



About Parks Canada

On May 18, 2010, the Honourable Jim Prentice, Canada's Environment Minister and Minister Responsible for Parks Canada, and the Honourable John MacDonell, Nova Scotia's Minister of Natural Resources, announced that the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia will take the necessary steps to explore how Sable Island could be designated as a national park under the Canada National Parks Act for the benefit of future generations.

It is with pleasure that I announce the commitment by the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia to explore how Sable Island could be designated as a national park. In this International Year of Biodiversity, what better way to celebrate than by taking steps toward the long-lasting protection of Sable Island, its majestic horses and some of the rarest birds and wildlife in Canada by designating it a national park.

**Honourable Jim Prentice,
Minister of the Environment
and Minister Responsible for Parks Canada**

A national park designation gives Sable Island the highest level of protection of its natural and cultural features. The next step is to hear from the Mi'kmaq and others as we work with the federal government toward an agreement to conserve and manage the Island for present and future generations.

**Honourable John MacDonell,
Minister of Natural Resources,
Government of Nova Scotia**

TOP: S. COFFEN-SMOUT
BOTTOM: D. FENTON



About Parks Canada

Parks Canada is the federal agency responsible for managing national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas and this year is proudly celebrating 125 years of natural heritage conservation in Canada. On behalf of Canadians, Parks Canada protects and presents these treasures because they are unique and authentic, and because of the stories they tell, the experiences they offer, and the contribution they make to help us understand the essence of Canada.

Parks Canada protects and presents 42 national parks across Canada ranging from vast, remote parks in Canada's north that welcome only a handful of visitors a year to smaller parks that are more accessible and offer more opportunities for a diverse range of people to come, discover and create memorable experiences. Parks Canada is a proud steward of these heritage places and protects and presents them for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians while ensuring that they remain unimpaired for present and future generations.

National parks are representative examples of Canada's terrestrial regions. They offer a variety of recreational activities and learning experiences as well as a unique opportunity for Canadians to personally connect with their land.¹

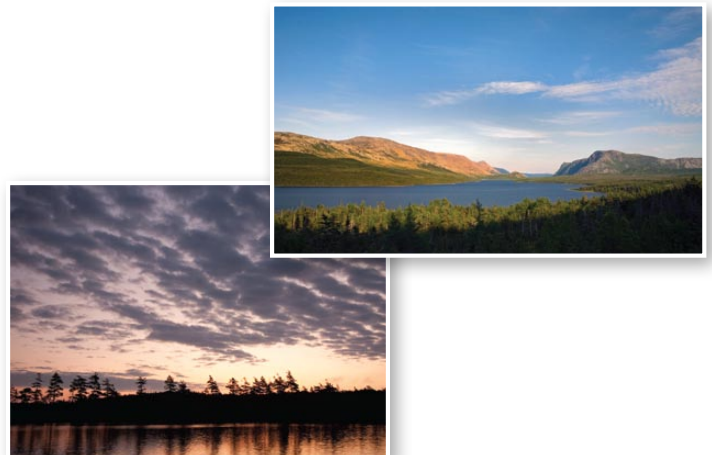
Parks Canada's mandate and vision statement

The mandate of Parks Canada describes what the Agency does, and has remained essentially unchanged for three quarters of a century:

On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations.

Parks Canada's goal is to make Canada's places and stories more relevant to Canadians, as described in its vision statement:

Canada's treasured natural and historic places will be a living legacy, connecting hearts and minds to a stronger, deeper understanding of the very essence of Canada.





System of protected places

National parks are established to protect and present outstanding representative examples of natural landscapes and phenomena that occur in Canada's 39 natural regions. These wild places, located in every province and territory, range from mountains and plains to boreal forests and tundra, to lakes and glaciers, and much more. National parks protect the habitats, wildlife and ecosystem diversity representative of and sometimes unique to the natural regions.²

Canada's national parks and national marine conservation areas, as well as the places, persons and events of national historic significance to Canada, are symbols to the world and are part of the fabric of the nation. Protection of Canada's natural and cultural heritage and making it available to Canadians for discovery and enjoyment are of key importance. Establishing heritage places is essential to enhancing pride, encouraging stewardship, giving expression to our identity as Canadians, and involving Canada in the internationally shared objective of protecting and commemorating the best of the world's natural and cultural heritage.³



PHOTOS: TOP – M. PETERSMANN; RIGHT – M. PETERSMANN; LEFT – D. FENTON

How are new national parks established?

National parks are a special type of public lands administered by the federal government under the provisions of the Canada National Parks Act.

Although there is a sequence of steps followed for identifying, selecting and establishing new national parks, each situation is different, and the final result reflects the individual circumstances and the involvement of all those parties that are directly affected.⁴

The following steps give an overview and outline of the expected sequence of events for Sable Island:

- Public consultations to secure public comment on the conservation, management and operational issues associated with the designation of Sable Island as a national park;
- Consultations with the Mi'kmaq and other key stakeholders;
- The governments of Canada and Nova Scotia would then negotiate any required park establishment agreement;
- The federal government would then introduce legislation resulting in the legal designation of Sable Island as a national park of Canada;
- Parks Canada would then prepare a management plan, outlining key strategies and detailed objectives regarding ecological integrity, visitor experience and public education.



Management planning

Management plans are public documents that outline the objectives for managing national parks as well as the means and strategies to achieve these objectives. They are key instruments for ensuring that Parks Canada delivers on its commitments to the people of Canada as communicated through the Agency's Corporate Plan.

At the local level, management planning is the main engagement process to ensure that the Agency meets its legal obligation to allow stakeholders, partners and Aboriginal communities an effective voice in shaping the future of each of the heritage places under Parks Canada's responsibility and assisting the Agency in establishing priorities.⁵

Sources

¹Corporate Plan 2009/10-2013/14, Parks Canada Agency Overview

²http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/np-pn/intro_e.asp

³Corporate Plan 2009/10-2013/14, Heritage Places Establishment, Program Activity Description

⁴National Parks System Plan, 3rd Edition

⁵Parks Canada Guide to Management Planning, 2008