



*Parks Canada News Release*

## ***Free access for new Canadian citizens To national parks and national historic sites***

**Ottawa, Ontario, October 19, 2011** – The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, on behalf of the Honourable Peter Kent, Canada’s Environment Minister and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, today announced Parks Canada’s participation in the Cultural Access Pass program for new Canadian citizens in partnership with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

“I am honoured to announce the participation of Parks Canada in the Institute for Canadian Citizenship’s Cultural Access Pass Program. This pass for new Canadian citizens will now open the doors to places that bring together the geography and history defining their new country,” said Minister Kent. “Our national parks, national historic sites, and national marine conservation areas are an encyclopedia of our national identity, waiting to be discovered and experienced.”

Through the Cultural Access Pass, new Canadian citizens and up to four of their children under 18 years of age will receive free admission to more than 100 of Park Canada’s treasured places. The pass will be valid for one year after the new citizens have been sworn in. Several Parks Canada locations will also serve as pick-up locations for the passes.

“Community citizenship ceremonies at treasured Parks Canada places already offer a unique transformative and memorable experience,” said Minister Kenney. “The Cultural Access Pass will offer many more opportunities for new Canadian citizens to experience Canada’s natural and cultural heritage firsthand. This initiative will benefit new Canadian citizens by enabling them to become more informed about Canada and more committed to the communities in which they live,” added Minister Kenney.

The Institute for Canadian Citizenship is a national non-profit organization that engages new Canadians citizens through innovative programs, campaigns and partnerships. Their initiatives are designed to ensure that new citizens are welcomed and included as equals and are aimed at creating meaningful connections among all Canadians, fostering a culture of active, engaged citizens and celebrating our shared identity as Canadians.

“Together with Parks Canada, we are creating opportunities for new citizens to access the essence of what so many define as a uniquely and truly Canadian experience,” said Gillian Hewitt Smith, Executive Director and CEO, Institute for Canadian Citizenship. “By opening the gates to our national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas, tens of thousands of new Canadian citizens who have been able to curate their cultural experiences at museums, galleries, and other attractions, can now step outside and discover the beauty of this country’s natural heritage and historical sites.”

Parks Canada works to ensure Canada's historic and natural heritage is protected and, through a network of 42 national parks, 167 national historic sites, and four national marine conservation areas, invites Canadians and people around the world to engage in personal moments of inspiring discovery at our treasured natural and historic places.

For additional information or to register for a Cultural Access Pass, please see [www.parksCanada.gc.ca](http://www.parksCanada.gc.ca) or <http://www.icc-icc.ca/>.

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