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INTRODUCTION

One Hundred Years of Struggle: The Ongoing Effort to Establish Provincial Parks and Protected Areas in British Columbia

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SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT of Algonquin Park in Ontario in 1893, Canada's provincial parks have served a variety of functions, and the ever-changing number, area, and purpose of these places has made them the subject of frequent debate, as well as the resort of many millions of visitors, if not the focus of a great deal of academic scholarship.¹ In British Columbia, 2011 marks a centenary for the prov-

* A note from the editor: this special issue of *BC Studies* owes a great deal to Ben Bradley and Jenny Clayton, who proposed the idea of a theme issue to mark the centennial year of the provincial parks movement in British Columbia. They recruited authors; read, commented upon, and pre-edited their submissions; and have engaged in the editorial/production process throughout. As editor of *BC Studies*, Graeme Wynn orchestrated the usual double-blind review of all articles, offered editorial input to contributors, and assisted Clayton and Bradley along the way. Towards the end of the production process, Richard Mackie provided valuable input as the journal's new associate editor. Finally, we acknowledge, on behalf of all contributors and *BC Studies*, the support of NiCHE (the Network in Canadian History and Environment/Nouvelle initiative canadienne en histoire de l'environnement) in assisting with the costs of preparing maps, acquiring illustrations, and allowing a handsome suite of colour reproductions, all of which enhance this special issue. We acknowledge the work of UBC Department of Geography cartographer Eric Leinberger, whose fine maps grace each of the articles in this issue. Thanks also to Jessica Thompson who kept various drafts moving among authors and editors, and Leanne Coughlin who met the challenges involved in laying out this issue with her usual effective assurance.

¹ Only Ontario's provincial park system has received sustained attention from academic historians. See especially Gerald Killan, *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1993); George Warecki, *Protecting Ontario's Wilderness: A History of Changing Concepts and Preservation Politics, 1927-1973* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000). The history of Manitoba's park system is sketched out in John C. Lehr, "The Origins and Development of Manitoba's Provincial Park System," *Prairie Forum* 26, 2 (2001): 241-55. As this introduction is being written, the first historical survey of British Columbia's provincial park system has just come to press, with James D. Anderson, *British Columbia's Magnificent Provincial Parks: The First 100 Years* (Madeira Park: Harbour, 2011). Otherwise there has been a surprising dearth of work on the topic in British Columbia. Individual parks are examined in Wallace Baikie with Rosemary Phillips, *Strathcona: A History of British Columbia's First Provincial Park* (Campbell River: Ptarmigan, 1986); Bill Merilees, *Newcastle Island: A Place*

incial parks movement: an act of the legislature established Strathcona Park as the province's first such space on 1 March 1911. Prompted by this anniversary, this issue presents several case studies that show how park management has changed over time; the reception of and use of parks in various regions of the province; the contribution of parks to British Columbia's tourism industry; the wide range of actions regarded as permissible in "protected areas"; and the role of conservationists and environmentalists in urging the provincial government to create and preserve parks. The culmination of these developments to date is shown in the frontispiece, while a photo essay compiled with suggestions from a number of scholars who have worked on the history of British Columbia's provincial parks explores some of the contradictory cultural and environmental "highs" and "lows" in how the parks have been used and appreciated, juxtaposing images of majestic scenery and contemplative outdoor activities against crowded roadside campgrounds and young people seeking sun and fun at the beach. The photo essay also presents colour photographs made by two former Parks Branch employees: Chester Lyons, who played a key role in the expansion of the park system between 1940 and 1963, and Davey Davidson, who worked at Manning and Bowron Lake parks. In doing so, it sheds light on some of the behind-the-scenes processes involved in the selection, modification, and management of British Columbia's parks.

This collection begins with Paula Young's article, "Creating a 'Natural Asset': British Columbia's First Park, Strathcona, 1905-1916," which examines how the establishment of this park in 1911 was driven by Vancouver Island boosters and tourism promoters. The article also traces early plans to develop the park with trails, roads, "family camps, summer homes, and children's playgrounds" – an ambitious scheme that was only halted by a recession and the First World War.² Several other provincial

of Discovery (Surrey: Heritage House, 1998), chap. 12; Jarrett Thomas Teague, *Sacred Heart: John Dean Provincial Park* (Victoria: John Dean Nature House, 2004); William H. Wilson, "Reginald H. Thomson and Planning for Strathcona Park, 1912-15," *Planning Perspectives* 17, 4 (2002): 373-88. Jeremy Wilson situates the provincial parks within the broader context of government forest policy and environmental politics in *Talk and Log: Wilderness Politics in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998). The administrative history of the park system is traced in Eric Michael Leonard, "Parks and Resource Policy: The Role of British Columbia's Provincial Parks, 1911-1945" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1974); James Kenneth Youds, "A Park System as an Evolving Cultural Institution: A Case Study of the British Columbia Provincial Park System, 1911-1976" (MA thesis, University of Waterloo, 1978); J.K. Youds, *A History of the British Columbia Provincial Park System, 1911-1980* (Victoria: Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division, 1981).

² Paula Louise Eng, "Parks for the People? Strathcona Park 1905-1933" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1996), 56.

parks appeared on the map of British Columbia before the war and during the interwar years. Some, such as Mount Robson and Garibaldi, were created by orders-in-council or special acts. Most were administered by the Department of Lands (albeit often in a disinterested manner), while a few were watched over by local boards.³ By 1930, British Columbia had thirteen provincial parks that encompassed 1.7 million acres (735,000 hectares). Today most of these would be considered wilderness areas as they did not have any permanent facilities and it was very difficult for the general public to gain access to them.⁴ Parks did not rank very high in the provincial government's priorities during the interwar years, and on several occasions the transfer of provincial parks to the federal government for incorporation into the national park system was discussed.⁵ However, negotiations fell through when Victoria proved reluctant to part with potential resource wealth. Indeed, as the province's resource economy grew, the government reduced park protection, allowing new mining and logging operations in several parks.⁶ For example, the thesis from which Young's article is developed shows that a 1918 amendment to the Strathcona Park Act allowed new prospecting and mining activity inside park boundaries; it also shows that plans to cut timber around Buttle Lake were contested by local groups who wanted to preserve the park's visual appeal.⁷ And, as noted in the article by Arn Keeling and Graeme Wynn that concludes this issue, there were plans to dam Buttle Lake for power generation as early as 1927, but the Depression and a limited local market for electricity stayed these designs.

During the 1930s, low commodity prices reduced some of the pressure to exploit parks for their mineral and timber wealth, and the availability of low-cost labour allowed the government to develop some of the more accessible parks for tourism and outdoor recreation.⁸ Under the

³ The three Special Act parks – Strathcona, Garibaldi, and Mount Robson – were governed by their own park boards, although there is no evidence that the latter park's board ever actually convened.

⁴ C. Lyons, "British Columbia's Provincial Parks," *Transactions of the Second Resources Conference* (Victoria: Department of Lands and Forests, 1949), 236. As Eric Leonard put it: "The existence of large wilderness parks in British Columbia is something of a fortunate historical accident. It is clear that the governments which established the large parks were not interested in the preservation of wilderness per se, and that, had the parks been proposed on those grounds alone, they would never have been established." See Leonard, "Parks and Resource Policy," 47-48.

⁵ Mount Robson, Mount Assiniboine, and Garibaldi parks were the most talked-about candidates for transfer to Ottawa.

⁶ Leonard, "Parks and Resource Policy," 31-34.

⁷ Eng, "Parks for the People?" 62-82. The Alpine Club of Canada, which had protested the damming of the Spray Lakes in Banff National Park in 1926, raised similar objections to industrial activity in Strathcona.

⁸ Wilson, *Talk and Log*, 93.

direction of Ernest C. Manning, who was chief forester from 1936 to 1941 and a promoter of conservation and multiple use of Crown lands, the government expanded the park system and built trails, roads, and campgrounds.⁹ Manning oversaw the establishment of a series of small parks on southern Vancouver Island, including Englishman River Falls, Little Qualicum Falls, and Stamp Falls, all of which were designated in 1940. In addition, he promoted the development of downhill skiing on Mount Seymour, where a park was established in 1936, and, under his watch, several large parks were established in the Interior, including enormous Tweedsmuir (1937) and Wells Gray (1939). Rick Rajala and Jarrett Teague have shown that several Vancouver Island parks benefited from the labour of the Young Men's Forestry Training Program, initiated in 1935, as well as from forest development projects that provided employment for those in need after closure of the Department of National Defence relief work camps in 1936.¹⁰

In 1939, amendments to the Forest Act made the Forest Service responsible for British Columbia's provincial parks – “the founding provincial parks were left abandoned on our doorstep,” was how one forest ranger recalled this development a few years later.¹¹ The act also introduced a park classification system. Class A parks had the highest level of protection; multiple use was permitted in Class B parks; and small parks for recreational use in rural communities were designated Class C parks. But these were administrative and, in some sense, paper classifications for, with reduced personnel during the Second World War, the Forest Service had little capacity to develop or maintain the parks placed under its jurisdiction.¹²

In the postwar period, successive governments – most notably the Social Credit government of W.A.C. Bennett – strove to provide British Columbians with the “good life” by flattening out the boom-bust cycle associated with a resource economy, developing new infrastructure, and cultivating public amenities. Huge sums were put into improving

⁹ On the limits of Manning's conservationist stance, and his legacy for the provincial park system, see Richard A. Rajala, *Clearcutting the Pacific Rain Forest: Production, Science, and Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 155–66; Helen Manning Akrigg, “Ernest C. Manning,” in *Manning Park Memories: Reflections of the Past*, ed. BC Parks Branch (Victoria: BC Parks Branch, 1991), 6–14.

¹⁰ Teague, *Sacred Heart*, 32–37; Richard A. Rajala, “From ‘On-to-Ottawa’ to ‘Bloody Sunday’: Unemployment Relief and British Columbia Forests, 1935–1939,” in *Framing Canadian Federalism: Historical Essays in Honour of John T. Saywell*, ed. Dimitry Anastakis and Penny Bryden (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 118–50.

¹¹ D.L. Macmurchie, “Considerations on Park Planning in British Columbia,” 1946, Victoria, BC Forest Service, BC Ministry of Forests Library.

¹² Lyons, “British Columbia's Provincial Parks,” 236–37.

and expanding the highway network in order to encourage tourism, facilitate resource extraction, and build a sense of provincial identity. The provincial parks took on greater significance as they were made accessible and equipped with new facilities. In his history of national parks in Atlantic Canada, Alan MacEachern argues that the postwar years saw the rise of “recreational democracy,” a growing sense that all Canadians had the right to recreation and an annual vacation.¹³ In British Columbia, as across the continent, middle- and working-class families saw significant improvements to their material standard of living, and, with the strong economy, rising wages, and union contracts that included paid vacation time, growing numbers could afford modest holidays that typically revolved around a road trip. Sociologists, criminologists, and planners who attended the BC natural resources conferences also argued that constructive outdoor recreation helped produce healthy, democratic, law-abiding citizens. They stressed that parks should be available to all British Columbians and emphasized the need for parks that were within easy driving distance of major population centres.¹⁴

British Columbians proved eager to visit the provincial parks, and the government responded to this popularity by creating and developing more of them. Some 300,000 people visited the parks in 1949, and the number of visits increased tenfold over the next decade.¹⁵ Between 1949 and 1961, the number of parks grew to more than 150. Most of the new parks were relatively small, between 10 and 10,000 acres (4 and 4,000 hectares), and were established near towns and cities, along major highways, on lakeshores, and at the seaside.¹⁶ Most parks offered basic amenities like campsites, clean drinking water, and pit toilets. In 1951, the summer Youth Crew Program was inaugurated as a way of minimizing development costs while helping to shape the character of teenagers and young men. In the program’s first year of operation, these young workers earned three dollars per day, had their living expenses covered, and carried out such tasks as trail building, campsite construction, and cutting firewood.

¹³ Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 161-62.

¹⁴ The reports of the BC Natural Resource Conferences and the annual reports of the Forest Service provide useful if cursory overviews of the Parks Branch’s intentions and activities during the 1950s.

¹⁵ Youds, *British Columbia Provincial Park System*, 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12; BC Archives, GR-1379, BC Forest Service, Briefs to the Commission on Forest Resources (1955), Parks and Recreation Division, box 1, file 1, exhibit 17.

In their spare time, they were encouraged to participate in organized outdoor recreation.¹⁷

By the late 1950s, British Columbia's provincial park system was impressive in extent, with a total area slightly larger than that of the combined US National Parks and Historic Sites.¹⁸ Yet large portions of this area saw little use as the vast majority of park visitors stayed close to the roadside facilities that had been developed since the war. Ben Bradley's article in this issue shows how the Parks Branch devoted itself to managing Manning Park so that it would appeal to motorists who were travelling through on the Hope-Princeton Highway. Family camping became very popular during this period, and free, easily accessible campgrounds in provincial parks helped foster this trend.¹⁹ Although most park users were BC residents, the Parks Branch was pleased to point out that many out-of-province licence plates could be spotted in the parks during the summer travel season. The geographer Bruce Braun, who was raised on the Prairies, recalls his family "hop scotching across the BC Interior from park to park" during the early 1970s on road trips facilitated by the "democratization" of long-distance pleasure travel.²⁰ New tasks were added to the Parks Branch's mandate even as it struggled to keep up with growing numbers of parks and visitors. Most significantly, it was assigned responsibility for developing a roadside Stop-of-Interest plaque program as part of the 1958 Centennial celebrations and for turning the ghost towns of Barkerville and Fort Steele into historical theme parks.

With the government focused on making parks easily accessible to all British Columbians, the value of keeping large, isolated "wilderness" parks off-limits to industrial activities came into question. Although park planner Chester Lyons was an enthusiastic outdoorsman, he acknowledged that tastes varied and that different people wanted different experiences in parks. He argued that the provincial park system should embrace diverse values: "wilderness, primeval, multiple use, community use, roadside reserves, park ways, look-out points, camp sites, geological, historical, and archaeological."²¹ However, by the late

¹⁷ E.T. Kenney (Minister of Lands), "Youth Use: A New Experiment," in *Transactions of the Fourth British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1951), 5-11.

¹⁸ C. Lyons, "British Columbia's Provincial Parks," in *Transactions of the Second Resources Conference* (Victoria: Department of Lands and Forests, 1949), 237.

¹⁹ See Samantha Morris, "Mapping the Family Road Trip: The Automobile, the Family, and Outdoor Recreation in Postwar British Columbia" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2010).

²⁰ Bruce P. Braun, "Place Becoming Otherwise," *BC Studies* 131 (2001): 15-24.

²¹ Lyons, "British Columbia's Provincial Parks," 240.

1950s, many Parks Branch planners were convinced that the primary goal of the park system was to provide basic amenities and recreation opportunities for as many people as possible and that large parks were less necessary than were small accessible parks.²² This institutional mindset offered little resistance to the Social Credit government's decision to allow industrial incursions into several large provincial parks, which resulted in a paradoxical situation in which a significant increase in the number of small parks was matched by a decrease in overall park area, from 10.8 million acres (4.3 million hectares) in 1945 to 6.4 million acres (2.6 million hectares) in 1965. Most of the loss came from the deletion of Liard River Park and the dramatic reduction of Tweedsmuir and Hamber for hydroelectric megaprojects.²³ While the Parks Branch could offer little resistance to these incursions, conservationists and park supporters reacted to them in a variety of ways. For example, in the 1950s, the writer Roderick Haig-Brown led a campaign against the damming of Buttle Lake in Strathcona Park. Far to the north, in the Cassiar, guide-outfitter Tommy Walker – who had worked in Tweedsmuir prior to construction of the Kenney Dam – joined with scientists and big game hunters to lobby the government for protection of the Spatsizi Plateau area.²⁴

The Forest Service lost jurisdiction over the provincial parks in 1957, when the new Department of Recreation and Conservation was given responsibility for the Parks Branch, the Fish and Game Branch, the Government Travel Bureau, and several smaller agencies.²⁵ The goals of the new ministry were to provide recreation for as many British Columbians as possible and to protect recreational areas for public enjoyment.²⁶ That providing recreation and supporting economic de-

²² See for example, Mr. [D.M.] Trew, verbal comment following the session on "Recreation Problems in British Columbia," in *Transactions of the Third British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1950), 255; R.H. Ahrens, "The Recreation Potential of British Columbia," in *Transactions of the Sixth British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1953), 136.

²³ Youds, *British Columbia Provincial Park System*, 11-12; Ben Bradley, "Four Million Acres Deleted: Automobility and the Failure of Liard River and Hamber Provincial Parks, 1940-61," *Space and Place in British Columbia: BC Studies Conference*, Victoria, 2 May 2009.

²⁴ Arn Keeling and Robert McDonald, "The Profligate Province: Roderick Haig-Brown and the Modernizing of British Columbia," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, 3 (2001): 7-23; Arn Keeling, "A Dynamic, Not a Static Conception: The Conservation Thought of Roderick Haig-Brown," *Pacific Historical Review* 71, 2 (2002): 239-68; Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), chap. 7; T.A. Walker, *Spatsizi* (Surrey: Antonson, 1976).

²⁵ Cooperation between the British Columbia Government Travel Bureau and the Parks Branch in promoting tourism is examined in Michael Dawson, *Selling British Columbia: Tourism and Consumer Culture, 1890-1970* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), chap. 6.

²⁶ Department of Recreation and Conservation, *Report of the Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1957* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958), 7.

velopment were considered more important than preservation was made clear in 1964, when the new Park Act confirmed the executive power of cabinet to create, cancel, and change the boundaries of parks. Land and resources could more easily be removed from Class B parks, which at that moment made up over 65 percent of the parks system. The only areas that the Park Act firmly protected from resource exploitation were parks under 5000 acres (2000 hectares) and seven nature conservancies that had been designated within larger parks.²⁷

How the Social Credit government's cavalier treatment of provincial parks influenced the emergence of environmental politics and activism in postwar British Columbia is a question that warrants serious attention from historians. In the 1960s and 1970s, parks became flashpoints for a growing number of environmentalist campaigns as British Columbians sought to preserve existing parks and lobbied for the establishment of new parks in areas thought to be threatened by resource development. The campaign to prevent further inundation of the Skagit Valley was perhaps the longest and best-publicized of these, but sustained campaigns also led to the establishment or expansion of provincial parks at Cypress Bowl above West Vancouver, in the Ashnola highlands near Keremeos, and in the Purcell Mountains.²⁸ In 1971, the Social Credit government responded to growing environmental sentiment by passing the Ecological Reserves Act and forming the Environment and Land Use Committee; however, there were no significant revisions to the Park Act or changes in park management policy.²⁹ On the other hand, the New Democratic Party (NDP) established a number of large parks and protected areas during its short first tenure in government, from 1972 to 1975. Two articles in this theme issue examine the extent to which the shift from Social Credit to NDP governments was characterized by continuity or change in attitudes towards parks. Phil Van Huizen's article, which focuses on

²⁷ Wilson, *Talk and Log*, 97; Youds, *A History of the British Columbia Parks System*, 12. Nature conservancy areas were designated in three Class B parks – Strathcona, Tweedsmuir, and Wells Gray – and in one Class A park, Garibaldi.

²⁸ On the Skagit Valley and Purcell Mountains, see the Clayton and Van Huizen articles in this theme issue, respectively, as well as Wilson, *Talk and Log*, 102–3. On the emergence of environmental activist movements during this period more generally, see Dianne Louise Draper, "Eco-Activism: Issues and Strategies of Environmental Interest Groups in British Columbia" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 1972); Frank Zelko, "Making Greenpeace: The Development of Direct Action Environmentalism in British Columbia," *BC Studies* 142/43 (2004): 197–239.

²⁹ V.J. Krajina, P.A. Larkin, J.B. Foster, and D.F. Pearson, *Ecological Reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver: n.p., 1974), 4; "Land Pledge Kept by BC," *Times Colonist* (Victoria), 18 March 1971; "Environmental Committee, Ecology Reserves on Way," *Vancouver Sun*, 18 March 1971; Wilson, *Talk and Log*, 107–8.

the international protests around the proposed raising of the Ross Lake reservoir in the Skagit River Valley, argues that both the Social Credit and NDP governments created parks as a “smokescreen” for continued exploitation of natural resources. On the other hand, Jenny Clayton’s study of local residents’ efforts to protect forested valleys from logging in the West Kootenays suggests that the NDP’s approach to parks was substantially more responsive to these kinds of efforts than was that of its predecessor.

By 1975, British Columbia’s park system had “bounced back” to nearly 11 million acres (4.5 million hectares), and, with the addition of new parks and reclassification of others, parks with Class A status accounted for 62 percent of the park area in the province.³⁰ Several of the large parks and protected areas established between 1972 and 1975 were intended to protect wildlife populations, including Kwadacha Wilderness Park, Mt. Edziza Park and Recreation Area, and Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park. These parks resembled the large parks established between 1911 and 1945 in that they were difficult to reach, undeveloped, located in areas where timber and mineral values were low, and demanded little from the Parks Branch in terms of management or budgeting. They were visited by a few British Columbians who were committed to having an intense, extended, or “authentic” wilderness experience, but most people were content simply knowing they existed. Parks Branch records show that parks continued growing in popularity during the 1970s, with visitation rising from about 6 million in 1970 to 14.6 million in 1979, and that automobile-borne day visitors accounted for most of the increase.³¹

Several provincial parks and protected areas resulted from the protracted “war of the woods” of the 1980s and early 1990s. Two developments during this period stand out as particularly noteworthy. One is the diversity (and sometimes audacity) of environmental activists and park advocates’ campaign techniques, which included legal actions, road blockades, and sophisticated media relations for garnering attention and public sympathies.³² The other is the key role that First Nations

³⁰ Youds, *History of the British Columbia Parks System*, 13–14.

³¹ Youds points out that the Parks Branch’s method for collecting visitation data and calculating attendance numbers changed several times during the 1970s. See Youds, *History of the British Columbia Parks System*, 8.

³² A detailed description of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee’s activities during this period, with a valuable focus on the production and dissemination of publicity material, is contained in Paul George, *Big Trees, Not Big Stumps: 25 Years Campaigning to Preserve Wilderness with the Wilderness Committee* (Vancouver: Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 2006). Another important personal account of these kinds of campaigns is Ric Careless, *To Save the*

groups played in the struggles to have the Stein and Carmanah valleys set aside as parks so that they would be protected from logging. There has been little historical research on how the setting aside of land for parks has affected British Columbia's Aboriginal residents, but in recent decades First Nations and environmental groups have worked together on a number of campaigns that have resulted in new parks. And today BC Parks and the Tsilhqot'in people of Xení have arranged to co-manage Ts'il-os Park.³³

In response to pressure from domestic and international environmental organizations that wanted examples of British Columbia's diverse ecosystems protected for future generations, the percentage of the province's total area set aside as parks and protected areas was increased from 5 percent in 1980 to more than 12 percent in 2000.³⁴ A significant part of this increase – though not the greater part – came from expansion of the provincial park system, yet budgets for provincial parks were stagnant during this period. Beginning in the late 1980s, cutbacks resulted in reduced staffing levels, the cancellation of interpretive programs, seasonal park closures, and increased user fees. Maintenance, fee collection, and other routine operations were outsourced to private contractors in many parks or, in parks where there is little opportunity for profit, to community-based service groups or regional governments. Groups like the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and the BC chapters of the Sierra Club and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society have criticized provincial governments for neglecting the provincial parks, but to little apparent avail. In 2003, private enterprise was invited further into British Columbia's parks with an amendment to the Park Act that eased the way

Wild Earth: Field Notes from the Environmental Frontline (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1997).

Two scholar's contributions to one of these campaigns can be found in Michael M'Gonigle and Wendy Wickwire, *Stein: The Way of the River* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1988).

³³ Although not focused specifically on provincial parks, Bruce Braun examines how Aboriginal history and modernity have often been erased in British Columbia's so-called "wilderness" areas in *The Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture, and Power on Canada's West Coast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). Jonathan Clapperton is currently working on a PhD dissertation at the University of Saskatchewan that addresses the competing visions of marine tourists, the Sliammon people, and the BC Parks Branch regarding the appropriate use of Desolation Sound Marine Park.

³⁴ British Columbia Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection, *Environmental Trends in British Columbia 2002* (Victoria: Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection, 2002). Meeting the 12 percent benchmark for parks and protected areas was deemed significant because that amount was set out in the so-called Brundtland Commission Report as a threshold for "sustainable development" and was reaffirmed at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. See World Economic Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

for resort development and subsurface oil and gas exploration.³⁵ With many parks undersupervised, infringements have become increasingly common, and, in an August 2010 report, British Columbia's auditor general criticized the Ministry of Environment for failing to adequately "ensure the conservation of ecological integrity" in the province's parks and protected areas.³⁶

Funding for provincial parks was cut again in 2011.³⁷ Ironically, Christy Clark, the province's new premier, gave a nod to the parks' historical and continuing importance to British Columbians in May of this centennial year for BC parks when she declared that the parking meters that, since 2003, have been placed in many of British Columbia's most heavily visited provincial parks would be removed immediately. "It's about making sure our parks are accessible," Clark explained. "I've grown up in BC. My family always used parks."³⁸ Clearly, improving access to already-popular provincial parks is still considered good politics. Clark's announcement also acknowledged public attachment to the ideal of "free" access to parks, a legacy of postwar government policies and cultural patterns. However, much has changed in the provincial parks system over the past forty years. Those charged with political and administrative responsibility for the parks need to recognize this. It is again time, as Keeling and Wynn note was once said of Strathcona Park, "to clear up old mistakes" so that British Columbia's provincial parks might "achieve [the] potential ... first perceived so many years ago" – a potential often celebrated even as the parks themselves suffered benign neglect. Or worse.

³⁵ British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, "Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act" Bill 84, 37th Parliament, 4th Session, 2003.

³⁶ Jack Knox, "No Cake, Just More Cuts, for BC Parks Centennial," *Victoria Times Colonist*, 17 February 2011; British Columbia, Office of the Auditor General, *Conservation of Ecological Integrity in BC Parks and Protected Areas* (Victoria: Office of the Auditor General, 2010), 6.

³⁷ Gwen Barlee, "BC Parks Reaches 100th Birthday, But There Is Little to Celebrate," *Times Colonist* (Victoria), 27 February 2011.

³⁸ Larry Pynn, "Parking in BC Provincial Parks Now Free," *Vancouver Sun*, 3 May 2011.