

Historical Overview of the Council

The Resources for Tomorrow Conference in 1961 emphasized the importance of co-ordinated federal, provincial and territorial programs to meet the increased need for outdoor recreation facilities. There was additional recognition of the need for organized meetings of representatives of federal and provincial park agencies to promote the interests of park development. The Federal Provincial Parks Council was established in response to these recommendations. The first meeting/conference of the FPPC took place in Ottawa in 1962.

It was agreed at the first conference that following 1962, the Council, (then called the Conference), would meet again in Ottawa in 1963, and every second year thereafter to consider broad matters affecting parks policy and planning.

In addition, annual meetings of park administrators would be called to examine management techniques and exchange information. In essence, the Council was to be split into two Committees the Policy Committee and the Technical Committee, with the former to meet every second year.

Membership of the Policy Committee was to be made up of deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers. The Chairman was the senior public servant, responsible for parks of the host agency generally the Deputy Minister. The Policy Committee was to meet just following the Technical Committee to respond to recommendations and resolutions arising from the latter. Membership of the Technical Committee was made up of Parks Directors.

The Technical Committee operated under the following assumptions:

1. It was assumed the Policy Committee would address itself to the matters requiring provincial/federal arrangements and agreements.
2. The Technical Committee would concern itself with studies and recommendations on matters of a technical, administrative and management nature, the preparation of reports for the Policy Committee on special areas of concern such as education, research, etc., and other items as required by the Policy Committee.
3. The Technical Committee would be authorized to organize itself in a constitutional manner to permit it to function in a proper and effective way.

Originally, it had been intended that the Federal Parks agency would host the Conference on alternative years. However, the decision to have each member agency take its turn evolved from the 1972 Conference.

In the years following 1972, the main concern of the council appeared to settle on the technical sessions and the work of Committees. The functions of the Policy Committee became integrated with the business session of the Annual Conference which received reports of committees, resolutions, recommendations of task forces, etc. The business session of the Conference later evolved into its present format as a meeting of CPC Directors.

In 1972 as a follow-up to concerns in the 1971 Conference as to the adequacy of the organizational structure to meet the purpose and objectives of the Council, and its direction in the short and long terms, the Council recommended that a continuing Council Secretariat be established. The purpose of the Secretariat was to provide for the collection, collation and dissemination of information to communicate among member agencies; to administer the business of the Council; and to carry out tasks as may be assigned from time to time.

In response to this, the federal parks agency agreed to provide secretariat services for an interim period following which it was suggested that secretariat services be arranged on a contract basis with costs being shared between members.

After several years of study and negotiations, the FPPC Secretariat was established on a continuing basis in 1975 through an arrangement with the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers (CCREM). This arrangement was originally to cover an eighteen month trial period, but was subsequently extended indefinitely.

The arrangements vested the administrative responsibilities for FPPC primarily in the FPPC Executive Committee and the CCREM Secretariat. The CCREM Executive Director was responsible for the budget and disbursement of FPPC funds. The member of the CCREM Secretariat staff designated as the FPPC Co-ordinator received technical direction from the FPPC Executive Committee. Office space and support serve for the FPPC Co-ordinator was provided by the federal park agency. This arrangement remained in place for a number of years.

In 1986, the arrangement with the federal parks agency for office support and service was altered when the Co-ordinator at that time retired and was replaced by a Co-ordinator who resided in the Province of Manitoba. Because the new Co-ordinator did not wish to relocate, the Manitoba parks agency agreed to furnish the new co-ordinator with office services.

Arrangements with the CCREM for the handling of FPPC budgets and expenditures were altered in 1990 when the mandate of the CCREM changed (now called CCME- Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment), and the Secretariat was no longer able to provide services to the FPPC. As a result of this change administrative responsibilities for the FPPC were assumed by the home province of the Co-ordinator until such a time as a new policy was developed. Meanwhile, British Columbia's Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks took over from Manitoba and assumed responsibility for providing office space and overhead and administrative support for a newly contracted part-time coordinator (Charles Velay). This arrangement lasted until the Council's Strategic Framework, which was approved in 1995 called for the strengthening of the Secretariat.

To facilitate implementation of the new Strategic Framework, the Council decided to move to a "more full time" contracted Secretariat which would operate independently of any member jurisdiction and which would be fully financed by sharing the cost, under a new funding formula, among council members. A Secretariat was tendered for in 1995 and in January 1996 a Contract was awarded to Eugene Murphy and the office of the Secretariat was moved from Victoria, British Columbia to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

With the retirement of the National Manager in 2001 the Council once again tendered for secretariat services. With the awarding of a Contract to John Good, the office was relocated to Warsaw, Ontario. The work of the Council continued with a 2002 review of the Strategic Framework that resulted in the renewal of the council's Vision and Mission articulation of areas of shared interest, identification of strategic priorities and the adoption of a new name "Canadian Parks Council" (CPC) to more fully recognize the diversity of its member agencies.

The efforts of CPC were evolving beyond broad perspective reviews and studies into undertaking a greater number of projects with additional need for the National Coordinator to lead various tasks of the Council and support numerous sub-committees. The Coordinator's duties were expanded and the Coordinator, renamed the Executive Director in 2003.

In 2005 the CPC again challenged itself resulting in a number of projects being undertaken. A significant review of the Council's Administrative Manual, last undertaken in 1999 was completed to account for the changes to the Council's strategic priorities and address some of the organizational changes to the Council's strategic priorities and address some of the organizational changes among its member agencies