Towards Financial Sustainability
Tourism & Canada’s National Parks

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Parks Canada Agency
Created in 1998 as “a departmental corporation” within the Department of Canadian Heritage, with:
• Separate employer status;
• Full revenue retention;
• 2 year rolling budget;
• Non-lapsing account to fund new national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas.

“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 the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present & future generations.” CNPA

➢ We are guardians!
➢ We are guides!
➢ We are partners!
➢ We are story tellers!

Building Pride for Over a Century
• First park system in the world
• Best rated Canadian government agency for service
• Central to Canadian values:
  ✓ Important to protect national parks (96% - Environics Poll 2000)
  ✓ Heritage conservation important to Canadian culture and identity (92% - Golfarb Report 2000)
• 40 national parks, 146 national historic sites administered by Parks Canada and 2 national marine conservation areas.
Contributing to People, Economy, Environment and Tourism

- Leaders in partnerships with Aboriginal peoples
- Promote rural Canada as place to live, work & visit.
- Cornerstones of environment
  - Protects 245,000 km²
  - Ecological and economic services
  - Historic buildings lead to less demand for new materials
- Centre pieces of Canadian tourism, internationally, nationally and regionally
- 26 million park and site visits annually
  - $1.2 billion annual contribution to GDP
  - $1 invested into Parks Canada = $3.50 impact on GDP
  - $145 million spent by foreign visitors
- Sustains 38,000 full-time jobs

Parks Canada’s Key Priorities

- Maintain quality service to visitors. (We are achieving 90-95% high to very high satisfaction levels!)
- Maintain the ecological integrity (EI) of national parks, the sustainability of national marine conservation areas (NMCAs) and the commemorative integrity (CI) of national historic sites and cultural resources
- Establish new national parks and NMCAs in unrepresented areas and designate new national historic sites
- Ensure adequate long-term funding and financial sustainability of the Parks Canada programs

Parks Canada Financial Situation

- Two decades of budget reductions and lost purchasing power due to inflation
- Tidal wave of deteriorated cultural resources and visitor infrastructure, some of which will close or even disappear.
- New obligations (e.g. Agency status, CEAA, Canada Labour Code)
- Government commitments to expand parks and sites systems
- It will be a challenge to maintain existing programs and services.

Parks Canada Funding Needs Over Five Years

- Extending national park and national marine conservation area systems (provided in Budget 2003)
- Improving ecological and commemorative integrity (provided in Budget 2003)
- Maintaining expected or adequate level of services
- Improving National Historic Sites of Canada Cost-Sharing Program in order to deal with the highest priority sites
- Recapitalization of assets
New Funding and Sources
Federal Budget 2003, Minister’s announcement and Other:
• New Parks and National Marine Conservation Areas
• Ecological Integrity
• Historic Places Initiative
• Species at Risk
• “Rust Out”• Revenues – A National pricing Strategy

National Pricing Strategy
• Increasing recognition that revenues generated from user fees are essential to sustainability.
• Past modest increases did not reflect cost of delivery or value. Prices are often below industry standards or are cited as reason for relatively low fees for service.
• The development of an Agency wide fee strategy to align costs and value. Particularly for business licenses, leases and high occupancy areas.
• Extensive consultations with Industry and visitors.
• Training of staff

Other sources
• Sponsorships
  – Corporate
  – Private
• Land Trusts
  – Particularly for new initiatives
• Other funding agencies
  – Delivery of economic or employment objectives
• Cooperating Associations
  – “Friends of”
  – Volunteers

Sustainable Business Plans
• Each management unit is using nationally driven business planning to chart sustainable practices.
• Five year perspective of issues and proposed realistic options and strategies. Updated annually.
• Proposes a combination of cost reduction and reliance upon revenue generation to bring sustainability.
• Nationally developed models for service delivery to guide appropriate levels of service and resources.
Parks Canada and Tourism: Working with partners

Recognition that welcoming our national and international visitors is a key component of achieving our mandate!

- Canadian tourism commission
- Tourism industry association of Canada
- Provincial tourism industry associations
- Local destination marketing organizations
- Individual business
- Cooperating associations
- Funding agencies of governments
- NGO’s

Our Shared Future!

- Our success depends upon our ability to collaborate.
- We must continue to seek to understand and respect each others goals.
- Parks Canada’s role is to foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present & future generations.
- Leadership must also come from communities and industry.
- There will be differences of opinion. It is how we resolve them that will determine our success.

We have learned that by placing integrity first we have maintained the quality and authenticity that are the real incentives to visit.