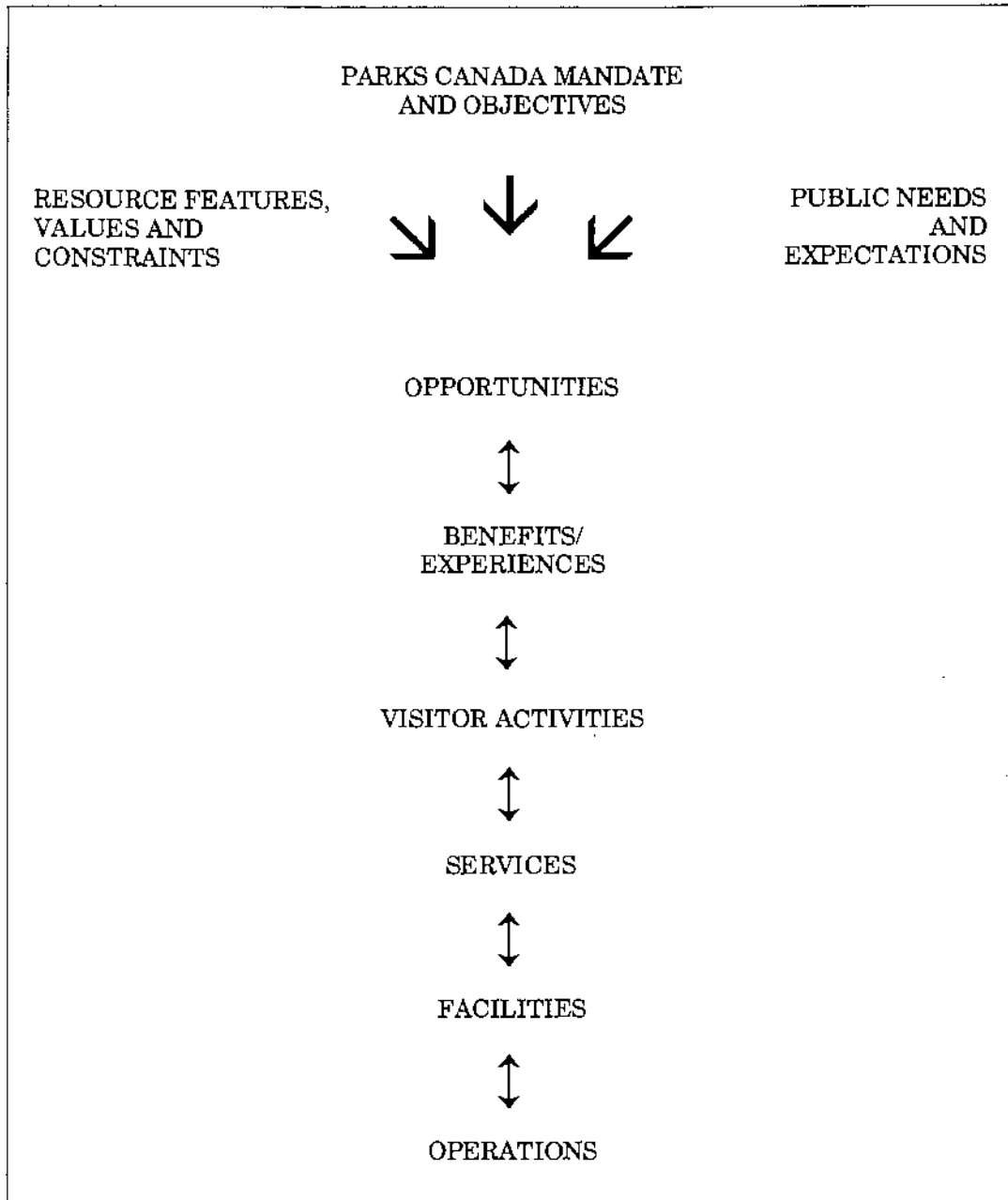
Identify any strategic management direction related to the proposed activity contained in the Parks Canada Policies, National Park Regulations, specific management directives, or management plans.

The *Cultural Resource Management Policy* (e.g. Sections 1.1.7, 1.2.3, 1.4.1, 3.5, 3.5.3) provides specific direction for the management of visitor activities which have the potential to impact upon cultural resources (Parks Canada Policies, p. 99). See Appendix 3 for a more complete listing.

What direction do planning documents such as the management plan and ecosystem conservation plan provide regarding management of the proposed activity?

- 1) Summarize the relevant direction provided by these documents.
- 2) Note major issues or constraints. For example, non-conformity of the activity with heritage area zoning or natural/cultural resource or visitor use conflicts.
- 3) Highlight any potential management benefits associated with supporting the activity. For example, the offering of ungroomed back-country ski trails could be used as a means to relieve crowding on front-country trackset trails.
- 4) Identify any agreements or decisions not contained in a planning document. Often these exist as part of a business licence or

Figure 2: Basic Vamp Concept



through memoranda of understanding between the heritage area superintendent and another party.

2.3.2 Visitor Experience Opportunities

What is the range of experience opportunities and benefits that participants in this activity seek? How do they relate to the Parks Canada mandate of “encouraging appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of our natural heritage?”

This is not an objective decision because it is based on values. Parks Canada's values need to be clearly stated and compared to participants' motivations.

Clear service objectives must be used in determining benefit, education and enjoyment opportunities, since the provision of such opportunities must be measured against the obligations imposed by the Act to maintain the parks unimpaired. This means that not every kind of use requested by the public can be provided (Parks Canada Policies, Section 4.0, p. 36).

Does the activity clearly represent a means of encouraging appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the heritage area's themes and values?

If a service plan exists, it may be possible to use the motivations of existing visitor activity groups as a basis for defining the experiences and benefits of participants in the new activity. Surveys that analyze the motivations of visitors can be a valuable tool as well. There is also a growing body of research on motivations for participation in recreation activities.

Participants in an activity can have a range of motivations. For example, cross-country skiers can be seeking exercise, fresh air, challenging terrain, solitude, etc., and they can be interested in front-country, back-country, ski skating or classic skiing opportunities. It is important not to just lump users into a generic group, but to identify the mandate of the heritage area, the experience opportunities that the heritage area can provide and to compare these to the motivations of potential users.

Consultations with participants in the activity can provide valuable insights into their motivations, the types of opportunities being sought and the levels of services required. This consultation is extremely important when the activity participants are represented by a formal group such as a mountaineering club.

The form of an activity is also a consideration. Informal back-country, cross-country skiing, for example, is quite different from skiing on a trackset trail network.

Are there similar opportunities in a comparable setting available outside of the heritage area (regional supply)? If so, would the heritage area be competing against or complementing these opportunities?

As stated in the Parks Canada Policies (p. 24):

Generally, access and services which relate directly to the objective for national parks will be provided within the parks, while a broader range of needs will be met in the surrounding region. The co-operation of the tourism and other sectors will be essential to help establish the appropriate balance of services and facilities on a regional basis.

The important issue, therefore, is: **Does the heritage area need to support these opportunities if they are already offered nearby?** Factors to be considered include:

Clientele: Is the heritage area supporting the same clientele?

Visitor Experience: Does the heritage area opportunity provide a different experience from that which is offered outside of its boundaries?

Cost versus Benefit: What is the relationship between the cost (environmental and monetary) of supporting the activity and the uniqueness of the experience offered within the heritage area?

Cost Competitiveness: Will the heritage area be subsidizing the cost of the activity and thereby unfairly competing with others outside its boundaries? For example, a heritage area that decides to upgrade the tracksetting of its trails to accommodate ski skating, yet limits the cost to participate to the regular park entrance fee may be competing unfairly with businesses which are trying to profit by offering the same level of service in the region.

Regional Role: Approximately what percentage of the total regional participation would take place within the heritage area if the activity were to be offered?

Consultations with existing or potential stakeholders could play an important role at this point. For example, if a heritage area is proposing to upgrade its winter trail opportunities through the addition of grooming, it would be important to consult with a wide range of local stakeholders including existing trail users, local businesses, etc....

2.3.3 Setting Opportunity

Does the heritage area setting (topography, climate, etc.) lend itself to supporting the activity?

It may not be worthwhile, for example, for an area to promote cross-country ski opportunities if snowcover is unreliable or only guaranteed for a short time period.

Does the setting for the activity provide a unique perspective of the heritage area?

For example, winter use in an area which has traditionally only been visited in summer.

Does the area offer sufficient opportunities to satisfy present and future visitor expectations?

This is a relative question. If a heritage area has only one small lake and it decides to offer day-use boating opportunities, what happens if there is significant demand for the activity? A problematic situation can ensue if an area offers an activity which is only marginally suitable given the available resources. Another similar situation is a heritage area experiencing great demand for trail bicycling opportunities, yet the only readily available trails suitable are gravel roads, which are of limited interest to the proposed clientele. The heritage area must ensure that the expectations of visitors are matched by the opportunities that the heritage area is willing to offer.

2.3.4 Heritage Theme Presentation

What role do the heritage themes of the heritage area play in the experience provided by the activity?

Certain activities tend to foster a high level of appreciation for the natural or cultural environment because of their specific attributes (e.g. back-country hiking), while others tend to be more socially oriented (downhill skiing, beach use). Also, within one activity, users may have varying levels of interest in the interpretation messages depending on their motivations. Given Parks Canada's mandate, an activity which inherently fosters a high level of appreciation and understanding of the area's environment is more desirable than an activity with a more tenuous connection.

Are the themes associated with the activity unique or are they available for presentation elsewhere?

A heritage area capable of supporting an activity and which provides a unique opportunity to experience a theme is potentially of greater benefit to visitors than a more common area.

For example, climbing opportunities may exist within and outside the area, however, the park themes of Rock Walls and Waterfalls are more readily experienced in the park.

2.3.5 Market Expectations

Based upon existing knowledge, which visitor activity groups (VAGs) would participate in the activity? And what is the relative priority of these groups in relation to the heritage area visitor population as a whole?

Consistent with maintaining ecological integrity, each national park may offer a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities conforming to the zoning determined in the management plan. These will serve visitors of diverse interests, ages, physical capabilities and skills so that they can understand and experience the park's natural environment (Parks Canada Policies, Section 4.1.2., p. 37).

Are the visitor groups participating in the activity of key importance to the heritage area? For example, are these visitors supportive of the heritage area's management policies and does the heritage area present a balanced service offer, i.e. one that reflects the interest of all priority VAGs?

What size of market exists for the activity?

Does the activity appeal to a small group of highly dedicated and skilled enthusiasts (e.g. ice climbing, mountaineering) or is it more mainstream (e.g. hiking, trail bicycling)? Is there a real demand being voiced (and is it quantified in any manner) for the activity or is the demand only perceived? Market research, visitor surveys, the management plan, the service plan and public consultations are key sources of information concerning potential participation.

What are the future market trends?

It may be difficult to predict whether a new activity will establish itself as a traditional mainstay or have a quick burst of popularity then settle down to a relatively low level of participation (e.g. sailboarding). Does the activity reflect trends in society (e.g. an aging population)? Does it reflect trends in local demand? Future trends are not easy to predict and therefore it is important to check as many information sources as possible including research literature, surveys and perhaps, other parks that have had experience in dealing with the proposed activity.

What are the potential consequences if the heritage area does not permit the activity?

The impact of management decisions must be considered both within and beyond the boundary of the heritage area itself. Decisions may have a political benefit or cost such as the alienation of part of the area's constituency (i.e. park visitors, local residents, municipal, provincial or other federal agencies).

For example, a local community which is developing a snowmobile trail network as a tourism initiative proposes that a national park be included in the development. The park must be prepared to manage the political impact if a decision is made to not allow snowmobile trails within its boundaries.

To what extent would the activity create opportunities for a new clientele (as opposed to supporting further opportunities for existing visitors)?

It is important for heritage areas to reach out and provide opportunities for understanding, appreciation and enjoyment to "... visitors of diverse interests, ages, physical capabilities and skills" (Parks Canada Policies, Section 4.1.2, p. 37), in addition to satisfying its existing constituency. New activities can play a beneficial role in providing opportunities for understanding and appreciation. However, it is important to identify whether clientele motivations are compatible with the experiences that the heritage area is able and willing to offer.

2.3.6 Visitor Conflict

What impact would the activity have upon existing heritage area visitors (quality of experience, safety, environmental)? And what impact would existing users have upon practitioners of the new activity?

There are many types of conflict and reasons for their existence. One-way conflicts are those which affect one visitor group without affecting the other. An example is a trail that is shared by snowmobilers and cross-country skiers. The snowmobilers are not unduly affected by the presence of skiers whereas the experience of skiers can be altered significantly by the presence of snowmobiles. Introducing new activities to facilities which are already used for another activity often creates two-way conflict (i.e. introducing trail biking to trails which were originally hiking trails). Identifying potential conflicts and developing methods to deal with these conflicts before they occur is often the best approach to resolving them.

Are there readily available ways of mitigating the impacts of the activity (if any) upon existing heritage area visitors?

Conflicts can often be reduced or eliminated through various management techniques. It is important to identify the reason a conflict exists in order to manage it. Consultation with existing heritage area visitors, who may feel the impact of the new activity, could help to identify the potential sources of conflict and resolve them early in the process. It may also be beneficial to seek out other parks or agencies which have dealt with a similar situation or refer to conflict literature before acting.

2.3.7 Visitor Risk Management

There are inherent dangers associated with some natural and cultural features and public activities. Therefore, risk management programs involving others are developed by Parks Canada for the safety of visitors. Public safety considerations are built into planning and design processes. Priority is placed on accident prevention, education and information programs designed to protect visitors in ways consistent with the commemorative and ecological integrity of heritage places. Visitors are encouraged to learn about any risks associated with heritage places and to exercise appropriate self-reliance and responsibility for their own safety in recreation or other activities they choose to undertake (Parks Canada Policies, p. 18).

What hazards in your heritage area are associated with participation in the proposed activity?

Hazards can be broken down into three categories; environmental, infrastructural and visitor characteristics. Environmental hazards are elements of a field operation's natural or cultural environment, such as bears, cliffs and historic structures. Infrastructural hazards are man-made support facilities such as trails, buildings and roads. Hazards associated with visitor characteristics include use of alcohol or drugs, degree of preparedness and group size (Couture, 1992).

Does the market demand indicate that activity participants would have a good understanding of the hazards/risks associated with the activity?

Different VAGs will have different perceptions of hazards/risks based on their own self-reliance and will be willing to accept different degrees of risk. For example, participants in mountaineering expeditions have different expectations of risk than someone on a short hike on a front-country trail.

Do some of the hazards related to the activity create unacceptable levels of risk for the heritage area?

Risk is a relative value based upon the probability of an incident occurring and, the severity of the consequences if an incident occurs (Couture, 1992).

What are the potential liability issues related to the activity?

This is particularly important for high risk activities such as whitewater rafting and rock climbing.

Would the activity require new visitor risk management measures such as pretrip planning, reception, information, patrolling, signage, search and rescue operations, emergency equipment, etc.?

These costs can easily be overlooked yet, in certain situations, they may be significant. Personnel, equipment, publication and operating costs should all be considered.

2.3.8 Heritage Area Services and Facilities

Parks Canada Policies state that:

Within national parks, essential services and facilities will serve the basic needs of the public, and will be directly related to the provision of understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage (Section 4.3.4, p. 39).

What impact would the activity have upon existing facilities?

This evaluation should be based both on initial projected demand and a long-term forecast. Potential impacts could include exceeding the design capacity of heritage area facilities such as parking lots and toilets. This can result in unforeseen cumulative environmental acts and decreased visitor satisfaction.

What new infrastructure would be required to support the activity?

This is in addition to existing infrastructure that the activity would require. The environmental, operational and long-term maintenance costs should be considered as part of the benefit/cost of developing new infrastructure.

Would the activity require new types or increased levels of maintenance?

Is it possible to estimate the operating and personnel costs based upon the maintenance management system?

What impact would the activity have upon the lifecycle of heritage area infrastructure?

At this stage, it is important to define whether the impact is significant or not and to provide an estimate of what and where the impact will be. For example, the primary impact of trail biking would likely be upon the trail base, although it would also impact upon trailhead and back-country facilities.

To what extent would the activity require new information and information delivery mechanisms (i.e. pamphlets, press releases, signage, etc.)?

This material will have to be developed by staff, contractors or other stakeholders. There is a need to set appropriate expectations and communicate codes of behaviour, etc. Heritage area staff will often be required to answer inquiries about the new activity, and interpretation or education programs may have to be developed to sensitize activity participants to the heritage area environment.

Is there the opportunity to generate revenue from this activity, i.e. to cover costs of development, recapitalization and operation?

The recent introduction of fees for specialized services associated with hiking the West Coast trail is an example.

2.3.9 Co-operative Activities/Regional Integration

What are the potential opportunities for regional integration as a result of establishing the activity?

Parks Canada Policies identifies regional integration as a key principle of the organization. It states that:

Parks Canada works with a broad range of federal, provincial, territorial and municipal government agencies, groups, individuals and Aboriginal interests to achieve mutually compatible goals and objectives. These relationships support regional integration, partnerships, co-operative arrangements, formal agreements, and open dialogue with other interested parties, including adjacent or surrounding districts and communities (p. 19).

Is there the potential for co-operative management of the activity?

If so, it is important to identify what benefits the heritage area would be seeking by a co-operative management arrangement and to identify whether these goals are advantageous to the heritage area and can be met. Would the benefits of a co-operative arrangement exceed the time, effort and risks required to realize them? An example of a co-operative management arrangement could be a trail

bicycling club providing patrol services and maintenance in return for access to trails. Initial consultations with potential partners could be used to identify whether there is the possibility of this type of management arrangement.

2.3.10 Environmental Impact

What are the potential environmental impacts of allowing the activity as defined by EARP?

Are the impacts acceptable, and if they are, what mitigative measures would be required to ensure that they remain acceptable?

The National Parks Act (1989) states that:

Maintenance of ecological integrity through the protection of natural resources shall be the first priority when considering park zoning and visitor use in a management plan (Section 5.1.2).

Parks Canada Policies also state that:

Protection of ecological and commemorative integrity takes precedence in acquiring, managing, and administering heritage places and programs. In every application of this policy, this guiding principle is paramount. The integrity of natural and cultural heritage is maintained by striving to ensure that management decisions affecting these special places are made on sound cultural resource management and ecosystem-based management practices (p. 16).

Beyond the direct environmental impact of an activity, there are a number of issues which play a significant role in deciding whether to permit or prohibit an activity.

Incrementalism: An activity in itself may have limited direct environmental impact. However, if the activity is bringing in new visitors doing new things, then there is an additional burden on the heritage area's ecosystem that may be difficult to quantify and, in the long term, a contributor to the degradation of the heritage area's natural environment.

The heritage area's capacity to manage: It is often difficult to estimate the level of management that will be required for an activity which does not yet exist or, once an activity exists, to actually quantify the management effort that is being expended. Does the heritage area have adequate resources to manage the activity and will they be made available? What happens if the heritage area gets into a situation that it cannot or does not want to manage? Once an

activity is established in a heritage area, whether on a trial or a permanent basis, it is seldom easy to withdraw support.

Setting a precedent: Allowing an activity could influence future decisions about other activities. For example, if a heritage area were to make a decision to allow jet skis on a lake within the area, this decision could be used as the basis of an argument to allow other forms of motorized watercraft and associated activities (e.g. water skiing).

Figure 3: Checklist Of Appropriate Activity Assessment Criteria

1) HERITAGE AREA MANAGEMENT CONTEXT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic management direction from corporate sources. • Direction provided by heritage area planning documents. 	
2) VISITOR EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of experience opportunities/benefits provided by the activity. • Availability of the activity on a regional and a national basis. 	
3) SETTING OPPORTUNITY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the setting for the activity. • Uniqueness of the perspective provided by the activity. • Potential of heritage area to satisfy existing and future visitor expectations. 	
4) HERITAGE THEMES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of heritage themes in the visitor experience provided by the activity. • Relative importance of heritage themes associated with the activity. 	
5) MARKET EXPECTATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the participating Visitor Activity Groups. • The relative importance of the(se) visitor segment(s). • The size of the market for the activity. • Future trends in the activity on a local and up to national basis. • Impacts of a decision to not allow an activity. 	
6) VISITOR CONFLICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on existing visitors. • Ability to mitigate impact. 	
7) VISITOR RISK MANAGEMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazards associated with the activity. • Activity participants awareness of hazards. • Acceptability of the levels of risk posed by the activity. • Potential level of liability related to the activity. • Visitor risk management measures required. 	

<p>8) HERITAGE AREA AND FACILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of activity upon existing park facilities. • New infrastructure requirements. • Maintenance demands created by the activity. • Impact of activity upon lifecycle of park infrastructure. • Operational requirements created by offering the activity. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>9) CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES/REGIONAL INTEGRATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional integration opportunities. • Co-operative management opportunities. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>10) NATURAL RESOURCE IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential environmental impacts of the activity. • Acceptability of the impacts and mitigative measures. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



PART 3

3.1 STEP 3: SYNTHESIS

3.1.1 Introduction

At this stage of the appropriate activity assessment all of the issues and opportunities related to the activity have been described. It is now time to take a more analytical approach, to identify the key issues and constraints, to identify potential solutions to issues and finally, to develop a management position towards the activity. To arrive at a synthesis, use the information from Step 2 to answer the following questions:

- 1) **Does the heritage area have the resource capability to support the activity?**

Based upon the results of the preliminary EARP, is the environmental impact of the activity acceptable and manageable?

- 2) **Is the activity suited to the heritage area environment?**

For example, is the setting conducive to the activity and does the activity in this setting provide opportunities to appreciate and enjoy key themes and values of the heritage area?

- 3) **How feasible is it for the heritage area to support the activity?**

Does the area have the human and financial resources to support:

- human resources requirements (planning and operational person years)?
 - operational resource requirements (pretrip information, reception, orientation, infrastructure maintenance and life-cycle costs)?
 - risk management costs (patrolling, search and rescue, safety measures)?
 - potential for, and costs associated with, revenue generation?
 - capital costs required to support the activity?
- 4) **What are the key management issues emerging from the assessment of the activity?**
 - 5) **What management alternatives are available to deal with the issues?**

For example can a combination of direct and indirect management strategies (Figure 4) be used to manage the activity?

Figure 4: Strategies for Managing Outdoor Recreation Areas

INDIRECT	DIRECT
Physical Alterations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve or cease maintenance for selected roads and trails • Improve or cease maintenance for selected campsites 	Enforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase surveillance • Impose fines
Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise areas targeted for recreation • Identify recreation opportunities in surrounding region • Inform public about benefits of minimal impact uses • Display chart of use patterns to encourage or discourage visitors 	Zoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate visitors by experience level • Separate incompatible activities
Economic Constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance fees • Activity fees 	Rationing Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit access to park areas • Limit use of campsites • Rotate use of areas, campsites • Require reservations
	Restricting Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict types of use • Limit size of group • Limit length of stay • Restrict camping practises • Prohibit use at certain times
Source: <i>NATIONAL PARKS</i> (Jan/Feb. 1985)	

- Are there partners and locations outside of the heritage area that are better suited to supporting the activities?
- 6) Are there viable options which can be selected?
- 7) Are there some issues that are not within the power of heritage area managers to resolve?
- 8) What is the impact of these issues?

3.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF A MANAGEMENT POSITION

Identify the heritage area's management position towards the activity. The possibilities lie within a spectrum from encouraging the activity through to prohibiting it within the heritage area. Once you have completed the situation analysis and identified the key issues, you will probably have a good idea of what the heritage area's position will be. Figures 5 and 6 present some of the potential positive and negative attributes of an activity.

If the management decision is to identify the activity as a **supported** or **permitted** activity, a brief Future Service Offer should be prepared (see Step 4).

If the management decision is to identify the activity as a **prohibited** activity, a brief synopsis of the rationale for the decision should be prepared to document and justify the position taken. Be careful to specify contraventions of policy, regulations, etc., in order to develop a solid basis for a negative decision. This may become critical if the negative decision is challenged by individuals or lobby groups.

3.2.1 Supported Activity

These are the activities for which there are very few concerns related to their introduction and which relate positively to all aspects of heritage area management (as presented in Figure 2: the basic VAMP model). The checklist in Figure 5 can be used to verify the appropriateness of an activity.

An example of a developed opportunity is the bicycle trail network in Kouchibouguac National Park. The park was able to respond to a need to diversify opportunities available to visitors, while at the same time take advantage of existing roads and trails. The flat terrain is suited to the family orientation of the park's clientele.

Figure 5: Attributes of a Supported Activity

- ☒ Respects the mandate of Parks Canada and the heritage area's management objectives.
- ☒ Maximizes opportunities for appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the heritage area's resources.
- ☒ Supports the presentation of natural and cultural resource themes and values of the heritage area.
- ☒ Is suited to the natural and cultural resource base of the heritage area.
- ☒ Responds to public needs and expectations.
- ☒ Provides high-quality opportunities for heritage theme presentation.
- ☒ Can be supported using available services or those which can be added within available resources.
- ☒ Can be supported with existing facilities or minor modifications to existing facilities.
- ☒ Can be operated within the context of existing budgets and person year allocations.
- ☒ Supports high priority Visitor Activity Groups.
- ☒ Does not compete with existing opportunities outside of the heritage area.
- ☒ Provides opportunities for co-operative management, community support.
- ☒ Creates management benefits (e.g. revenue generation).
- ☒ Provides opportunities for new clientele.

3.2.2 Activity Permitted but not Supported

Generally these are activities which do not place significant demands on the heritage areas natural, cultural or financial resources and which only appeal to a limited visitor market or are activities whose long-term popularity is untested. The superintendent may give permission without supporting the activity. This can provide the heritage area with the opportunity to assess the viability of the activity without establishing a long-term commitment. (There are pitfalls to this approach in that it is seldom easy to get rid of an activity once it has been permitted). An example of this type of opportunity is snowshoeing. It is an activity whose impact and popularity is generally limited, meaning that while heritage areas do not go out of their way to accommodate the activity, they also do little to regulate it.

3.2.3 Prohibited Activity

These are the activities that have significant constraints which render the activity incompatible with the management goals of the heritage area. Typically the constraints relate to the most important aspects of the Parks Canada mandate, that of the **protection** and **conservation** of a heritage area's natural and/or cultural resources.

An example was the decision to eliminate front-country camping in Point Pelee National Park. Other potential constraints which could preclude an activity from taking place are activities with an excessively high level of risk for participants, e.g. para-gliding, or activities for which the cost to develop and manage is excessive in relation to the number of participants, e.g. paved roller-blading trails. Figure 6 identifies some of the key reasons for not permitting an activity in a heritage area.

Figure 6: Attributes of Discouraged or Prohibited Activities

- ☒ Directly inconsistent with one or all of the following: federal, provincial or municipal laws, National Parks Act, Parks Canada Policies, management directives, the heritage area management plan, ecosystem conservation plan and service plan.
- ☒ Significant environmental and social impacts associated with the activity.
- ☒ Activity offers limited opportunities to appreciate and understand heritage area heritage themes.
- ☒ Activity does not relate directly: to the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of a heritage area's purpose and objectives; to ensuring ecosystem or commemorative integrity.
- ☒ Highly specialized activity appealing to limited numbers.
- ☒ Activity not consistent with the intent or design of existing facilities.
- ☒ Activity requires more than a minimum of built facilities.
- ☒ High cost to develop services and facilities to support the activity.
- ☒ Will result in negative effects upon or conflict with other heritage area users.
- ☒ Competes with existing opportunities available outside of the heritage area.
- ☒ Significant visitor risks and/or liability issues.



PART 4

4.1 STEP 4: DESCRIBE FUTURE SERVICE OFFER

4.1.1 Sample Outline

Prepare a brief future service offer description for the new activities which are to be permitted or promoted as per the *Guide to Service Planning*. This can be in the form of a one or two page summary. A sample outline (adapted from Yoho Service Plan, 1990) provides the key elements.

Objectives: These should be developed to specify acceptable and achievable natural, cultural and social conditions under which the activity will be offered. Limits of acceptable change should be identified to provide a basis for future monitoring, evaluation and management actions. For each of the individual service components (awareness, reception, heritage appreciation, campgrounds, trails, etc.), a specific objective should also be set to guide future actions.

Discussions: These are statements which summarize the shortfalls with the current offer of service and relevant management plan direction. They also include reference to relevant trends and their potential impact. They comprise the "justification" for many of the action items.

Levels of Service: For each of the individual service components (awareness, reception, heritage appreciation, picnic areas, etc.), a basic level of service should be described. These levels of service represent the basic services required to meet our mandate. Anything offered below the basic would be unacceptable and anything above would be considered an embellishment.

The levels of service descriptions are based upon resource protection and service objectives, the "experiences" that park management intends to offer each visitor activity group, and years of operating experience — not on our existing O&M resource base. In some cases the stated level is beyond our current capabilities. This does not mean that corresponding action will not occur. In fact, in such cases, the possibility for partnerships may well be the strategy used to enable implementation.

In some cases a level of service is already being provided and therefore, doesn't require further action. To clarify the existing status of the level of service each statement is coded as follows:

- [P] = Provided — the level of service is currently provided as stated.
- [PP] = Partially Provided — examples include cases where the level of service is provided but only in certain locations within the park; the service is provided at the level stated but on an inconsistent basis; or the service exists at an unacceptable level of quality.
- [NP] = Not Provided — the service is currently not provided at all.

Service Priorities: Where appropriate service priorities should identify the relative importance of individual services and facilities. These priorities will be used to help guide maintenance, recapitalization, new development, asset reduction and day-to-day management decisions.

Action Items: These statements represent what needs to be done to achieve basic levels of service and monitoring of conditions under which the activity is to occur. Where a basic level of service is identified with no associated action items, then it is currently being adequately provided. Action items can be prioritized and time action schedules can be developed to help guide implementation.

The future service offer description becomes an important tool for the introduction and subsequent management of new appropriate activities. This description can be later updated and integrated into the new or revised service plan.

4.2 STEP 5: IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR

Once a management position is agreed upon and a service offer description is prepared, a brief implementation strategy including appropriate monitoring actions should be started.

An important component of the implementation will be to communicate to staff, stakeholders and the public which activities will be supported, discouraged or prohibited and under what conditions this will occur.

4.3 ALTERNATIVE APPLICATIONS OF APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY ASSESSMENTS

Management Plans

Appropriate Activity Assessments could be used as a means to confirm or deny the level of support provided for various existing recreation activities in a heritage area. The approach would be to

screen the various activities to identify whether the existing level of support is consistent with Parks Canada's mandate and reflects the area's management position on the activity. The assessment process could also identify major service issues (excess or shortfalls).

Independent Assessments

The approach for assessment of a single activity could be more detailed and complete, and would require using the full assessment process. The emphasis would be upon identifying all issues and opportunities and developing a management position. The basic concern of this type of assessment is to resolve the question of whether the heritage area should permit the activity and if so, to identify the level of support to be provided.

APPENDIX 1: Sections of the National Parks Act Directed Towards the Management of Recreation Activities

Section 1 defines a park as a National Park or National Marine Park as described in Schedule 1.

Section 4 describes the general purposes of National Parks.

Section 5.1.2 states that:

Maintenance of ecological integrity through the protection of natural resources shall be the first priority when considering park zoning and visitor use in a park management plan.

Section 5.1.4 requires that the Minister provide opportunities for public consultation in the development of park policy, management plans and other matters as the Minister deems relevant.

Section 5.9 states that:

The Minister may not authorize any activity to be carried on in a wilderness area that is likely to impair the wilderness character of the area.

Section 5.10 states that:

Notwithstanding subsection (9), the Minister may authorize activities to be carried on in a wilderness area, subject to such conditions as the Minister considers necessary, for purposes of:

- (a) **park administration;***
- (b) **public safety;***
- (c) the provision of **basic user facilities** including **trails** and **rudimentary campsites;***
- (d) the carrying on of **traditional renewable resource harvesting activities** authorized pursuant to subsection (7) or any other Act of Parliament; or*
- (e) **access by air** to remote parts of such areas.*

Section 7.1 enables the Governor in Council to establish regulations on a wide variety of subjects.

Section 8.3 addresses the topic of **commercial ski areas**.

Section 10 enables the Governor in Council to apply sections 5, 7 and 8 of the National Parks Act to National Historic Parks as he may consider advisable.

NATIONAL PARK REGULATIONS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE MANAGEMENT OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES

National Park Business Regulations

Section 3 and 4 describe the requirement for a **business licence**, particularly as they relate to **guides**. Schedule I describes the categories of guides (e.g. Trail Guide, Class A, B, C; Trail and Boating Trip Guide, Park Ski Guide, Mountain Guide and Fishing Guide), as well as the prescribed qualifications for guides.

Camping Regulations

These regulations cover a wide variety of topics relating to **camping**. Sections 3, 10 to 14 provide specific direction that enables the superintendent to manage or control the activity.

Domestic Animal Regulations

These regulations provide, among other topics, for the control of animals. This may be an issue for activities such as **camping**, **dogsledding** or **hiking**.

National Parks Fishing Regulations

As the title implies, these regulations cover all aspects of **fishing** including fishing permits, open seasons, maximum catch and possession limits, and prohibitions.

National Parks General Regulations

Section 5 deals with **public recreation facilities**.

Section 6 deals with **hazardous activities**. It provides the park superintendent with the legal right to define and regulate hazardous activities. In particular, it touches upon registering in and out at the park office prior to and upon completion of an activity.

Section 7 enables the superintendent to **designate certain activities, uses or entry and travel areas of the park as restricted or prohibited**. It also describes the actions required to give public notice and issue permits.

Section 8 addresses the issue of **cave access**.

Section 15 deals with **aircraft operations**. Landing and takeoffs by gliders, power gliders and hang-gliders are not permitted in any national park with the exception of Banff. In Section 15.1, the regulations outline the procedures for hang-gliding in Banff including the need for a permit authorized by the superintendent which may identify the location in the park, the time of year and any other specific requirements deemed necessary by the park superintendent.

Section 16 and 17 refers to the **use of watercourse**, specifically stating that no person shall pollute any water course or obstruct or divert a water course.

Sections 21 and 26 deal with **watercraft**. Except where designated (by sign or notice) motorized watercraft, water skiing equipment or sub-surface diving equipment is not permitted on any watercourse in a national park. Houseboats are not permitted under any circumstances.

Section 32 deals with **prohibited conduct**. It gives the park superintendent the power to prohibit excessive noise or conduct which unreasonably disturbs other persons or interferes with the fauna or natural beauty of a park.

National Parks Highway Traffic Regulations

Sections 34, 35 and 36 deal with **bicycles**. Cyclists riding on a highway must keep to the right and not ride two abreast. Bicycles shall not be ridden on sidewalks. Bicycles ridden in national parks must be equipped in accordance with the laws of the province within which the park lies.

Section 41 deals with **oversnow vehicles (snowmobiles) and all-terrain vehicles**. Oversnow vehicles are not allowed unless permitted by the superintendent. If allowed, the vehicle must meet the provincial standards within which the park is situated, be operated in accordance with the conditions set by the superintendent and, the driver and passenger must wear the equipment specified by the province in question. All-terrain vehicles are only permitted for park administration purposes and with the permission of the superintendent.

Section 43 deals with areas for **toboggans and sleds**. No person shall, within a park, coast or slide upon any toboggan or sled along or across a highway or public place that has not been set aside by the superintendent for coasting or sliding.

Section 47 deals with **roller-skating, skateboarding and roller-blading**. It prohibits these activities on streets and sidewalks within the boundaries of towns, visitor centres or resort subdivisions. It allows roller-skiing and roller-blading on highways outside of towns and requires that the activity be done single file in the left-hand lane!

APPENDIX 2: Management Directives and Bulletins Directed Towards Recreation Activities

- 2.1.4 *Photography and Film Making*, 1986.
- 2.2.4 *Emergency Services*, 1991.
- 2.2.7 *Service Plans*, 1991.
- 2.4.2 *Procedures for the Application of the Environmental Assessment and Review Process (EARP)*, 1985.
- 2.4.5 *Research and Collection Activities in Parks*, 1987.
- 2.4.8 *Bear Management*, 1991.
- 2.6.4 *Provision of Basic Services and Facilities for Disabled Visitors*, 1984.
- 2.6.5 *Grooming and Tracksetting of Cross Country Ski Trails*, 1984.
- 2.7.1 *Volunteer Program*, 1990.
- 2.7.2 *Cooperative Activities*, 1981.
- 2.7.3 *Cooperating Associations*, 1981.
- 3.1.3 *Public Safety Measures for National Historic Sites and Canals (Bulletin)*, 1991.
- 4.1.1 *Commercial Advertising and Promotion*, 1976.
- 4.4.14 *Military Exercises in National Parks*, 1988.
- 4.4.1 *Management of Freshwater Sportfishing in National Parks*, 1981.
- 4.4.3 *Public Safety Management*, 1981.
- 4.5.5 *Guided Tours*, 1986.
- 4.6.1 *Alpine and Freestyle Ski Competitions in National Parks*, 1986.
- 4.6.2 *Construction and Operation of Alpine Huts in National Park Located North of 60 Degrees*, 1981.
- 4.6.4 *User Fees in National Parks*, 1981.
- 4.6.5 *Group Camps*, 1983.

- 4.6.6. *Outlying Commercial Accommodation*, 1989.
- 4.6.8 *Backcountry Trail Bicycling*, 1987 (expired bulletin).
- 4.6.10 *Oversnow Vehicles*, 1983.
- 4.6.12 *Hostels in National Parks*, 1984.
- 4.6.16 *Backcountry Lodges*, 1989.
- 4.6.30 *Camping Activity*, 1993.
- 4.6.40 *Certification and Licensing of Guides in National Parks*, 1988.
- Camping Manual*, 1993.
- Trail Manual*, 1979.

APPENDIX 3: *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies (1994)*

PART I — POLICY OVERVIEW AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding Principles

All of the Guiding Principles are important to appropriate activity assessment. In particular, the Guiding Principles pertaining to **Ecological and Commemorative Protection and Integrity, Education and Presentation, Appropriate Activities and Accountability** are of importance.

PART II — ACTIVITY POLICIES

NATIONAL PARKS POLICY

Background

National parks cannot sustain all the types of activities and development which a broad range of visitors might desire. Generally, access and services which relate directly to the objective for national parks will be provided within the parks, while a broader range of needs will be met in the surrounding region. The co-operation of the tourism and other sectors will be essential to help establish the appropriate balance of services and facilities on a regional basis (p. 24).

Objective

To protect for all time representative natural areas of Canadian significance in a system of national parks, and to encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this natural heritage so as to leave it unimpaired for future generations (p. 25).

Management Planning

In keeping with these objectives, plans will: specify the type and degree of resource protection and management needed to assure the ecological integrity of the park and the management of its cultural resources; define the type, character and locale of visitor facilities, activities and services; and identify target groups (Section 2.0. p. 29).

Zoning

The national parks zoning system is an integrated approach by which land and water areas are classified according to ecosystem and cultural resource protection requirements, and their capability and sustainability to provide opportunities for visitor experiences. It is one part of an array of management strategies used by Parks Canada to assist in maintaining ecological integrity through providing a framework for the area-specific application of policy directions, such as for resource management, appropriate activities, and research. As such, zoning provides direction for the activities of park managers and park visitors alike. The application of zoning requires a sound information base related to both ecosystem structure, function and sensitivity, as well as the opportunities and impacts of existing and potential visitor experiences (Section 2.2, p. 30).

The balance of this section of the policy describes the character of each zone.

Ecosystem Protection

Section 3.1.2:

Human activities within a national park which threaten the integrity of park ecosystems will not be permitted. Where ecosystem integrity is threatened by human activities outside the park, Parks Canada will initiate collaborative action with adjacent land management agencies or owners to try to eliminate or reduce the threat.

Section 3.1.4:

Sport hunting will not be permitted in a national park. Sport fishing may be permitted in a national park but will be restricted to designated areas.

Public Understanding, Appreciation and Enjoyment of National Parks

All of the policy statements in Section 4.0 should be closely examined:

- 4.1 Management of Visitor Activities
- 4.2 Information and Public Education
- 4.3 Visitor Services and Facilities
- 4.4 Access and Circulation
- 4.5 Visitor Accommodation

The following statements are of particular relevance to appropriate activity assessments.

Section 4.1.2:

Consistent with maintaining ecological integrity, each national park may offer a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities conforming to the zoning determined in the management plan. These will serve visitors of diverse interests, ages, physical capabilities and skills so that they can understand and experience the park's natural environment.

Section 4.1.3:

Only outdoor activities which promote the appreciation of a park's purpose and objectives, which respect the integrity of the ecosystem integrity, and which call for a minimum of built facilities will be permitted.

Section 4.1.4:

As new or modified forms of outdoor recreation emerge, each will be assessed for its appropriateness nationally before consideration in the park management planning process. Individual park management plans will then specify the types and ranges of both new and existing appropriate outdoor recreation activities and their supporting facilities. Parks Canada will also periodically review its national directives to ensure that new forms of outdoor recreation are adequately considered.

Historic Activities and Infrastructure

Section 5.0 notes the range of historical activities and infrastructure that exist, how they are being managed and states:

It was not deemed inappropriate to establish permanent and seasonal communities within national parks to serve the needs and wants of the park visitors.

Section 5.1 addresses National Park Communities; and Section 5.2 addresses Golf Course and Commercial Ski Areas.

NATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION AREAS POLICY

Objective

To protect and conserve for all time natural marine areas of Canadian significance that are representative of the country's ocean environments and the Great Lakes, and to encourage public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of this marine heritage so as to leave it unimpaired for future generations (p. 49).

Management Planning

Section 2.3:

Maintaining the structure and function of marine ecosystems will be a first priority when considering the zoning and management of visitor use and renewable resource harvesting activities.

Section 2.8:

Parks Canada will co-operate with other federal agencies and levels of government, private organizations and individuals involved in the planning and management of areas adjacent to marine conservation areas to ensure that research, management and regulatory programs, facilities and services are integrated in effective and economical ways.

Section 2.10:

The national marine conservation area zoning system will apply to all land and water areas of national marine conservation areas, and will state the specific protection and use objectives of each designated zone. Parks Canada will monitor the degree to which those objectives are being achieved and assess the validity of the designation during the review of the management plan.

Section 2.10.1 to Section 2.10.3 describe the three types of marine conservation area zones.

Section 3.0:

Managing the use of national marine conservation areas will be based on the 'ecosystem management' concept. This involves adopting an holistic view of the natural environment, ensuring that decisions consider the dynamic and interactive nature of ecosystems and their finite capacity to recover from stress caused by human disturbances.

Section 3.2.1:

Parks Canada will implement appropriate regulations under the National Parks Act or other statutes in accordance with management and zoning decisions set out in the approved conservation area management plan.

Section 3.3 provides specific policy direction on **fishing and aquaculture**.

Section 3.4 provides specific policy direction on **marine transportation**.

Public Understanding, Appreciation and Enjoyment of National Marine Conservation Areas

All of the policy statements in Section 4.0 should be closely examined, including:

- 4.1 Management of Visitor Activities
- 4.2 Interpretation and Public Education
- 4.3 Visitor Services and Facilities

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES POLICY

Objectives

- *To foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historical commemoration.*
- *To ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada by protecting and presenting them for the benefit, education and enjoyment of this and future generations, in a manner that respects the significant and irreplaceable legacy represented by these places and their associated resources.*
- *To encourage and support the protection and presentation by others of resources of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada.*

The Role of Parks Canada

Section 1.3.7 states that:

Parks Canada will encourage understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of Canada's history and of Canada's national historic sites by communicating the scope of the national historic sites system and by making the results of research available to the public through departmental, co-operative and private sector publications and other media.

HISTORIC CANALS POLICY

Background

Providing opportunities and services for appropriate use (as defined in Section 3.0 of this policy) of the historic canals is an important part of canal operations. Parks Canada will maintain a proper balance between appropriate use and heritage resource protection, so that the legacy these canals represent will be

understood and appreciated. Consultation and co-operation are also important to the effective management of the historic canals. Various levels of government, as well as groups and concerned individuals, have a role in fostering public appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of the values represented by the historic canals (p. 81).

Objective

To foster appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of Canada's historic canals by providing for navigation; by managing cultural and natural resources for purposes of protection and presentation; and by encouraging appropriate uses (p. 81).

Almost all of the policy statements have some implications for appropriate activity assessments in canal settings. Of particular importance are sections 2.4 **Presentation** and 3.0 **Appropriate Use**.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

This policy applies to all cultural resources administered by Parks Canada, whether in national parks, national historic sites or historic canals. The following excerpts from the Cultural Resource Management Policy (Parks Canada Policies, p. 99) highlight sections dealing with visitor activities:

Section 1.2.2:

To understand and appreciate cultural resources and the sometimes complex themes they illustrate, the public will be provided with information and services that effectively communicate the importance and value of those resources and their themes.

- *Parks Canada will select the means for presenting the history and cultural heritage of its national parks, national historic sites and historic canals in ways that recognize the nature and interests of the public it serves.*

Section 1.2.3:

Parks Canada will encourage public involvement in the protection and presentation of cultural resources at national parks, national historic sites and historic canals.

- *Appropriate uses of cultural resources will be those uses and activities that respect the historic value and physical*

integrity of the resource, and that promote public understanding and appreciation....

- In the interest of long-term public benefit, new uses that threaten cultural resources of national historic significance will not be considered, and existing uses which threaten them will be discontinued or modified to remove the threat.*

Section 1.4.1:

... Appropriate visitor activities and public uses of cultural resources at national parks, national historic sites and historic canals will respect the resources and be consistent with the purpose, themes and objectives of the park, historic site or canal.

Section 3.4.1.1:

In planning conservation activities Parks Canada will ensure first and foremost the basic protection of its cultural resources. With regard to cultural resources, the highest obligation is to the protection and presentation of resources of national historic significance.

Section 3.5:

Presentation encompasses activities, facilities, programs and services, including those related to interpretation and visitor activities, that bring the public into contact, either directly or indirectly, with national historic sites, national parks and historic canals. Parks Canada presents these places by promoting awareness of them, by encouraging visitation, by disseminating information about them and about the opportunities to enjoy them, by interpreting them and their wider significance to visitors and non-visitors, by providing opportunities for appropriate visitor use and public involvement, and by providing essential services and facilities.

Section 3.5.2.3:

In selecting the most appropriate means and media for interpreting cultural resources and themes related to human history, Parks Canada will be guided by Ministerial decisions regarding the purpose and form of commemoration, and will consider the following factors:

- i) the commemorative intent, themes, purposes and objectives of the national historic site, national park or historic canal;*
- ii) the historic value of the resource;*
- iii) the interpretive potential of the resource and its themes;*
- iv) visitor needs and expectations;*
- v) the impact of interpretation activities upon the resource;*

- vi) the availability of knowledge on which to proceed;*
- vii) opportunities for appropriate visitor use;*
- viii) the relationship of specific interpretive options to the overall presentation of the site; and*
- ix) available human and financial resources.*

Section 3.5.3 sets out policy direction, **Special Programs and Events**, for national historic sites, national parks and historic canals.

APPENDIX 4: Policies Relating to Access for Disabled Persons

TREASURY BOARD OF CANADA SECRETARIAT

Circular No. 1989 — 16. Revised policy on accessibility.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the government to provide barrier-free access to use within Crown-owned and federally leased real property.

NATIONAL PARKS POLICY

Section 4.4.1:

Where feasible, access and circulation within national parks will be designed to supply opportunities for understanding, appreciation and enjoyment for visitors of all ages, skills and physical abilities. Special information programs will be offered where direct access is excessively challenging or inappropriate. All access and circulation will be defined in management plans and conform with zoning.

NATIONAL MARINE CONSERVATION AREAS POLICY

Section 4.1.3:

In providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, Parks Canada will take into account the different needs of visitors depending on their age, physical capabilities and levels of skill and knowledge to function safely in the marine environment.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Section 3.5.1.6:

Information about cultural resources will be accessible to all visitors. Where the location of a resource, service or facility illustrating the historic value of cultural resources prevents access by persons with disabilities, special programs or services will be offered.

ACCESS SERIES

- *Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training, 1989.*
- *Design and Parks Programs, 1990.*
- *Accessibility: Requirements and Recommendations, 1991.*
- *Access Technology, 1992.*
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