

PARCS  
CANADIAN PARKS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL CANADIEN DES PARCS



CASE STUDY #13

## *Involvement of Inuit hunters from the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula*

*Involvement of Inuit hunters in monitoring heritage integrity in the Torngat Mountain region through the management of two major parks located on the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula*

### **Background**

Along with the Labrador Inuit Agreement-in-Principle signed June 21, 2005, the Canadian and Newfoundland and Labrador governments and the Labrador Inuit Association signed an agreement aimed at creating the Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve of Canada.

In June 2002, the Government of Quebec signed an agreement with the Kativik Regional Government giving the Inuit of Nunavik responsibility for capital projects and development and management of Kuururjuaq Park, which protects the Torngat mountain foothills, in the upstream reaches of the Korok River.



Koroc River (1951),  
photo copyright Jaques Rousseau

*« Protected areas  
are parts of larger  
ecological, cultural  
and economic systems;  
they are inextricably  
linked to the regional  
landscapes of which  
they are a part, and  
the elements of those  
linkages are dynamic,  
not static. »*

Like the parks that cover the St. Elias Mountains located on the border between the Yukon and Alaska, the two parks will ensure the preservation of a good part of the Torngat Mountain massif. The heritage monitoring plans for the two parks on the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula should therefore be harmonized through close involvement of the Inuit hunters concerned.

### **Initiative**

During the first historic meeting, held on May 11, 2005, in Duchesnay, near Quebec City, Inuit representatives from Nunavik and Nunatsiavut and representatives from the two parks agreed that harmonization of several elements of the master plan for the two entities was necessary, particularly with respect to monitoring of heritage integrity through close involvement of the Inuit hunters of the vast Torngat Mountains region.

The authorities of Kuururjuaq Park and Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve of Canada wish to build on the traditional knowledge of the Inuit to preserve heritage integrity in the great Torngat Mountains region.

The first initiative of this kind was taken by the management of Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve of Canada in August 2006, when Inuit elders from Nunavik and Nunatsiavut were brought together at the Parks Canada base camp on Shuldham Island in Saglek Bay, Labrador.

The event provided the opportunity to begin discussing the Inuit vision for the region with respect to the development of the two parks, as well as their future commitment to preserving the heritage of the Torngat Mountains region.



### Lessons learned

The work carried out in April 2004 by the team that produced the Kluane National Park of Canada Management Plan was pioneering from many standpoints and can serve as a reference for authorities at the two parks in their goal to preserve the ecological integrity of the great Torngat Mountains region.

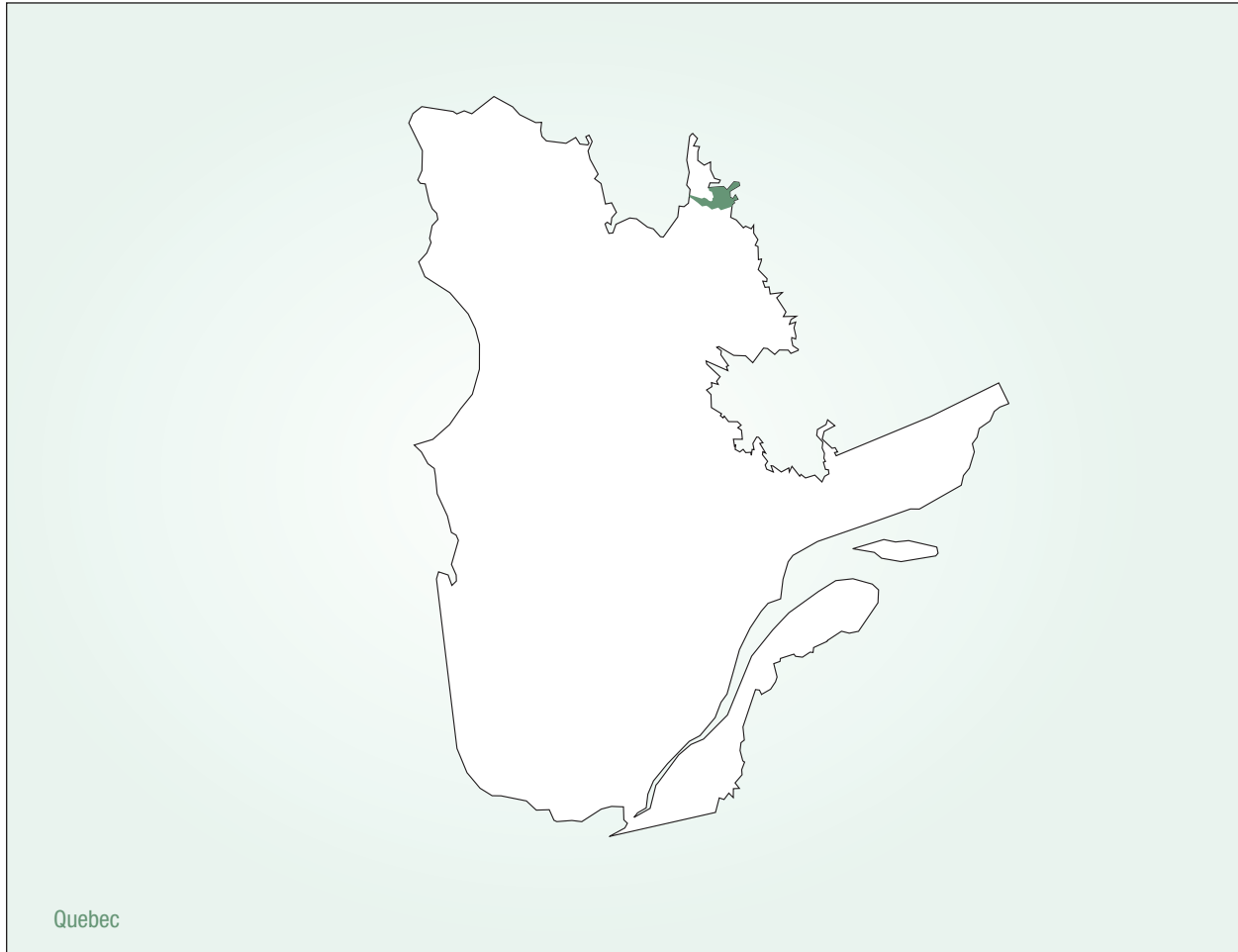
For the managers of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in Alaska and Kluane National Park in the Yukon, integrated planning and management are undertaken at the broader ecosystem level of the

St. Elias Mountains ecoregion and contribute to the ecological integrity of the two parks.

One of the measures that will contribute to this success will be incorporating the traditional knowledge of the Aboriginal people, who attach unique meaning to their ancestral lands as a result of the complex relationship that has always connected them to it. For them, this invisible landscape expresses their notion of the harmony that exists between the natural and spiritual heritage.



### Kuururjuaq Park



## Conclusion

The preservation of the integrity of the natural heritage cannot be separated from the cultural heritage of these great parks. Furthermore, because these integrated heritage values extend beyond the boundaries of the parks that overlap the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula, the boundaries must be established with reference to the Torngat Mountains ecoregion by closely involving Inuit hunters in monitoring indicators that measure the progress of the ecoregion.

*“The provinces and territories have adopted the ecoregions approach to replace the older “natural regions” classification, which is based on broad physiographic regions... In combination with the renewed focus on ecological integrity, this presents Parks Canada with a renewed opportunity to establish new parks within a greater ecosystem context. New national parks must be established with the co-operation of of the provinces and territories.”*



Family of Moses Etok, photo copyright Jacques Rousseau

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