



# ESTABLISHING A NEW TERRITORIAL PARK IN THE NUNAVUT SETTLEMENT AREA

Establishing and developing a Territorial Park or other special place in Nunavut takes place over many years, through close consultations and involvement with residents of nearby communities, and with the best available traditional, local and scientific knowledge.



## PHASE I: PARK FEASIBILITY

The first stage in establishing a park is identifying an appropriate **Area of Interest**. Generally, proposed park areas are identified in the Park System Plan, Community or Regional Land Use Plan or other existing documents and reports such as Economic Development Plans, Wildlife Research reports, cultural or archaeological studies. Communities may also propose areas of interest for parks, based on their own research, study or knowledge of an important area.

Nunavut Parks collects the information related to parks from these reports, and any other information that may be available from other Federal and Territorial government departments, wildlife officers, hamlets, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, or agencies such as the Inuit Heritage Trust, or the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. This information is put into a **Preliminary Park Resource File** which provides background information on the cultural and natural resources and the recreational and economic opportunities that a potential territorial park may include and determines and documents potential benefits of park development. Nunavut Parks presents the Preliminary Park Resource File to the community, and discusses the concept of a park or other related ideas with them.

If there is potential for a park, and the community approves the park concept, a **Parks Advisory Committee (PAC)** is established. The PAC includes members from the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO), Elders, Hamlet, Community Lands and Resources Committee (CLARC), Youth, and other interested organizations.



With guidance from the advisory committee, Nunavut Parks completes a **Feasibility Study** which includes an initial inventory and overview of area resources including cultural and archaeological sites, wildlife, habitat, and vegetation, landscape and geological information, preliminary mineral assessment, place names, and other area values. The Feasibility Study also documents economic development needs and opportunities, tourism and recreation opportunities, and determines the potential for various park scenarios.

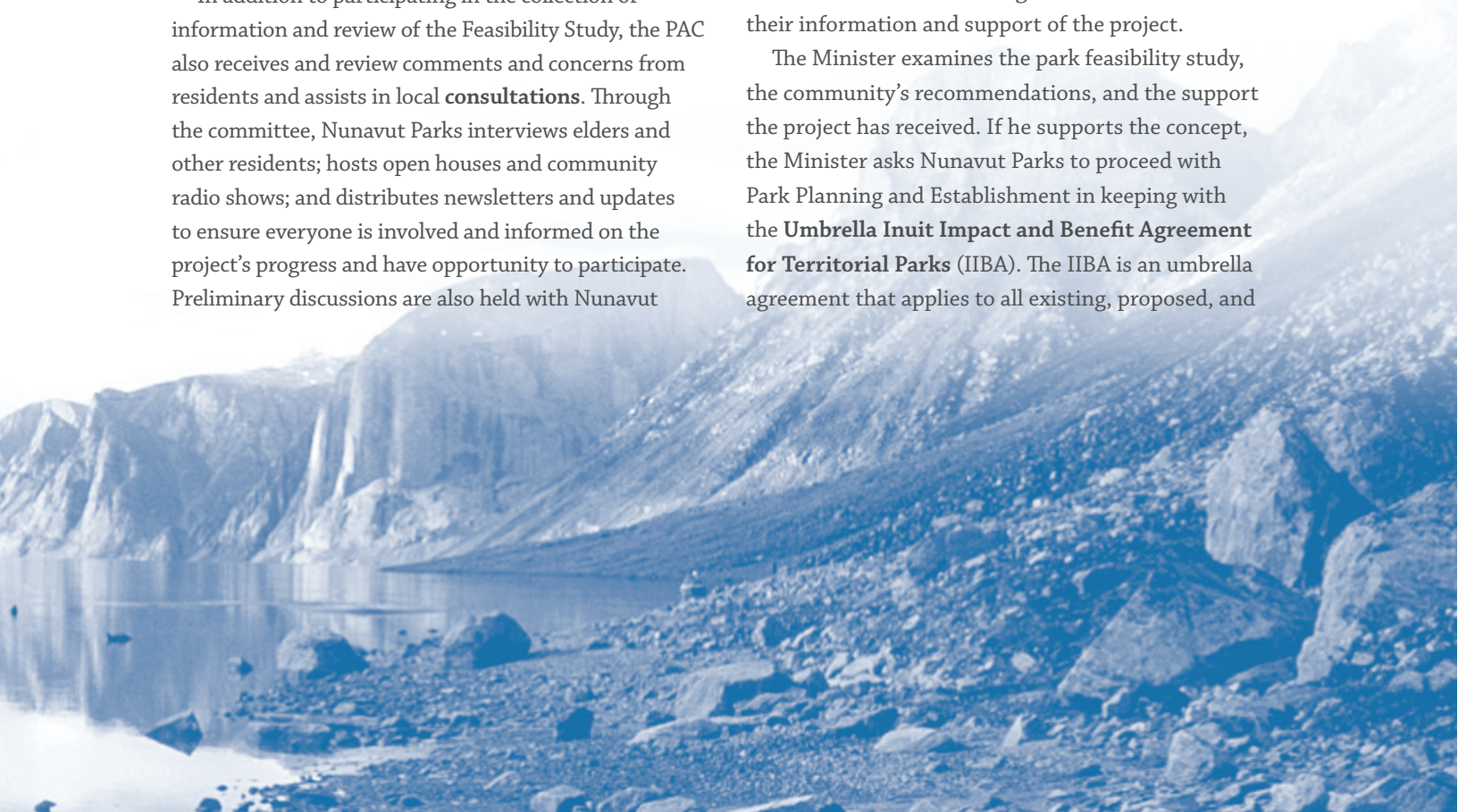
In addition to participating in the collection of information and review of the Feasibility Study, the PAC also receives and review comments and concerns from residents and assists in local **consultations**. Through the committee, Nunavut Parks interviews elders and other residents; hosts open houses and community radio shows; and distributes newsletters and updates to ensure everyone is involved and informed on the project's progress and have opportunity to participate. Preliminary discussions are also held with Nunavut

Planning Commission to ensure the proposed park is in conformity with the existing regional Land Use Plan.

The end result of the feasibility study is a recommendation, by the community, of a **Park Concept** supported by the community that considers park boundaries, natural values, cultural heritage, tourism and recreation values, community development needs, and park operational and development requirements. The park concept may include Inuit Owned Lands, or other Federally managed lands such as water and coastal areas; but recognizes that final boundaries and management approaches will have to include consideration of IOL and Federal responsibilities.

Based on its review of all the information presented in the Feasibility Study, and comments from consultations within the community, the community is asked to approve the Park Feasibility Project, and recommend a **Park Study Area** for consideration by the **Minister, Department of Environment**. The PAC also invites letters of support from residents, community groups, associations, the hamlet, and others interests. Nunavut Parks and the PAC also present their recommendations to the Regional Inuit Association for their information and support of the project.

The Minister examines the park feasibility study, the community's recommendations, and the support the project has received. If he supports the concept, the Minister asks Nunavut Parks to proceed with Park Planning and Establishment in keeping with the **Umbrella Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for Territorial Parks (IIBA)**. The IIBA is an umbrella agreement that applies to all existing, proposed, and





future territorial parks, and requires consideration of parks-related matters such as educational and employment benefits; park information; visitor use; and park natural, cultural, and mineral resources.

The IIBA also identifies a joint management approach at both the local and territorial levels, which is established for any specific park through a **Park Specific Appendix** (PSA) which ‘adds’ the park to the IIBA. Because it may also include park management decisions, the PSA cannot be finalized until after the planning processes have been completed. So, in approving the park feasibility study, the Minister directs Nunavut Parks to initiate the negotiation of a

PSA with NTI and the relevant RIA to set up the co-management structure which will provide advice and recommendations on the park planning, management, and operations, which will be described below.

The Park planning and management process is expected to take several years. To allow time for Nunavut Parks and the community to complete the more detailed inventories and assessments of park resources that are described in the IIBA, and are required to finalize park boundaries, and complete Park Master and Management Plans the Minister also asks Canada to set aside lands in the proposed park study area through an **Interim Land Withdrawal** request. If approved by Canada, the Interim Land Withdrawal sets the study area aside from other uses that may affect a future park, for an agreed upon period of time.

The Minister’s approval is not the final approval by the Minister or Cabinet needed to proclaim the area as a Territorial Park. It is important for the Minister to formally recognize that a park will be developed in the area, though the extent, boundary, management and other planning decisions will be developed through the Park Planning and Park Establishment processes.

## PHASE II: PARK PLANNING

Once the interim withdrawal of lands has been requested, and a PSA has been initiated, the second phase of the process begins with the establishment of a **Community Joint Planning and Management Committee** (CJPMC). In keeping with the IIBA, Nunavut Parks and the relevant Regional Inuit Association (RIA) appoint members from the community to sit on the CJPMC to provide advice and recommendations on the planning, establishment, operation and management

of Territorial Parks. It is expected that at least some members from the earlier park committee will be included on the CJPMC to ensure continuity.

Nunavut Parks works with the CJPMC, residents, and others interested (including the Inuit Heritage Trust, Geoscience Office, Regional Inuit Associations, Regional Wildlife Organization, etc.) and Inuit field assistants in developing an **Inventory of Park Resources** that includes:

- > archaeological and Culturally Significant sites;
- > cultural heritage, including oral histories and other historical information;
- > Inuktitut place names for the park and for locations of interest within the park;
- > wildlife populations, vegetation and important wildlife areas that may require special protection or management efforts; and
- > geological and mineral resources.

The extent of the inventory must, at minimum, meet the objectives and the requirements of the IIBA and the *Territorial Parks Act*. In developing these inventories, Nunavut Parks and the CJPMC will first consider information collected during the feasibility phase, and identify areas where additional inventory and assessment work may be required.

Nunavut Parks and the CJPMC use this information to determine park boundaries, appropriate Inuktitut place names, and park interpretive programs. The information is also used to develop **Park Master Plans** and **Park Management Plans**. These plans are based on frameworks that are created to ensure a consistent approach to park planning and management throughout Nunavut. These frameworks ensure

*In keeping with the IIBA, a Park Specific Appendix (PSA) is negotiated by the GN, NTI and the relevant RIA and is intended to recognize the planning and management approach and related decisions made for a park in keeping with the IIBA such as those related to carving stone, outpost camps, cabins and access to minerals. It may be decided that the park may not require a PSA, or that it can be added to an existing PSA that may have already been created for a similar group or class of park.*

that completed plans include clear park purpose statements and related management goals; define park boundaries; identify and protect culturally significant sites, important wildlife areas, and recreational areas through 'zoning' or other tools; describe what facilities are needed for the park; and describe specific plans for ensuring the park's important resources and related opportunities will be maintained.

As with earlier phases, **community consultation** and involvement is an important component of development



of park master and management plans. Through the CJPMC, Nunavut Parks hosts community open houses and radio shows; interviews elders, youth and other residents; develops newsletters and other types of information to ensure residents and others interested in the park have the information to make knowledgeable decisions on park planning and management.

Some Management Plans may include sections related to wildlife, which must be reviewed by the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) to ensure they are in keeping with any wildlife management harvesting or any other wildlife related programs; and to ensure that NWMB is aware of park management decisions made by communities.

Once the CJPMC approves the completed plans, they must also be approved by a **Nunavut Joint Planning and Management Committee (NJPMC)** who makes sure the plan is consistent with the IIBA, and the intent of the park. In its review, the NJPMC may ask the CJPMC and Nunavut Parks to do further work, refine management statements, or revise the plan to reflect any new information they may have concerning the park and re-submit the plan to the NJPMC. Once they are satisfied that the plans are complete, they then forward the approved plan to the Minister, Department of Environment. Similarly, the Minister may also ask the NJPMC to review or revise the plan to reflect any new information he may have.

### PHASE III: PARK ESTABLISHMENT

Once approved by the Minister, Department of Environment; the PSA for the proposed park must be completed to reflect management decisions made by the CJPMC through the planning and management



process as described earlier.

To transfer the park lands to the GN, the Minister, Department of Environment must apply to Canada to formally **withdraw** the approved park lands from ‘Crown Lands’ which are managed by Canada, and **transfer** management responsibility for those lands to the ‘Commissioner’ on behalf of the Government of Nunavut to be managed under the Territorial Parks Act. Some park lands may already lie within ‘Commissioner’s Lands’ as part of municipal lands and may simply require a transfer between GN departments. Similarly, some identified park lands may include Inuit Owned Lands, which are jointly administered by NTI and the relevant Inuit Association. Though there are currently no formal procedures for park lands on IOL, the lands could

be jointly managed in keeping with park management plans, they could be leased to the GN for park purposes, or other similar arrangements may be established.

Land transfers may also involve the preparation of a **Strategic Environmental Assessment** for the Nunavut Impact Review Board to make sure that protection or management measures, development and operations requirements, visitor use, socio-cultural considerations, and resource management decisions respect the requirements of Nunavut’s Environmental Assessment Process and the NLCA. The park lands are also reviewed by the Nunavut Planning Commission to ensure the park conforms to the region’s Land Use Plan.

For Territorial Parks, these lands are surveyed (or ‘described’) and withdrawn under the **Territorial Parks Act** as one of several different types of territorial parks allowed for in the legislation, such as natural environment parks, outdoor recreation parks, or historic parks. Together with the Parks and Special Places program, the Territorial Parks Act describes the purposes for parks, sets out ‘rules’ for park operation and use; and clarifies the links between territorial parks, territorial conservation areas, and other ‘special places’ such as Heritage Rivers. The Act also requires that parks continue to be managed jointly with communities and that communities benefit from the establishment of the park.

## PHASE IV: PARK OPERATIONS

Each Park Master Plan describes what facilities are required for the Park and where they should be located; outlines a park interpretive and signage program; and identifies any other facilities required for operations and visitor services. These facilities are developed

through the Government of Nunavut’s **Capital Plan** over a number of years – depending on the size and scale of the park.

Similarly, each park has ongoing maintenance and operations needs which are described in **Park Operations Guidelines**. These guidelines include registration systems, maintenance requirements, emergency response plans, and staffing requirements. In some cases, park staff is hired on a full-time, casual or seasonal basis to ensure park facilities are kept in good shape for visitor and resident use. In addition, operations staff ensures park users are using facilities properly and are adequately prepared for safe and sustainable travel in Nunavut.



