



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

Canada

Let's Talk National Marine Conservation Areas

General Regulations Summary Paper: Visitor Experience and Public Use

Purpose of summary papers

Parks Canada is developing **general regulations** under the [Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act](#) (the Act). General regulations are nationally consistent and enforceable tools that will apply to all national marine conservation areas established under the Act, from coast to coast to coast and including the Great Lakes. The regulations will include general restrictions and prohibitions applicable to all national marine conservation areas, as well as permit requirements and authorities that can be used to manage activities specific to the context and environment of each site. Please read the [Backgrounder on General Regulations](#) for more information.

A series of summary papers has been prepared to explain the main themes of the regulatory proposal.

5 THEMES

- Research and collections activities
- Protection of natural and cultural resources
- Zoning and area-based management
- Commercial activities and special events
- Visitor experience and public use

Visitor Experience and Public Use

in national marine conservation areas

National marine conservation areas are established for the purpose of protecting and conserving representative marine areas for the benefit, education and enjoyment of the people of Canada and the world. Visitation and public use are therefore central to the reason why national marine conservation areas are created and is one of eight goals set out in the recently adopted [Policy on the Establishment and Management of National Marine Conservation Areas](#). In turn, visitation and public use contribute to achieving other national marine conservation area management goals, such as enhancing awareness and understanding of national marine conservation areas and contributing to the well-being of coastal communities by supporting local and regional economies. As with all activities that take place in national marine conservation areas, visitation and public use are managed to ensure they occur in an ecologically sustainable manner that supports the protection of marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

Why are we regulating

Regulations are being created to ensure that visitation and public use

- Do not harm the natural and cultural heritage found in national marine conservation areas
- Respect Indigenous heritage, traditional uses and stewardship
- Lead to positive experiences that increase appreciation, awareness and engagement with the marine environment
- Result in appropriate use of a shared space
- Support a diverse array of ecologically sustainable business opportunities
- Have due regard for public safety

Regulations are one of several strategies to manage visitation and public use in accordance with national marine conservation area management goals. Other strategies include providing public use facilities, interpretation programs and public information that foster appropriate and enjoyable activities in national marine conservation areas.



What we are proposing to regulate

Table 1 provides a list of the main activities associated with visitation and public use that will be covered by the regulations.¹ Please consult the discussion paper on

[Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage](#) for an overview of general prohibitions and restrictions that apply to all activities (with limited exceptions).

Table 1. Visitation and public use activities covered by regulations.

ACTIVITY OR USE	SCOPE OF GENERAL REGULATIONS
Camping on dry and intertidal lands in a tent, vehicle, camper, trailer or other portable structure	Permit required. The permit will specify where camping can take place. The regulations will also include prohibitions, restrictions and authorities relative to camping similar to those found in sections 10 to 16 of the National Parks of Canada Camping Regulations
Installing seasonal recreational camps or fishing huts on sea and lake ice	The regulations will provide authority to designate areas where a permit is required for this activity in order to manage impacts on natural and cultural heritage or other national marine conservation area users.
Boating	The regulations will provide authority to close areas to vessel traffic where needed for the protection of natural or cultural heritage. Mooring or docking in public facilities provided by Parks Canada will be subject to posted rules and fees.
Diving	The regulations will provide authority to designate areas in which diving is prohibited, restricted or subject to a permit when needed for public safety reasons or to manage impacts on natural or cultural heritage.
Motorized vehicle use on dry and intertidal lands	The regulations will provide authority to restrict motorized vehicle use to designated routes or areas where needed to manage impacts on natural or cultural heritage or other national marine conservation area users.
Recreational fishing	The regulations will provide authority to prohibit recreational fishing in zones where extractive uses are not allowed. Otherwise, the activity will be allowed subject to relevant federal, provincial or territorial regulations governing recreational fishing.
Hunting and trapping	The regulations will provide authority to prohibit hunting and trapping in zones where extractive uses are not allowed. Otherwise, the activity will be allowed subject to relevant federal, provincial or territorial regulations governing hunting and trapping.
Non-commercial harvest of plants and natural objects	The regulations will provide authority to prohibit non-commercial harvest of plants and natural objects where extractive uses are not allowed, and designate areas where harvest is allowed subject to a permit or posted rules.

Table 1. Continued on next page

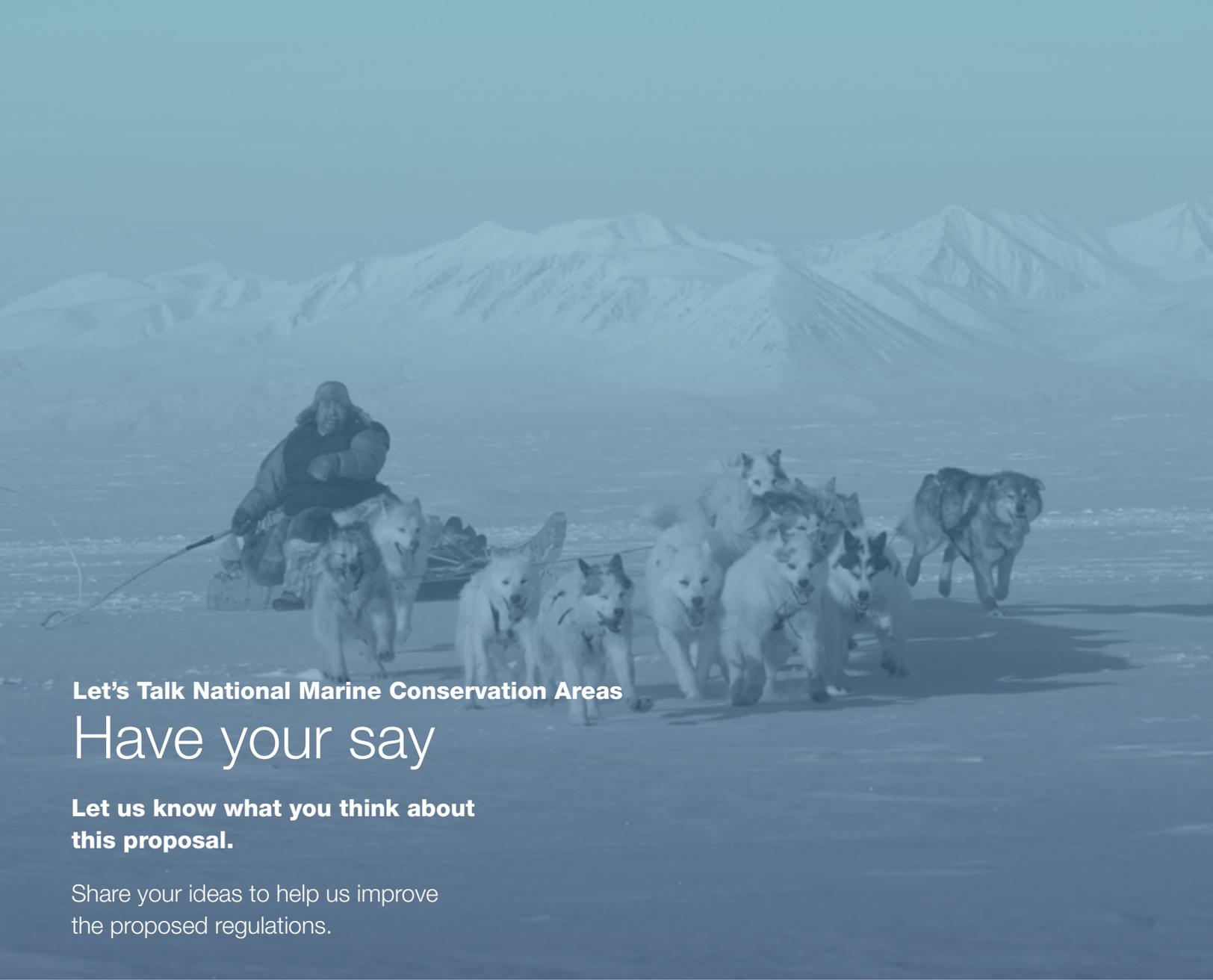
¹ Please note that the general regulations will not apply to rights based activities, or traditional, spiritual or ceremonial practices, carried out by Indigenous peoples

Lighting or maintaining a fire on dry and intertidal lands	The regulations will provide authority to prohibit or restrict fires in areas or during periods where needed for public safety reasons, or to manage impacts on natural and cultural heritage or other national marine conservation area users.
Aircraft landing and take off	The regulations will provide authority to designate areas where aircraft landing or take off require a permit if needed to manage impacts on natural or cultural heritage or other national marine conservation area users.
Drone use	The regulations will require a permit for drone use in national marine conservation areas in order to minimize disturbance to wildlife as well as visitors and other national marine conservation area users.

In addition to the above, the regulations will have a number of prohibitions related to public conduct that are intended to promote safe and respectful use of public spaces in national marine conservation areas.

These are based on similar prohibitions found in regulations that apply to National Historic Sites and National Parks across Canada. Specifically, the following activities will be prohibited under the regulations

- Vandalism of public facilities and infrastructure
- Excessive noise and other behaviour that unreasonably disturbs the enjoyment of others
- Littering
- Wilful disruption of Indigenous harvesting activities
- Failing to keep dogs on leash (except in designated off leash areas)
- Allowing domestic animals to disturb or injure persons, other domestic animals, fish and wildlife or their habitat
- Possessing or using explosives, with the exception of
 - Transport of explosives through a national marine conservation area in accordance with the [Explosives Act](#) and other applicable legislation
 - Possession and use of vehicle, vessel and aircraft safety equipment (e.g., flares), hunting ammunition and bear bangers, for their intended purpose
- Possessing or using firearms, with the exception of
 - Firearms transported in accordance with the [Storage, Display, Transportation and Handling of Firearms by Individuals Regulations](#) made pursuant to the [Firearms Act](#)
 - Firearms carried or discharged for the purposes of hunting or trapping in areas of the national marine conservation area where these activities are permitted
 - Firearms carried or discharged in accordance with a permit issued under the regulations
 - Firearms carried or discharged for protection of life and property in national marine conservation areas where polar bears are present



Let's Talk National Marine Conservation Areas

Have your say

Let us know what you think about this proposal.

Share your ideas to help us improve the proposed regulations.

We hope this summary paper has you thinking about how these regulations may affect you, and prompts you to provide feedback and comments. Your input is an important part of the process to develop regulations.

We appreciate the feedback we have received so far. Let's keep the dialogue going!

Please watch the www.LetsTalkNMCAs.ca website for updates, and share with friends and colleagues.