



CCEA
CANADIAN COUNCIL
ON ECOLOGICAL AREAS



STRATEGIC PLAN
2010 - 2020



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**CANADIAN COUNCIL
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(CCEA)**

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A COMMITMENT TO PROTECTED AREAS IN CANADA

CCEA's Strategic Plan 2010 - 2020

This strategic plan was developed by the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas (CCEA) in consultation with its federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictional representatives. It outlines five strategic priorities where CCEA intends to focus its efforts in support of jurisdictions and agencies that have primary responsibility for the designation and management of protected areas. The strategic plan has a ten-year horizon, a three-year implementation strategy (2010-2012), and will be reviewed in 2012. Comments may be forwarded to the CCEA Secretariat c/o Robert.Helie@ec.gc.ca.



Bob Lake Conservation Reserve, Temagami, Ontario

The Canadian Council on Ecological Areas (CCEA) was incorporated in 1982 as a national, non-profit organization with a mission

“to facilitate and assist Canadians to establish and manage a comprehensive network of protected areas representative of Canada’s terrestrial and aquatic ecological natural diversity”.

In 1995 CCEA became a registered charity based largely on its educational function. Consistent with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), CCEA views ‘protected areas’ as areas established through legislation or other effective means that are managed to achieve the long-term protection of the components, structure, and processes of ecosystems. They can include areas modified by human activities that retain significant ecological importance, as well as relatively pristine areas.

For nearly 30 years CCEA (Council) has worked to encourage, guide and assist efforts to maintain Canada’s heritage of ecologically significant areas. With changes in government, society and the environment, protected areas remain an important window into our collective past, as well as an essential part of a sustainable future. Protected areas are repositories of ecological knowledge and understanding

that are needed to sustain natural and human communities. They help us to describe and understand the history and processes that affect the distribution and viability of native species and ecosystems. They are places where species and their habitats can be maintained in a world that is rapidly being modified by human activities. If properly selected, designed, connected and managed, protected areas will continue to be the backbone and foundation of landscapes that provide for our diverse societal values and needs.

CCEA is structured to encourage involvement and collaboration among different Canadian protected areas jurisdictions and its various partners – individuals, professionals, students and academics representing a wide variety of agencies, organizations and other institutions. The CCEA Board of Directors (Board) is the managing and decision-making authority that oversees and coordinates CCEA’s activities. The Board seeks advice and assistance from a wide range of conservation policy makers and practitioners across Canada, Canadian jurisdictions, environmental and conservation organizations, universities and industry. CCEA works in partnership with Canadian and international agencies and organizations, and seeks to establish consensus from diverse regional and sectoral viewpoints to formulate a larger cohesive ecological picture of relevance to all jurisdictional representatives.



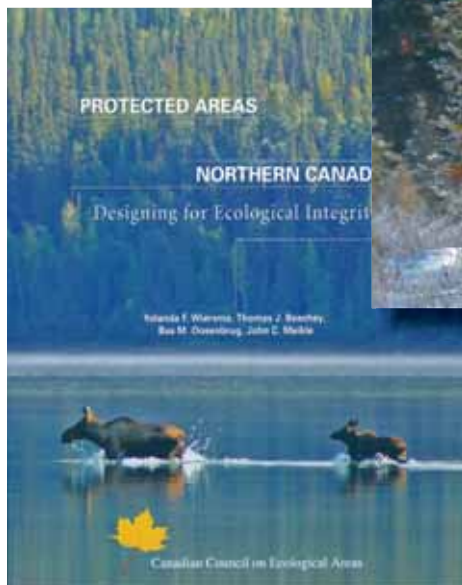
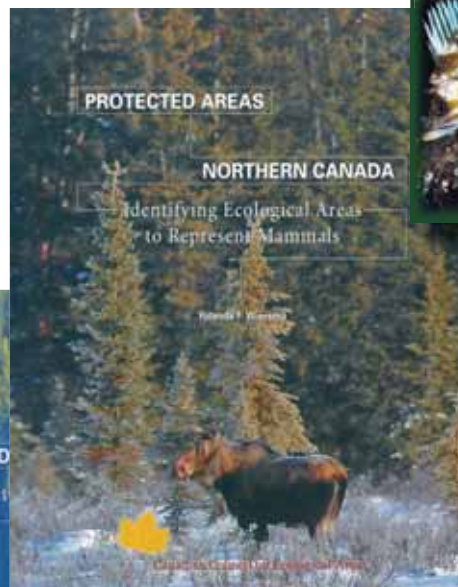
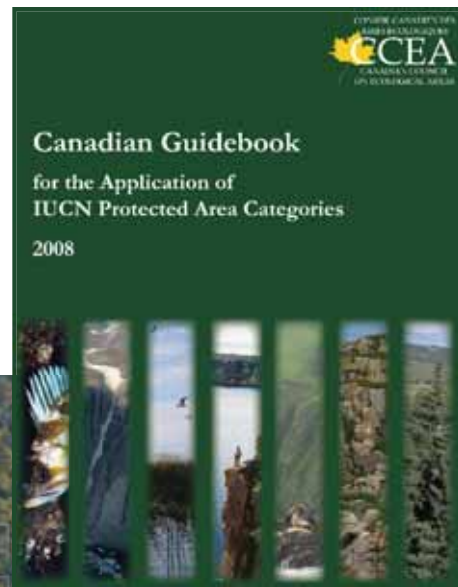
STRATEGIC PLAN 2010 - 2020

As such, CCEA provides an effective communications network for protected areas practitioners in Canada and beyond, and a responsive forum for research, policy development, innovation, technical advances and transfer, and professional growth.

This strategic plan is written to engage all Canadians in the protection of our ecological heritage. The plan represents a commitment to work together to fulfill a renewed vision for CCEA. The Council recognises that clear communications is essential to raise its profile, and to build greater awareness of the benefits of local, national and international conservation efforts through protected areas.

Some CCEA Accomplishments

- Protected Area Management Guidelines
- Northern Protected Area Guidelines Research
- National Ecological Framework
- Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System (CARTS)
- Jurisdictional Reports
- Conferences and Workshops
- Science-based Publications
- Web site/Bulletin Board/ Newsletter
- Gold Leaf Awards
- Stan Rowe Home Place Scholarship



CCEA AND CANADA'S PROTECTED AREAS LEGACY

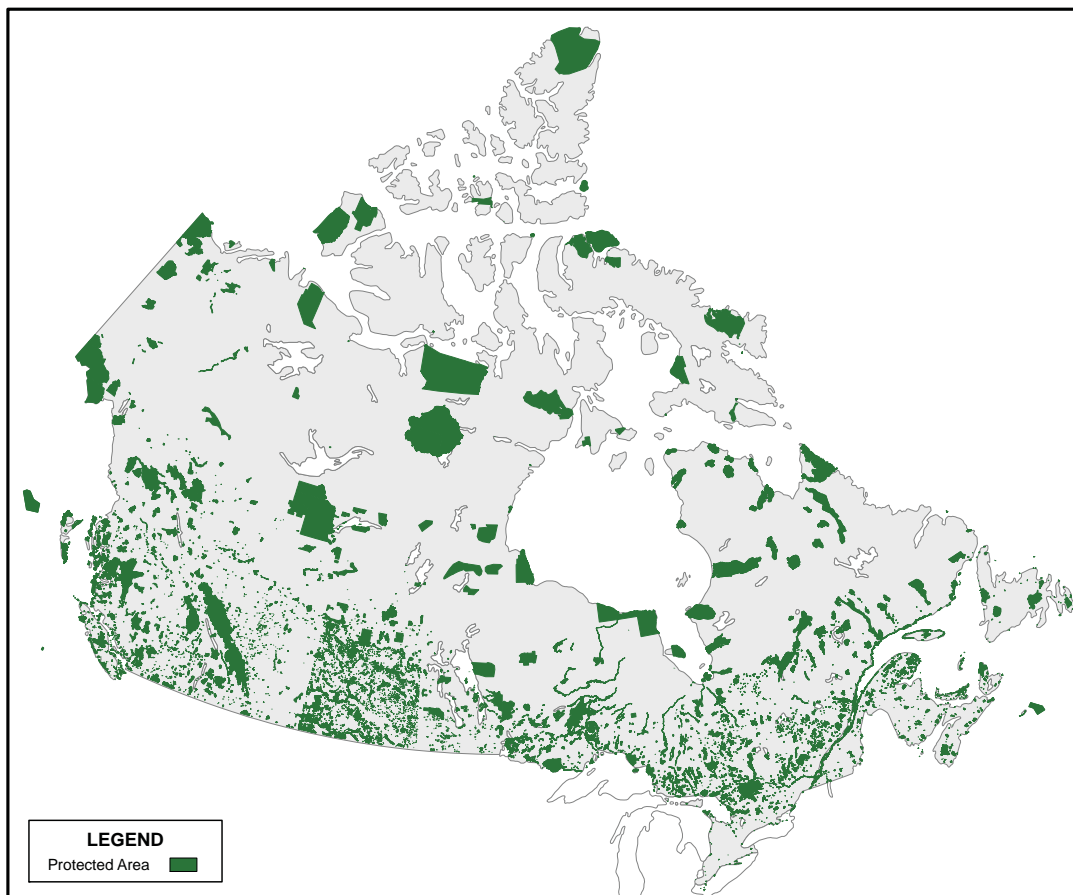
As of 2009, 9.36% of Canada's lands and waters were designated as protected areas, for a total of 96.4 million hectares¹. Marine protected areas comprised approximately 3 million hectares, or about 0.5% of Canada's oceans. The extent of protected areas in Canada varies considerably among jurisdictions and among different ecological regions of the country, ranging from more than 22% of the Arctic Cordillera, to 7.4% of the Boreal Shield, to 0.4% of the Mixed-wood Plains (Great Lakes-St. Lawrence valley)².

Canada ranks 16th out of 30 OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) countries in terms of percentage of protected areas, but ranks 4th in terms of lands in IUCN Categories I-IV protected areas, which largely prohibit industrial use². IUCN recognizes a gradation of protected area types ranging from those most strongly (Category I) to those least strongly (Category VI) protected from human intervention.

Canada is one of a few countries that still has the opportunity to conserve relatively intact, unfragmented habitats within a protected areas system, particularly in its boreal forests and Arctic ecosystems. In the southern

regions of the country the highly fragmented landscapes necessitate approaches that focus on conserving and restoring biodiversity and species-at-risk habitat, and working with conservation organizations, land owners and land users toward effective stewardship of private lands.

In the early years, CCEA priorities included the promotion of ecological science and the value of ecological areas to conserve biodiversity, and establishing a Canadian Conservation Areas Database (CCAD). Since the 1990s, CCEA's efforts have focused on promoting the recognition of a hierarchy of terrestrial ecological regions and the assessment and establishment of representative protected areas within each of these regions. This strategic plan will continue along this path by supporting the establishment of marine protected areas, protected area linkages and corridors, and improved planning and management of protected areas to meet current biodiversity conservation challenges such as habitat loss and fragmentation, and emerging issues such as climate change. Education, awareness and information sharing, particularly among protected areas researchers, policy advisors and practitioners will continue to be a primary focus for CCEA.



Source: Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System 2009

¹ Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System May, 2009

² Canadian Protected Areas Status Report 2000-2005 (Environment Canada 2006)

MISSION AND GOALS

CCEA has produced a strategic plan that affirms its mission to

“support the establishment and management of a network of protected areas that will represent and conserve the natural diversity of Canada’s terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems”.

CCEA’s broad goals to support the identification, establishment and management of a network of protected areas are:

ECOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY

- To guide the design and completion of a network of Canadian protected areas that conserve the full range of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems;

MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND REPORTING

- To advance sound science-based management, monitoring and reporting of protected areas;
- To determine the ecological requirements and institutional arrangements needed to secure the integrity of protected areas;

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

- To inform and to educate Canadians about the importance and roles of protected areas;
- To promote the full range of values of protected areas in an ecosystem context; and,

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

- To conduct its work and facilitate the exchange of relevant information among interested partners through regional and national forums.

At the heart of this plan are **five strategic priorities** aimed at fulfilling CCEA’s mission.

1. **CONSERVE ECOLOGICAL DIVERSITY THROUGH A NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS.**
2. **MANAGE PROTECTED AREAS USING KNOWLEDGE-BASED DECISION MAKING.**
3. **DOCUMENT AND REPORT PROTECTED AREAS INFORMATION ACCURATELY.**
4. **ENHANCE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS OF PROTECTED AREAS.**
5. **ENGAGE THE PROTECTED AREAS COMMUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY.**



Burrowing Owl

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The objectives and outcomes outlined in this framework will be advanced through an implementation work plan that prioritizes outcomes, and establishes targets, timelines, and specific actions to meet them.

PRIORITY 1

CONSERVE ECOLOGICAL DIVERSITY THROUGH AN INTEGRATED NETWORK OF TERRESTRIAL, MARINE AND FRESHWATER PROTECTED AREAS

Ecological diversity is the sum of the biophysical systems, features and processes that occur across landscape and seascape at various spatial and temporal scales. Conserving diversity to a level that allows continued viability of ecological systems is accomplished in part by protecting key terrestrial and aquatic features and processes within a complex matrix of human uses. Since the entire landscape and seascape cannot be protected, protected areas should be located and designed in ways that ensure their persistence and optimize their contribution to ecological sustainability.

CCEA will continue to facilitate discussion and advance the resolution of issues associated with the design of integrated protected areas networks. These activities include the development and use of hierarchical ecosystem classification schemes; the application of gap analysis using these schemes, at both coarse and fine scales of resolution; the application of landscape fragmentation and connectivity analyses; the identification and assessment of natural and

anthropogenic threats and stressors; the consideration of ecological integrity, persistence, irreplaceability, and vulnerability in network planning; and, the design of protected areas in large, unfragmented landscapes such as the Boreal and Arctic regions of Canada.

OBJECTIVE

By 2020, there will be a comprehensive network of Canadian protected areas conserving the range of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecological diversity.

OUTCOMES

1. Ecosystem or ecological classification schemes are current and comprehensive.
2. Protected areas gap analyses are conducted and applied.
3. Modelling tools for landscape/seascape planning are advanced and applied.
4. Terrestrial, marine and freshwater protected areas are integrated to allow broad ecosystem based evaluation.



Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area, Quebec

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

PRIORITY 2

MANAGE PROTECTED AREAS USING KNOWLEDGE-BASED DECISION MAKING

By 2009 9.36% of Canada was designated as protected areas by federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions and non-governmental land conservation organizations. While the system of protected areas needs to be expanded, there is also a priority to ensure that existing protected areas are managed to meet the conservation objectives for which they were established. The range of management objectives is reflected in the IUCN's six categories of protected areas.

Protected area management focuses on minimizing human impacts on ecological features and processes to meet a variety of objectives: maintaining natural processes and the wilderness character of large protected areas; restoring degraded ecological communities and habitat; reducing threats to biodiversity, including invasive species and climate change; and maintaining ecological integrity and ecological benchmarks so that ecological impacts of surrounding land uses can be evaluated.

A variety of knowledge and tools is available to support park and protected area managers. Enabling legislation, policy and related resources, and ecosystem science involving knowledge of species, communities and systems (e.g. natural range of variation, natural disturbance regimes, etc.) are essential. Ecosystem science needs to be considered relative to other knowledge-based systems, including local and traditional knowledge. Involvement of the public, including local residents and other users of parks and protected areas, is critical for effective long-term management. Assessment of management effectiveness will require a range of monitoring methods, criteria and indicators.

OBJECTIVE

By 2020, all Canadian protected areas will be carefully managed, monitored and reported on using informed decisions based on best knowledge.

OUTCOMES

1. Best management practices are researched, advanced, applied and reported.
2. Criteria and indicators for monitoring ecological integrity are developed and employed.
3. Management plans are in place and up-to-date.
4. Evaluation of management effectiveness are conducted in each protected area and reported.
5. Stakeholders are engaged as necessary to effect long-term stewardship goals.
6. Conservation science, traditional ecological knowledge and human dimensions are more widely applied for the long term stewardship of protected areas.



Colville Lake, Northwest Territories

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

PRIORITY 3

REPORT PROTECTED AREAS INFORMATION ACCURATELY

Previous works by CCEA and protected area agencies across Canada have engaged the diverse communities of protected areas practitioners across Canada. These have led to the publication of a number of ground-breaking products, including the *Canadian Protected Areas Status Report 2000-2005*, the *2007 Atlas of Canada's National Protected Areas Framework Layer*, and the *2008 Canadian Guidebook for the Application of IUCN Protected Area Categories*. In December 2008, the *Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System (CARTS)* provided, for the first time, a permanent statement from authoritative sources, and publicly available Internet database with tabular and mapping outputs that cover all of Canada. Environment Canada has taken responsibility for maintaining CARTS on behalf of the CCEA and has incorporated inputs from all federal, provincial and territorial governments as well as a small number of non-governmental organizations that also manage protected areas. This database is a significant advancement over earlier efforts to document and track protected areas.



Avalon Wilderness Reserve, Newfoundland and Labrador

The development of tools and information will continue so that new and changing impacts on protected areas can be mitigated or resolved through knowledge and effective policy, and ongoing progress to establish and manage protected areas can be regularly reported and assessed. CARTS will move beyond providing a visual depiction with basic documentation and dates of protected areas establishment, to providing interactive geospatial information that will inform assessments and research on landscape conservation, ecosystem integrity, and ecological sustainability. This will require collaboration with partners to develop reporting and assessment standards beyond those of the IUCN classification of protected areas in order to describe landscape features (e.g., terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems and species) and functions (e.g., connectivity and integrity).

OBJECTIVE

CCEA will continue to ensure that current information on all protected areas in Canada is compiled and reported accurately. As well, using Canadian content and technology standards, interactive spatial and non-spatial query services will be developed by 2020.

OUTCOMES

1. CARTS shows marked progress and improvement in the areas of data update procedures, management transparency, user interactivity, and public access.
2. Canadian jurisdictions and non-governmental organizations that are mandated to establish and manage protected areas use CARTS for their statement as authoritative source for reporting on terrestrial and marine protected areas.
3. The Canadian Guidebook for the Application of IUCN Protected Area Categories is updated to be consistent with developments in the 2008 IUCN Guidelines resolutions and recommendations.
4. Ecosystem features and functions that improve the characterisation of protected areas are identified and integrated into the CARTS schema.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

PRIORITY 4

ENHANCE EDUCATION AND AWARENESS OF PROTECTED AREAS

CCEA has a respected record of communicating scientific information on emerging and current issues. It relies on a multi-disciplinary network of managers, scientists and policy-makers to undertake and facilitate discussion on ecosystem-based research and the links between ecosystems, the economy and society. CCEA has organized numerous conferences and workshops on topical issues that enable jurisdictional representatives, non-governmental participants and various other protected area practitioners to exchange information and resolve important issues. CCEA has published many conference and workshop proceedings, occasional papers, newsletters and fact sheets on various protected area topics.

CCEA makes efficient use of the Worldwide Web. As an educational and awareness tool, the Web provides a window on CCEA's activities and information products in both official languages. CCEA will continue to populate its website (<http://www.ccea.org>) with both current and archival material in both official languages, thus providing a permanent repository and source of reference material on the organization's contribution to protected areas. Major products, such as the national report (CARTS), are made available exclusively via the CCEA web site, as are the primary reference to summary statistics for protected areas in Canada. Through promotion by participating jurisdictions and other partners, CCEA will become a reference source of information on many aspects of landscape and seascape conservation. Current research and activities will be reported, promoted and linked via the CCEA web site. CCEA will continue to work with partners to provide appropriate material to support education and awareness about protected areas to Canadian and international audiences.



Restoule Provincial Park, Ontario

CCEA will continue its two annual recognition programs: a conservation achievement award known as the Gold Leaf Awards; and the Stan Rowe Home Place Award, a graduate scholarship. The Gold Leaf Award acknowledges outstanding contributions, achievements and excellence in planning and managing protected areas. To date over 60 individuals and organizations have been recognized. The award often focuses on noteworthy efforts within the jurisdiction where the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being hosted. The Home Place Award encourages and supports scholarships by graduate students at Canadian universities whose theses relate to CCEA's mission. CCEA promotes the students research, provides a \$1,000 cash award to each recipient and opportunities to present their work at the CCEA AGM.

OBJECTIVE

By 2020, the CCEA will play a increasing role in educating and promoting awareness of protected areas as critical components of environmental conservation both in Canada and internationally.

OUTCOMES

1. Venues for the exchange of innovative ideas on protected areas are provided on a regular basis.
2. Current and emerging protected areas knowledge is disseminated.
3. Excellence in protected areas research and practice is rewarded.
4. Web presence is enhanced to provide relevant information and links.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

PRIORITY 5

ENGAGE THE PROTECTED AREAS COMMUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY

CCEA works in partnership with many agencies, organizations, and individuals across Canada and throughout the world. It is especially responsive to the inter-jurisdictional and regional ecosystem needs of the provinces and territories. The core program activities of CCEA focus on connecting Canadian protected area jurisdictions, specialists, practitioners and organizations. CCEA holds collaborative meetings in different jurisdictions to discuss common issues and specific regional concerns, and to celebrate jurisdictional achievements. Its leadership on terrestrial ecosystem representation, a national framework for protected areas, approaches to gap analysis, marine conservation areas, northern protected areas, protected area categorization, international collaboration, and data management are indicative of enduring work serving wide jurisdictional and national needs.

Internationally, CCEA has contributed its collective expertise to a number of organizations, including the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), the government of Mexico, the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and the George Wright Society (GWS) in the United States. Increasing global conservation efforts have made the CCEA's international portfolio highly relevant to regional and national efforts to fulfill Canada's commitment to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. CCEA's inclusive structure and mandate enable it to address large-scale and over-arching issues relevant to all Canadian jurisdictions.



Waterton Lakes National Park, 2007 CCEA Annual General Meeting

CCEA recognizes the value of communicating its message to organizations with related mandates, and is making increased efforts to integrate protected areas work with other organizations such as the Canadian Parks Council (CPC), the Science and Management of Protected Areas Association (SAMPAA), and the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI). With the sustained involvement of provincial, territorial and federal government agencies, non-governmental organizations and other partners and associates, CCEA will continue to be a vibrant and relevant forum for ecologically based approaches to establishing and managing protected areas.

OBJECTIVE

By 2020 the Canadian protected areas community, through their affiliation with CCEA, will be supported by a range of partnerships fostered through CCEA's mission.

OUTCOMES

1. CCEA continues to provide strong leadership in progressive, science-based thinking, and its application to establish and manage protected areas.
2. Partnerships and shared interests with all protected areas organizations and individuals are fostered and advanced.
3. CCEA's continued activity and relevance will ensure financial and in-kind support from governments and private sector sources.

ADVANCING CCEA's WORK

There is growing recognition that effective management of protected areas requires a careful blend of information, knowledge and understanding from both the natural and social sciences. In its ongoing development and application of sound conservation science, CCEA will continue to be an advocate for ways to effectively apply the principles of ecological integrity, the restoration of damaged ecosystems, and assessment methods, particularly using a common suite of ecological indicators. CCEA will also help advance discussion on ecological approaches to management and promote best practices in the surrounding landscape that are compatible with maintaining the health of protected areas.

To carry on this important work, CCEA remains indebted to the financial and in-kind support from government agencies and private sector sources. CCEA's collaborative approach to projects and problem solving ensure relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, guaranteeing the highest return to the Canadian protected areas community and other sectors.

Benefits to jurisdictions and partners from CCEA participation

- National voice and forum
- Science-based and apolitical approach
- Facilitation and dialogue
- National synthesis/leadership
- Shared Canadian perspective
- Professional development
- Information exchange/problem solving
- Showcase success
- Public-private sector bridge
- Leadership, expertise and resources



Tobeatic Wilderness Area, Nova Scotia

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Current contact information can be found on the CCEA website:

http://www.ccea.org/en_contact.html

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Parc national des Hautes-Gorges-de-la-Rivière-Malbaie , 2008 CCEA Annual General Meeting



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