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• (0845)

[English]

The Vice-Chair (Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC)): I call the meeting to order.

Good morning, everyone. We're going to get started. Our chair will be here shortly, I'm sure. We don't want to cut into witness time. We have a lot to cover. I'll just say right now that I'm from Vancouver, so I feel like I'm living in a snow globe. I'm getting used to it.

We have with us today representatives of the Parks Canada Agency: Andrew Campbell, senior vice-president, operations; Catherine Blanchard, vice-president, finance directorate; Line Lamothe, vice-president, human resources and employee wellness; Michael Nadler, vice-president, external relations and visitor experience; Darlene Upton, vice-president, protected areas establishment and conservation; and Stephen Van Dine, vice-president, strategic policy and investment directorate.

Welcome to you this morning. We appreciate your being here and educating us on all you do. I'm sure that we have a lot of questions for all of you.

Madam Chair is here. I'll just finish this sentence and say that we've allotted 10 minutes to each.

I will turn this over to the chair.

The Chair (Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.)): Thank you, Madam Findlay.

Are all of you taking 10 minutes each?

[Translation]

Mr. Andrew Campbell (Senior Vice-President, Operations, Parks Canada Agency): It will probably take a total of 15 minutes.

The Chair: Thank you. Who's going first?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I am. Thank you.

Good morning. I would like to begin by saying how honoured we are to be here this morning on unceded lands of the Algonquin, Anishinabek people. I'd also like to express our thanks to the chair and to the members of the committee for inviting us to speak with you today.

[English]

It's a real privilege to appear before the committee, and we are grateful for the opportunity to discuss the agency's mandate, priorities and some of our recent accomplishments.

In just a bit of housekeeping, I would like to outline that we've provided the members with a copy of our presentation. As well, hopefully, you've all received a USB stick that has a presentation and some visuals of Parks Canada and gives an outline of some of the things we do that are a little less well known. Finally, I believe there are notes that have been provided to the clerk.

Now, if I may, I will quickly walk the committee through the mandate and overarching scope of Parks Canada. I'll be followed by Darlene, Stephen and Michael, who will highlight some of the major mandate areas of Parks Canada.

To begin, the Parks Canada Agency is responsible for protecting nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage and sharing the stories of these treasured places with Canadians. In doing so, the agency fosters public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure ecological and commemorative integrity for today and for the future.

The Parks Canada team is over 5,000 strong, and we're proud to be entrusted with the stewardship of Canada's national treasured places, a stewardship we share in many places with indigenous peoples.

The agency manages some of the finest and most extensive natural and cultural heritage places in the world, which include 47 national parks; 171 national historic sites, which include nine heritage canals; five national marine conservation areas and one national urban park.

The protected areas help restore the health of ecosystems, build their resilience and contribute to the recovery of species at risk—

[Translation]

Is there a problem?

• (0850)

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): The two interpretation channels aren't working.

[English]

Our translation isn't working.

The Chair: Could you try plugging it on the side? Sometimes that works. Maybe someone could help them. Is everybody else's working?

[*Translation*]

You may continue, Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Is it working? Thank you.

[*English*]

Protected areas help us restore the health of ecosystems, build resilience and contribute to the recovery of species at risk, not only protecting biodiversity but also helping mitigate the impact of climate change.

National historic sites, whether they're sacred spaces, archaeological sites, battlefields, heritage houses or historic districts, allow Canadians to learn more about Canadian history, including the diverse cultural communities that make up Canada and the history and culture of indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, Parks Canada places are an important part of local economies, helping welcome more than 25 million visitors to Canada's treasures, helping generate billions of dollars annually and employing tens of thousands of people in urban settings, in rural communities and in the north of Canada.

I'd like to quickly present an overview of the agency's priorities, which help guide our everyday work in meeting our important mandate.

First and foremost, Parks Canada places tell the stories of who we are, including the history, cultures and contributions of indigenous people. Together, through a collective commitment to heritage, we are renewing the ways that these stories are brought to Canadians. Through natural conservation, we are working with other federal departments, provincial and territorial governments and indigenous partners, both as a leader and as a trusted partner in advancing the conservation goals of our country.

We are making impactful infrastructure investments. Parks Canada is protecting and conserving our national treasures while supporting local economies, employing Canadians across the country and contributing to growth in the tourism sector. Investments in the heritage, visitor, waterway and highway infrastructure ensure safe, high-quality and meaningful experiences for visitors, enabling Canadians to discover nature and connect with history. Importantly, Parks Canada in many communities is one of the key anchors of economic sustainability, as the iconic places provide both economic opportunity and community spirit.

As an overview of our financial situation, Parks Canada's budget is approximately \$1.7 billion in 2019-2020. Of this amount, approximately \$600 million is our ongoing permanent funding, of which 75% comes from funds appropriated by Parliament and 25% comes from revenues generated by the agency. The main sources of our revenues are admission fees, accommodations such as camping and land rent, and commercial operations. The remaining time-limited portion of our budget primarily relates to capital funding in the amount of \$900 million in the current fiscal year. This capital portion is part of the \$3.6 billion that the government has provided over the past six years to Parks Canada to improve the condition of

its large, diverse and unique asset base. The ultimate goal of these capital investments is to ensure Canada's national parks and historic sites are a source of pride and enjoyment today and into the future.

Now I'd like to turn to my colleagues to highlight key directions and a few accomplishments of Parks Canada over the past fiscal year with regard to protecting and managing our treasured natural and cultural heritage.

● (0855)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Upton, you may go ahead.

[*English*]

Ms. Darlene Upton (Vice-President, Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation, Parks Canada Agency): Thanks, Andrew.

Thanks, everyone.

The agency will actively assist in meeting the goal of protecting biodiversity and conserving 25% of Canada's land and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025. In collaboration with indigenous partners, stakeholders and other levels of government, we're currently working on two national park reserves and five marine conservation areas and exploring new opportunities.

In addition to this goal, the agency is a recognized international leader in the effective management of protected areas. We ensure complete understanding of the biodiversity and ecosystem processes in our places, we monitor further ecological integrity and we take management action to restore ecosystems and recover species. In fact, we're one of the only national park systems in the world that has a fully developed and fully implemented system-wide ecological integrity monitoring program, consisting of more than 700 independent scientific measures that inform park-specific priorities and guide our investments in conservation.

Parks Canada is also one of three competent departments under the Species at Risk Act, with more than 200 species on Parks Canada-managed lands. We are a partner in the implementation of the pan-Canadian approach to transforming species at risk conservation, with a focus on priority species, places and sectors.

Given the potential magnitude and diversity of climate change impacts on Parks Canada heritage places across the country, the agency is continuing to work to improve its understanding of current and future climate change impacts and to enhance its ability to adapt through a variety of initiatives. This includes conducting a risk assessment and developing a carbon atlas and an adaptation framework. We've done a number of regional climate assessment meetings, hosting these regional workshops with partners. We have site-specific risks, mitigations and adaptations, and we're continuing to look at how to integrate climate change considerations into all aspects of our park management.

I'll stop there and turn it over to Stephen, who's here for Christine Loth-Brown.

Mr. Stephen Van Dine (Vice-President, Strategic Policy and Investment Directorate, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you.

Good morning. I'm here on behalf of our colleague and newest addition to the team, Christine Loth-Brown. She has been delayed by the weather today. We are strong believers in team, so I am delivering her remarks. We're even stronger believers in the motto "safety first".

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: We are responsible for 171 national historic sites across the country. These are varied places and tell many chapters in the story of Canada from time immemorial until the 20th century. Parks Canada also acts as the secretariat for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, which advises the minister for Parks Canada on the designations of persons, places and events of national historic significance. We administer a number of programs, including heritage railway stations, heritage lighthouses and federal heritage buildings. The agency is Canada's representative to the World Heritage Committee and oversees the program for world heritage sites.

The framework on commemoration that we delivered in 2019 is our new system plan for national historic sites. The framework sets priorities for new designations and for the renewal of the way in which history is told at our heritage places. The framework provides a foundation for how we work with others—including, importantly, indigenous peoples—to identify, recount and mark our common past. Our achievements include the discovery and exploration of HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror*, which have been collectively designated as national historic sites.

The 2019 archaeological research season was one of the best ever. The Parks Canada underwater archaeology team's findings contributed to a better understanding of historical and Inuit accounts of the Franklin expedition, and in particular will help establish a clearer picture of the storied ships and their crew.

In 2019 the World Heritage Committee supported the inscription of Writing-on-Stone/Áísinaí'pi as Canada's most recent world heritage site. This landscape in southern Alberta is characterized by hoodoos and rock art. Some of the in situ archaeological remains date back approximately 3,000 years. The landscape is considered sacred to the Blackfoot people. Their centuries-old traditions are perpetuated through ceremonies and enduring respect for places.

Some of the work of your committee has also contributed to the studying of built heritage in Canada, producing in the last session of Parliament the report entitled "Preserving Canada's Heritage: The Foundation for Tomorrow" in 2017. This report made 17 recommendations, many of them relating to the need for legislation to protect federal heritage. As a result of this mandate being given to our minister, we will be developing new legislation for the effective protection of federally owned heritage places, ensuring that these cultural crown jewels are sustained for future generations.

I will conclude my remarks by saying that one of the most effective ways to achieve concrete results in advancing an important objective of this government—reconciliation—is through negotiated agreements and increased roles for indigenous peoples in decision-making. Parks Canada works with approximately 300 indigenous communities. More than 30 places are currently managed through collaborative structures with indigenous peoples. We are engaged in 40 modern treaty negotiation tables and over 30 rights and recognition tables.

Finally, in 2019 Parks Canada published a work plan to address barriers to its work with indigenous peoples. This document, entitled "Mapping Change: Fostering a Culture of Reconciliation within Parks Canada", sets out commitments to be achieved within a five-year timeline. Commitments include work to support inclusion of indigenous languages in heritage places and collaborative development of messaging regarding the ongoing roles and responsibilities of indigenous peoples as stewards of their traditional territories.

● (0900)

[*Translation*]

Thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Nadler (Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you, Stephen.

A core element of Parks Canada's mandate is to present and share Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas with visitors from across Canada and around the world. In fulfilling this mandate, Parks Canada not only facilitates the enjoyment of our country's national heritage places but also contributes to communities and to Canada's growing tourism industry.

[*Translation*]

Each year, Parks Canada receives 25 million visitors across the 222 sites administered by the agency. Most of these visitors are Canadian, with the remaining 20% coming largely from the United States, Europe and Asia. The scale of Parks Canada's operations makes the agency one of Canada's largest providers of natural and cultural tourism.

[English]

Visitors to Parks Canada places contribute an estimated \$4 billion to the Canadian economy through spending in communities that neighbour Parks Canada places and through disbursements to the operators who deliver experiences in Parks Canada places.

While contributing to Canada's tourism economy is very important for the agency, Parks Canada's focus is on facilitating Canadians' enjoyment of our national heritage places now and into the future. This work is rooted in the legislation for Canada's system of national parks. It means that the agency works hard to present national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas to Canadians not only when they come to visit but also through digital media and a number of outreach programs in their communities.

In fact, each year Parks Canada delivers an amazing array of experiences to visitors to national heritage places. At the same time, the agency works to bring these places to people where they live by delivering outreach and engagement programming, such as the Learn-to Camp program in urban and rural centres across the country.

Combined, these outreach programs reached 110,000 Canadians in 2019. On our digital channels, Parks Canada reaches still more Canadians. We receive some 18 million unique visitors per year to our website and enjoy a social media following of nearly two million.

[Translation]

Parks Canada places are also important settings for communities to gather. In 2019, Parks Canada hosted more than 20 citizenship ceremonies, and we hosted over 100 local events and celebrations in collaboration with local communities and other partners.

Canada's national heritage sites are places where Canadians can gain a deeper appreciation of our country, including indigenous cultures. Parks Canada works closely with indigenous communities across the country to deliver authentic indigenous experiences in national parks and at historic sites.

These experiences help to foster greater understanding by non-indigenous Canadians of the cultures, history and traditions of our country's indigenous peoples.

• (0905)

[English]

Parks Canada is the steward of some of Canada's most treasured places. We are guides, partners and storytellers, and we strive to foster a greater appreciation and understanding of Canada's national and cultural heritage.

We are committed to sharing the stories of these special places from multiple perspectives, reflecting the diversity of Canada and also respecting the cultures and perspectives of Canada's indigenous peoples.

[Translation]

Madam Chair, we would be pleased to address any questions or comments the committee has.

[English]

The Chair: Is anybody else speaking? No? Okay, thank you.

We'll begin the first round of questioning for six minutes.

Go ahead, Madam Findlay.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Thank you for being here.

I'll start with a couple of B.C. questions, as that's where I'm from.

Are you involved at all in Ramsar designations? For instance, Burns Bog, which is near where I live, got a Ramsar designation a few years ago. Are you involved in things like that? You talked about recognition and protection.

Ms. Darlene Upton: No, we are not involved directly. There may be overlaps from time to time with some of our sites, such as Wood Buffalo, but we're not directly involved in the designation.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Okay.

One close to home for me as well is the Gulf of Georgia Cannery in Steveston, which has a rather unique relationship with Parks Canada. I'm just wondering how that is working. I know your partnership there is a little different.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Just for everybody else's education, the Gulf of Georgia Cannery is a site that is co-managed with the local people. We maintain the facility and the local community actually does the interpretation of the site, which is, from our perspective, a great partnership. It continues to work on a good basis.

Our ability to do some of the capital improvements has been helpful in that relationship. We continue to look forward to that relationship moving forward smoothly into the future.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: This is a historic site on the Steveston harbour, off Richmond in B.C. It's a heritage site, in the sense that it speaks to the early cannery days there. It is managed by a non-profit society in co-operation with Parks Canada.

Are there any similar partnerships that you're aware of in Canada?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We do have some other partnerships like that, but I can't think of them off the top of my head. We do a great amount of co-operative management with indigenous people across the country for many of our sites. As well, we have sites in many places across the country where the story is brought by the local community. Certainly that one was one of the forerunners of these kinds of arrangements for Parks Canada.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

In Radium Hot Springs, another place in B.C., there has been a shutdown of the hot pools there that's having a major economic impact on the village of Radium. Does Parks Canada have a timeline to complete the shoring up the wet floors so that people can access the pools?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We have, over the past three weeks or so, been working on the engineering study to get the exact time frames. We've met with the Chamber of Commerce and we've met with the office of the mayor in order to keep them up to date as we get information. We have approved the funding so that the repair can go forward. We're now in the final stages of engineering.

We want to make sure that we are accurate about how long it's going to take to get the facility back open. We are working with businesses locally, and we have been able to keep the one tenant who runs the spa in the area open through the entire process. We'll continue to work with the town and let them know as we get the exact time frame.

• (0910)

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I know there's a lot of anxiety there about the economic impact of this shutdown. Do you feel there are enough funds available to complete the project and deal with the failing concrete?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We just put funds towards that—in fact, on Monday—in order to make sure that the funds are in place.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Do you see how timely I am in asking you that?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: You are extremely timely.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Will the funds spent be replaced? I gather there have been a lot of funds already spent so that the hot pools can continue with the modernization of the building as had been planned.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Yes. These funds will be extraordinary, meaning on top of the amount that we already have, the \$9.5 million that has already been appropriated and expended in the rejuvenation of the hot pools.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I'm interested in what you're doing as part of marine protection. You said you had five, I think, marine protected areas that you're involved with. What is your role with marine protection?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Parks Canada has a National Marine Conservation Areas Act. Although the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is the lead federal department for reporting on the percentage of protected areas, Parks Canada has its own legislation and establishes national marine conservation areas.

Gwaii Haanas, Fathom Five, Lake Superior and Saguenay-St. Lawrence are some of the marine protected areas we have. We're currently working on the southern Strait of Georgia and Îles de la Madeleine. We're working with DFO in partnership in the High Arctic for quite a large national marine conservation area. All of those will then contribute to Canada's percentage targets for protection.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Longfield, you have six minutes.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the team from Parks Canada for your presentations, in particular Andrew Campbell, brother of Malcolm Campbell, vice-president of research at the University of Guelph, who is focused on improving life through research. The contributions your family is making to Canada are much appreciated.

Your team mentioned indigenous peoples several times, and call to action 79 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls for "...the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration." I was looking for opportunities for us to study items within the departments that we have in front of us.

Stephen, you mentioned "Mapping Change", the mapping time report with indigenous peoples in 2019. How do we engage with indigenous peoples in terms of promoting culture, of drawing attention to culture or working with them through employment? Is that a report that we should maybe dive into a little deeper? It's not that you can tell us what to do, but it sounds interesting.

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: No, I can't tell you what to do. Let's be clear.

That is a particular document that we have invested quite a bit of time and energy into as a key piece on our reconciliation agenda. It's been designed to allow us to modernize and contemporize stories that have already been told by Canada and Canadians to Canadians through more of an indigenous lens. The process by which we are revising or updating is key to that particular objective.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I'm the previous chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship. I'm interested in the opportunities that we present to new Canadians. When they go through their oath of citizenship, they get a free pass for one year to visit Parks Canada as part of our integration programs.

We've talked a little about indigenous people, but what about newcomers to Canada? Also mentioned was Learn-to Camp. I know some parks set up tents for you. You just show up, and they help you get into the camping experience.

How do we integrate newcomers through Parks Canada? Michael, would you comment?

Mr. Michael Nadler: That's an excellent question. Thanks for posing it.

In fact, over the past six years, Parks Canada has been orienting more and more of its programs toward the rich diversity of Canada's population. A key audience or client group for us is new Canadians and new citizens. There's an array of programs that we offer.

You're absolutely right that our outreach program is directed largely to people who may not yet have visited a Parks Canada place or who may not yet have embraced Canada's outdoors or Canada's historic places, for all manner of reasons. The Learn-to Camp program, for example, is delivered in communities across the country. We partner with newcomer organizations for specific delivery to that audience, both in urban and in rural settings, but also in our places for overnight experiences.

We've also adapted a number of our elements of visitor infrastructure to better reflect the diversity of Canada's population. We're working to make our places more accessible. We're working to ensure that our places are more culturally neutral and can receive people of multiple cultures and backgrounds.

We're also working to ensure that we're equally inviting to the LGBTQ community, so we're adapting values of gender equity and better balance in our infrastructure.

● (0915)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I'm looking to bridge these two ideas. In the House right now, we're debating changes to our citizenship oath that would include recognition of indigenous peoples as part of Canada's heritage.

In terms of indigenous tourism or opportunities for newcomers or other Canadians to experience life as indigenous people did before colonialization, is there any work afoot in terms of bringing forward indigenous culture through indigenous tourism in our parks?

Mr. Michael Nadler: There's a great deal of work. Andrew mentioned at the outset that we collaborate with indigenous communities across the country on the operations of our places, and that includes the visitor offer.

Our approach is to empower indigenous communities to share their culture, history and traditions with Canadians directly. We facilitate that kind of visitor experience delivery.

In our outreach programming, we also work with indigenous communities. One great example is a recent Learn-to Camp experience in which we brought together the Mi'kmaq community and newcomers. I'll see if I can get a video reference sent to the clerk of the committee. You'll see this fabulous interaction of newcomers' music with Mi'kmaq drumming.

I agree that the Parks Canada settings are a welcoming place for everyone, and a place where cultures can intermingle and be shared.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Pauzé is next.

[*Translation*]

You have six minutes, Ms. Pauzé.

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Nadler, for the lovely documentation. It's a wonderful site, quite interesting to look at and read.

According to your presentation, "ecological integrity is the first priority in all decision-making in national parks".

What do you mean by "first priority"? I have an example to share with you after.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I'm going to let Ms. Upton answer that.

Ms. Darlene Upton: Thank you for your question. I'll do my best to answer in the language in which it was asked.

Under our administration, ecological integrity is our number one priority. What that means is, when we create things like visitor programs, our first consideration is their impact on ecological integrity. That is the case for every program, no matter what it is. We also have a monitoring program for every single park in the country, so we have a good understanding of

[*English*]

current state of our parks and our places, so we understand where our risks are. We're able in that way to take that into consideration in making decisions, whether they be infrastructure decisions or visitor programming decisions.

● (0920)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: How much authority do you have when it comes to not allowing a development project to proceed in a protected area like a marine protected area? I have an example for you, the Saguenay estuary, in Quebec. It's currently a protected area, in particular, because of the presence of belugas. Nevertheless, many projects would bring large vessels to the area. What authority do you have in that respect? Can you oppose the project?

[*English*]

Ms. Darlene Upton: We have legislative protection. In particular, in that place we have that piece of legislation that helps define our role, and then as a federal department we work with the impact assessment agencies, so any projects that move forward would be going through environmental assessment.

Our role gets determined by the impact in that legislation. We would participate in projects, in the assessment of projects and the potential impacts on our places. The scope of our participation depends on the type of impact and the mandate of the agency.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Do you have some sort of right of redress—and I'll tie in the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada—to deal with developers who might trample on you and push ahead with their projects despite their detrimental impact?

[*English*]

Ms. Darlene Upton: It would depend on the legislation, on what that particular impact might be and our ability to demonstrate actual impacts. It's going to depend.

[Translation]

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I would also point out that we have a management plan for each site throughout the country. The plan sets out planning tools to improve the park's or marine area's ecological integrity, while controlling the activities being carried out there for the next 10 years. The management plan is tabled in the House of Commons following consultation with local communities.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'm going to stay on the topic of protected areas. As we know, climate change is causing significant environmental degradation. Given that it's already March, I'd like to know how you're going to achieve the country's 17% conservation target for protected areas by 2020—I assume that means by December 2020.

[English]

Ms. Darlene Upton: For both the terrestrial and the marine environment, Parks Canada has a systems plan whereby we've divided the country. For marine conservation, we have 29 natural regions. The mandate of the agency is to have a representative placed in each of those regions.

The first thing we do is look at the region. We study all the values and what's most at risk. We select an area and we move in partnership, often with the provinces and indigenous communities, on a feasibility study. That's the first step toward the establishment. If we determine that the park is feasible, we then move into negotiating agreements.

We have a very set process for that.

The Chair: You have lovely questions, but your time is up.

Madam Collins, you have six minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm going to pick up on some of the questions that were just asked.

With regard to marine protected areas, taking, for example, the southern Strait of Georgia, where are you in that process? Can you walk me through how you got to where you are and what the next steps are?

Ms. Darlene Upton: The southern Strait of Georgia has been a bit of a long-standing project, and some of these are like that. We're currently in conversations with many of the first nations communities. One of the challenges and opportunities on the southern Strait Of Georgia is there is 19 indigenous communities that we have to work with.

That's basically where we're at now. We have the support of the province to move forward. We've negotiated a number of agreements with first nations. We're hoping to be able to agree to a feasibility study shortly. There are a lot of conversations going on now with various indigenous communities.

• (0925)

Ms. Laurel Collins: That would mean large boats that anchor in those areas would no longer be able to. Is that correct?

Ms. Darlene Upton: It depends. As with terrestrial parks—and Andrew mentioned the management plan—part of the management planning process is to identify zones. We operate with different zones. We have the ability to protect really sensitive areas with spe-

cial preservation zones and so focus use in areas that are less potentially ecologically sensitive.

The zoning system is a part of the planning process. It then allows us to look at the other interests in that area, and whether we can, through zoning, reconcile various uses, ensuring that in the case of marine conservation areas, they're sustainable into the future.

Ms. Laurel Collins: In terms of our targets of 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2030, what is Parks Canada's role in that? Are you taking a lead on both? It sounds as if DFO is taking the lead on the marine targets. Can you describe that?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Parks Canada contributes to both the marine and the terrestrial targets. DFO is the lead federal agency to report those numbers. Environment and Climate Change Canada is the lead federal department to report the terrestrial.

Parks Canada is feeding both of those with our system of protected areas. We work quite closely with both organizations.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Looking ahead, in terms of where we're at right now and where we need to be, are we adequately funding our organizations in order to meet those targets?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Right now, the establishment processes can be long. The government's invested quite a bit of money into protected areas. I think we're doing really well right now to explore a number of options.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Forecasting ahead, does it look as if we're on track to meet our targets?

Ms. Darlene Upton: I'm not going to comment on that, thanks.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Do I still have a bit of time? It looks as if I do.

The Chair: You have two and a half more minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Okay, great.

I'm curious about the Indigenous Guardians program and how Parks Canada is working with that organization and pilot project.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Michael, I'll turn that to you.

Mr. Michael Nadler: Darlene and I could share that. Let me give you a general answer, and then Darlene can speak to some specific initiatives.

In fact, Parks Canada has been working in collaboration with indigenous peoples across the country on stewardship and management of our places for some years. Some of the earliest programs under the broad definition of guardians stems from Parks Canada's programming. Gwaii Haanas is sort of the classic example of a place where stewardship truly is in the hands of the Haida.

We've replicated that model across the network in a number of places, and even some of the most recent examples include the national historic sites for the wrecks of the Franklin expedition.

We can go through some specific examples if you'd like.

Ms. Darlene Upton: I think you're referring to the pilot project. That's being led by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

To Michael's point, Parks Canada has had a number of guardian programs operating for upwards of 20 years in certain parks. It's a model that we know works really well to reconnect indigenous communities with their lands in our places. We continue to support those programs.

Ms. Laurel Collins: You mentioned, or perhaps one of my colleagues mentioned, the call to action number 79 and the Mapping Change report. I may not have time for this whole question, but I can follow up.

Beyond the indigenous language mapping and sharing culture, are there other calls to action that Parks Canada is working on in terms of the truth and reconciliation commission's calls to action? Are there other projects that are attempting to uphold and respect indigenous rights?

Ms. Darlene Upton: That's the call to action we're specifically responsible for, but a number of the initiatives and the way in which the agency works with indigenous communities are supporting a number of the principles in the calls to action.

● (0930)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We have Mr. Mazier for five minutes. We're going into the second round.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much for coming out today. I'm from Manitoba and Riding Mountain National Park's in the middle of my riding. As you tour around any one of our national parks, of course, there are immense amounts of tinder and wood around them. Are there any emergency plans in general? Regarding fire emergency plans, how do you manage those? What is the fire emergency plan?

I can't help but think that when you have a bunch of people and you're trying to attract foreigners, especially people from out of the area, how is that all managed, and what kinds of plans do you have working in the parks?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Maybe I'll do the broader one and then throw the fire management one over to Darlene.

On the broader emergency response and what we call the visitor safety program, certainly within every park and site we have a visitor safety plan that also has an incident command structure around it. If there is an incident, we actually have a way of knowing who actually takes the decisions and how they're taken so that we expedite that decision-making process. Every park and site does have that.

The superintendent of the park or site, normally, is the end authority there, because we want to make sure the decisions are taken from an emergency and incident response at the closest local site we have.

On fire management, Darlene can comment.

Ms. Darlene Upton: Every park known to have a fire risk will have a fire-risk management plan and everything for that. We currently invest about \$7 million a year to prevent, mitigate and respond to fire management, and another \$1.5 million a year in the use of fire on the land for ecological integrity.

I'm really proud to say, and many people aren't aware of this, that Parks Canada is the only federal agency that has forest firefighters and a mandate to fight fire. We provided 13 of our resources to the deployment in Australia, including the only female who went in the first deployment. We have about 65 year-round firefighters and another 68 or so who come on seasonally, as well as many other staff who are trained for fire management. We're managing about 118 wildfires, on average, a year, and then again a number of prescribed burns we're doing to restore the landscape.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay.

Do you allow hunting in any national parks?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Michael can comment.

Mr. Michael Nadler: The short answer is yes. In situations of hyperabundance of some species, we—

Mr. Dan Mazier: How do you pick that?

Mr. Michael Nadler: The most significant element of the program is actually conducted with indigenous peoples. It's part of our work to facilitate traditional activities in our national parks and heritage settings. In one circumstance, we are part of a provincial licensing and permitting system for hunting, but that's an outlier. Generally we do it in collaboration with local communities.

In a couple of other circumstances when we faced significant hyperabundance, we've contracted services to help us control that.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Would it vary from province to province, probably?

Mr. Michael Nadler: As well as site to site.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Maybe I should just underscore that the determination of hyperabundance is entirely scientifically based on what the carrying capacity is of that particular species within the area, and that's tracked over time.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay.

How do you manage the area around the parks? Riding Mountain National Park has a unique circumstance. How do you work with those communities around the park and deal with invasive species? If your top priority is both preservation and protecting the park and you have the potential for zebra mussels coming around, how do you handle that as an agency? Who do we turn to in that case?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Again, it's going to depend by species, but certainly some of the invasive species or just hyperabundant native species are causing problems. We do manage for ecological integrity, and certainly with native species it's not necessarily our goal to eradicate them. Within our policies, if a species could be causing ecological impacts due to overabundance or if it's threatening values at risk that are outside of our park, we have the ability by policy to react.

● (0935)

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now go to Mr. Scarpaleggia for five minutes.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to our witnesses for being here.

In your opening remarks, someone mentioned infrastructure investments. I happen to be fortunate enough to have in my riding the Sainte-Anne canal and locks, which are a major tourist attraction in the summertime and a great asset for our community. As you know, they're in need of an upgrade.

In fact, there was a plan to bring repairs to the canal. The original plan was that the work would be finished I think in 2018, if I'm not mistaken—the exact date doesn't really matter—but then we had flooding in 2017. As I understand it, the money that was put aside for the rehabilitation of the canal and the locks was spent on effective repairs necessitated by the flooding.

Have we started work on the actual rehabilitation of the canal? Given that the money put aside for the repair work was spent on the flood aftermath in 2017, as I understand it, is there going to be another funding envelope to take care of the upgrades?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: You have good information.

I would begin by saying that our infrastructure is managed on a dynamic basis. We look at where immediate pressures are on an ongoing basis and we re-evaluate projects constantly.

I'll have to get back to you on whether or not the work has started on the core elements you've described, but certainly the work that's been identified is within our business planning for restoration for all our sites.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Will there be funding? The funding that was put aside originally has been spent on repairs necessitated by the flooding. Will there be another budget envelope for the repairs themselves, which were scheduled to be done by 2018?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: All the work that we've scheduled, we still have under...it's a question of when it starts.

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: We are constantly re-juggling our finances, yes.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Okay, so the funds are available.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: You've got it. Okay.

Also, Mayor Paola Hawa contacted me at least a year ago—and I remember writing to Parks Canada about this—because there's a jetty as part of the installation and it's in serious need of repair. The mayor was hoping that the materials that would be used to repair the jetty would be more environmentally friendly. I guess that right

now it's asphalt, and it attracts a lot of sun and heat. Basically, it creates a bit of a heat island.

Are you looking at using more environmentally friendly materials for the jetty and for other upcoming upgrades that you have to do on other installations that are under Parks Canada?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: We are constantly looking for greening our project delivery mechanisms. On that particular one, I'll get back to you in terms of what is being considered for the jetty.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: That would be great.

I'd like to turn now to Wood Buffalo National Park, which is at risk of ecosystem collapse due to changing hydrology and increasing water demands and diversions.

UNESCO has warned that continued deterioration could lead to its inscription on the list of world heritage sites in danger. As I understand it, an environmental—

● (0940)

The Chair: Mr. Scarpaleggia, do you want an answer? You have 30 seconds left.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Okay.

How's it going there?

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Andrew Campbell: There is a Wood Buffalo National Park and world heritage site action plan that has been tabled in Parliament. We are working forward on that. We've started to take the initial steps. We are working towards solutions with the first nations communities surrounding and within the park and are looking at ways in which we can abate some of the ongoing issues within the park.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Redekopp, you have five minutes.

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Thank you.

Thanks for coming today.

The Rouge National Urban Park Act established a park in Toronto.

I'm from Saskatoon. We have the Meewasin Valley in Saskatoon. You talked about co-managed sites like the Steveston cannery. The Meewasin encapsulates, I think, the principles of Parks Canada, but they've struggled financially to support the park in Saskatoon, and they've struggled to communicate with you guys as to whether there is any financing or any help that you could provide.

They wrote me a letter that I want to quote from:

It would be great to understand for us, and others who are not necessarily an actual National Park to understand funding opportunities better. There are many publicly accessible spaces that are utilized by many folks, especially in Saskatoon in an urban environment that could use support. We would be interested to know if there are funding opportunities for charitable organizations who manage or own green infrastructure spaces like the Meewasin Valley, which is 6700 hectares and sees over 1.65 million visits...

It's also connected with the Wanuskewin heritage park in Saskatoon.

Can you answer that question for Meewasin?

Ms. Darlene Upton: We don't currently have any funding programs to support those. We're certainly an agency that is always open to sharing our knowledge and our best practices and such, but we don't currently operate a funding program to support parks like that.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: How do you get into a co-managed situation?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Are you referring to something like the cannery?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: The cannery under the national historic sites program was designated a site of national historic significance, and so within that in.... I'm going to get my dates wrong, but there was a switch of ownership where that came over to the federal government because it was part of the federal cannery structure on the Steveston pier.

When it moved to Parks Canada.... In fact, we haven't had many new historic sites move to us. On the establishment of national parks, obviously the national parks establishment priorities are set out in our national parks plan, so as we move forward, those are the ones that currently have the—

Mr. Brad Redekopp: All right.

Also in Saskatchewan we have a couple of national parks, and I think we have four historic sites. I was reading through your departmental plan, and in there you said, "The Government of Canada is investing \$23.9 million over five years through Budget 2018 to integrate Indigenous peoples' views and histories and to reflect Indigenous cultures in Parks..."

Can you provide a breakdown for the six sites in Saskatchewan? How much of that \$23 million is or was spent on those parks?

Ms. Catherine Blanchard (Vice-President, Finance Directorate, Parks Canada Agency): I don't have those figures with me, but I'm happy to look into them for you. We'll do it as a follow-up.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Okay. If you provide that to the committee, that would be great.

Further to that, you talk about working with indigenous people. Which indigenous people do you work with? Is there a prescription for that, or how does that work?

Mr. Michael Nadler: There are approximately 300 indigenous communities that are adjacent to Parks Canada places, and we operate in the traditional territories of a great number of indigenous peoples and communities. I don't know that we have an easily accessible, publicly accessible list, but the driver of our collaboration is if a national park, a national historic site, or even a marine conservation area is in the traditional territory of an indigenous group. We collaborate with those groups in the stewardship and management of the parks.

• (0945)

Mr. Brad Redekopp: For the Saskatchewan parks, could you provide me with the people that you collaborate with?

Mr. Michael Nadler: Absolutely we could. We could give you a list.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Great.

In the departmental plan, there is no reference to the province of Saskatchewan. There's in fact no reference to Saskatchewan, New Brunswick or Yukon. Are there future park expansions or activities that are planned for Saskatchewan?

Ms. Darlene Upton: We don't have anything identified at the moment; however, we're always looking for opportunities to collaborate. In particular—

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Like Meewasin, perhaps?

Ms. Darlene Upton: In particular we have the establishment of Thaidene Nëné in the Northwest Territories, which is a recent example of a collaboration around an indigenous protected and conserved area.

The agency is always open to it, but we don't have anything on our radar on that now.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Baker, go ahead for five minutes.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I thank you all for being here today. It's really informative and really interesting.

Hearing the questions and the conversations thus far, I'm a little envious of a lot of my colleagues who have Parks Canada places in their ridings, when I don't have the fortune of having one. Perhaps that's something that will evolve in the future.

I represent a riding called Etobicoke Centre, a western suburban riding in the city of Toronto. One of the things I want to say to you, even though it's not in my riding but it's still in the city of Toronto, is that I congratulate you and thank you for establishing the first national urban park, the Rouge National Urban Park. I think it's great to see the strong working relationship with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and with the City of Toronto, so thank you and kudos on that.

Specifically on that, what are the next steps and timelines? I understand there's a visitor centre that's to be built at the Toronto Zoo. It sounds exciting for a lot of people in the GTA. I wonder if you could share with us what the next steps and timelines are for building that visitor centre.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: The visitor centre is in the design phase right now. Part of that design phase will be looking at—to talk about an earlier question—some of the greening elements we can have working there. There is an indigenous circle that represents 11 different indigenous communities around the park, and so that design phase will take all of that as well as community consultations into consideration.

The site has been selected. The site is close to the Toronto Zoo, so there are some great opportunities from a public transit perspective for people in the area to go to that site and visit it using public transit.

Once the design phase is through, we will start the tendering of the construction phase, and from there it will be built, if all goes according to plan, by around 2023.

Mr. Yvan Baker: In 2023, it will be complete. Is that correct?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Ideally, that's the plan.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Okay, I appreciate that. I understand that these timelines are fluid and can evolve, but that gives me a sense. Occasionally I get asked about that.

This is the environment committee, and on this committee I'm excited to think about how, through the levers of government, we can act to address climate change. Taking a step back a little bit, could you speak a little on the role of marine conservation areas or national parks in addressing climate change? What positive impacts do those have?

Ms. Darlene Upton: They have a number of positive impacts. We recently did some work, for example, on the ecosystem value of these places, and that could include things from flood mitigation to species protection, climate heat reduction and carbon storage in forests.

Our preliminary numbers are about 2.6 trillion per year for collection by Parks Canada places. It's an enormous number. Those are the big things, and we've done studies now to understand the carbon storage in all our places and the fluxes in the carbon. Protected areas, and especially, as recent studies have shown, managed protected areas contribute to biodiversity goals but also contribute to climate goals as well.

• (0950)

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I'll jump in for one second because I can answer both Mr. Redekopp's question and yours.

One of the areas in south Saskatchewan, obviously a protected area and one of our most important protected areas, is the natural grasslands. In fact, we are adding property to the Grasslands National Park on an annual basis to try to complete the creation of the park in southern Saskatchewan, which has large ecological and climate change impact for Canadians.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I appreciate that.

This is a question for Ms. Upton. You mentioned the reports and the studies you've done. Are those things you'd be willing to share with the committee?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Yes, definitely. We share those with a lot of partners already, because climate obviously has no boundaries and it has impacts, and so we do that.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you.

The Chair: Perfect. Thank you.

Madam Pauzé, you have two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'd like to talk about your cultural heritage mandate. You've identified 40 railway stations.

How exactly do they benefit from having a heritage designation?

Mr. Michael Nadler: That's a good question.

A heritage designation means a lot of things. Normally, proposals for historic sites come from the community. Railway stations are important to communities. It gives them a certain edge. These sites are usually representative of the entire country's heritage, in other words, Canada's cultural heritage.

It can even lead to economic advantages by supporting the community's tourism industry.

Does that answer your question?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes, that answers my question, but I'd like to dig a bit deeper.

What happens when the site is privately owned?

I have an article that was in the paper about a site not far from my riding, in the Lanaudière region. It's home to a federal heritage railway station that has been falling into disrepair for the past 30 years, completely ignored.

How did a heritage designation help that privately owned railway station? Canadian Pacific was privatized.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: In order for a railway station to be recognized as a protected site, various conditions have to be met. Consequently, any changes or upgrades are subject to certain rules and a review is carried out.

However, there are no rules forcing a private owner to make changes or improvements if they choose not to. The rules focus on the actual changes to the property.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Madam Collins, you have two and a half minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I want to go back to my question about conservation, to the 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2030. This is maybe a better way to get at what I'm looking for.

What do you see as the barriers, both on land and in water, to our achieving those targets? Where are we right now? I'm just curious about the path forward and what that looks like.

Ms. Darlene Upton: I'll speak to Parks Canada and what we've contributed.

Canada is currently at 12.1% protection on the terrestrial side. About a quarter of that, or about 3.5%, has been contributed by Parks Canada. We're hopeful that we might be able to contribute another 3% in the coming years toward Canada's targets for terrestrial conservation.

On the marine side—

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry; you said, "in the coming years". What's the timeline?

Ms. Darlene Upton: We're aiming to try to achieve another 3% by 2025.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Okay.

• (0955)

Ms. Darlene Upton: That's our goal. You can't always predict the outcome of these things, but we're always moving forward. I'll add on the terrestrial side that other effective conservation measures have been recognized for places that aren't managed specifically for conservation, but the way in which they're managed contributes to conservation. For example, a number of Parks Canada's national historic sites, which are not national parks but do contribute, are currently being evaluated for their effectiveness as conservation. They'll contribute as well.

On the marine side, Canada is currently at 13.81%. Parks Canada's contribution to that is about 6% currently. With the projects that we have going on—again, I don't have the exact numbers on me—we're expecting to make further contributions.

It's not all about the percentage, I would say. One of the things we need to look at is also the “where” and the value. That means, for example, that in southern Canada there's a lot of value to smaller protected areas from a biodiversity perspective.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you.

Then in terms of—

The Chair: You had 10 seconds.

We now go to the third round. I will have to stop at 10:15 to let the witnesses go. Then we'll go into committee business.

Mr. Aitchison, you have five minutes.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I appreciate you all being here as well, so thank you.

I'm actually from a riding that has a natural historic site—the Norman Bethune house in Gravenhurst, which we're very proud of. The mayor of Gravenhurst has actually been to China a couple of times, which is very interesting.

I want to talk about one of the mistakes, maybe, that Parks Canada made—specifically, the Signal Hill fence issue.

For those who don't remember, it was back in 2018. Parks Canada decided that they wanted to do what was described in the planning stages as a visually appealing permanent fence and gateway to control access to the tattoo performance field on Signal Hill. There were a lot of great reasons for this, including increasing revenues. It would be an attractive way to get more people attracted to the visitor centre and the café. It cost about \$65,000 to build, but a week after it was built, complaints started rolling in to MP O'Regan's office. Then Rick Mercer got hold of it and all hell broke loose, of course.

Parks Canada was being criticized all over the place, and there was some backtracking going on. Public safety was cited as a reason, but there were no stats on that. The fence was taken down. It was fairly controversial and under the direction by then of Minister McKenna. I understand that screw-ups happen, and for anybody who thinks I'm being mean, google “pipe man in Huntsville” and you'll know that I've got some too.

The reason I ask the question is not to embarrass you, but just to ask what the public consultation process is for those kinds of decisions, whenever there's some kind of a significant change being planned for a facility or a natural historic site. Has it changed as a result of what happened on Signal Hill?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Thank you for the question.

It's great to learn from everything that goes on, both positive and negative. One thing we learned from that is that some of the public consultations we need to do around those types of elements.... I think we've always had a strong value and ethic towards public consultation. It just made us all remember to redouble that effort as we are doing those types of things that, as in this case, obviously affect the viewscape and the way people view that site.

I will say that on that site there are still some public safety concerns, but we're redoubling that effort of looking, with the community, at other ways that it could perhaps be mitigated.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Is there a difference between the consultation process that you go through for changes to a national historic site versus, say, a national park? I can't remember the park where users could get permits to do some clearing on back-country trails. It's things like that. When you make those kinds of changes, is the process different depending on what kind of facility you're in?

• (1000)

Mr. Andrew Campbell: There are many different types of processes, everything from the constitutionally protected areas that we talked about before and our duty to consult with indigenous people, right through to some minor consultations that you might do with a particular group.

The management plan is the largest consultative process that we take for the management for every park and site, and there are those for national historic sites as well. For specific actions, there will often be secondary consultations.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Those consultations are fairly broad-based, I would say. Who all would be engaged in that consultation? How do you pick who's involved?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: In many cases, it's open house. They are also using online consultative processes more and more through Michael's group, so that not just the people in the local area can participate. Obviously, all Canadians like to have a voice in national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas, and they should. Being able to do online consultative processes are also important.

Ms. Darlene Upton: We are now required to post any significant project requiring environmental assessment under the new act. It's not a consultation per se, but rather a transparency process that allows Canadians to see what's going on in these places and to request input.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Saini is next.

Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Good morning, and thank you very much for being here.

I'm going to start with a local question. I'm sure you're somewhat aware of the issue surrounding this question.

As you know, Parks Canada manages 12 UNESCO world heritage sites, and one of those sites is right here in Ottawa, the Rideau Canal. I think UNESCO's World Heritage Centre has been a bit concerned about the expansion of the Chateau Laurier in terms of how it would affect the viewscape of the Rideau Canal.

A lot of people may not know this, but the canal is an example of slackwater canals built in the 19th century, and we don't have that many in North America. It is not only a preserved heritage site, but the technology is something to marvel at.

What is Parks Canada's analysis of this expansion? Do you feel that this expansion is warranted? Would this expansion damage the viewscape of the Rideau Canal?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I'll flip it to Michael to start.

Mr. Michael Nadler: Thank you, and we'll be happy to take follow-ups.

On the Chateau Laurier addition, Parks Canada has played an active role in helping to assess and address any potential visual impacts the project could present to the Rideau Canal, a national historic site and a UNESCO world heritage site.

Over the past several years, various heritage impact assessments and visual impact assessments have been undertaken by third party consultants, and we've viewed these assessments very carefully.

We acknowledge that there is a visual impact associated with the proposed addition to the Chateau. What we want to underscore is that there are established processes under the World Heritage Convention, and managed by the World Heritage Centre, to address or look at those impacts. Parks Canada works very closely with the centre.

Mr. Raj Saini: My next question is in regard to the planting of two billion trees, which we had in our platform commitment. One of the things that I find would be really interesting and really creative is for all the parks across Canada to be involved in this endeavour, not only in terms of protecting the environment but also in terms of engaging the local community.

Is there a plan by Parks Canada to have this type of engagement to conduct tree planting? Is there a way of measuring how much will be done over the next few years?

Ms. Darlene Upton: That's a Natural Resources Canada project lead, and we are working closely with Natural Resources Canada

and Environment Canada on how this might be rolled out. Certainly, Parks Canada lands offer a potential that we're looking at.

Mr. Raj Saini: I'm going to follow up with a question that Ms. Collins asked. This is about the protection of the land, from 20% to 25% in 2025 and 30% in 2030.

One of the things I am thinking about is this. In that rollout, is there any plan by Parks Canada to increase the number of parks conservation areas in Canada? To get to that point, there would have to be a further analysis done of land in terms of what more could be conserved or what more could be brought under the guidance of Parks Canada.

• (1005)

Ms. Darlene Upton: That's right.

We have a couple of initiatives under way. We're trying to complete the systems plans for both the terrestrial and the marine areas. This has to do with putting parks in areas that aren't currently represented. We're also looking at where we can expand to better protect areas. There are a number of projects ongoing right now. Work is continuing to look....

Park establishment often can be serendipitous. A bunch of factors can come together and present an opportunity. One thing the agency has is a great deal of flexibility in how we move forward through establishment, including the partners we bring and ultimately the arrangements we have for the management of those places. More and more, we have co-management arrangements with indigenous communities, as well as the ability to create protected areas that respect the legislation but also incorporate the values of local communities.

The Chair: You have 15 seconds, if you'd like to—

Mr. Andrew Campbell: I'll donate it.

I was going to add this, for two seconds. The other thing is—Michael's probably too humble to say—we also take a leadership role in the Canadian Parks Council, which is a parks group that represents all of the provincial and territorial parks as well. Certainly Michael has taken a lead in making sure that the goals that the government has put forward are also being considered at the provincial and territorial level.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Mazier, you have five minutes.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Going back to the emergency management and tree management in general, you talked about going over to Australia and helping out over there with the wildfires. When you look at the damage that the pine beetle has done, especially in Jasper National Park and those kinds of parks, you see a situation evolving there that makes it perfect timber to burn.

Have there been any management plans implemented? What is the plan to get rid of that? Is there any sense of urgency? Are there timelines that if we don't...? Who's being hired, and all those kinds of things? What's the plan for that?

Ms. Darlene Upton: We have developed, with partners, a specific management plan in that particular area. Obviously, one of the big concerns is the dead trees and the fuel load.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Who would be the partners?

Ms. Darlene Upton: The partners are the province and Natural Resources Canada as well. They bring a lot of knowledge and information to the table. Obviously the province has a number of concerns, so we're working with all those partners.

We've invested a fair bit of money—and I don't have the actual number in front of me—on fuel reduction, particularly in those areas.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Have they started taking it away?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Yes. That's been ongoing for a while, but we are ramping up efforts in response to the—

Mr. Dan Mazier: Are there any deadlines? Are we thinking we have to get rid of this or we could end up with another Australia? Are there any mandate definitions like “let's get this done”?

Ms. Darlene Upton: They're defined by the funding we have available, in part. We started last year with a number of new projects. There will be a number of new actions this season as well in terms of load reduction and prescribed burns.

Mr. Andrew Campbell: It is one of the very few places that we have ever done mechanical removal within a national park. That's going on right now.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Could you provide to the committee an update on that plan and how that's going?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We can certainly provide that to the clerk and the committee.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay. Excellent.

Regarding cell service in parks, in general, does Parks Canada have any kind of plan? Is anybody responsible? You have people all over the parks. How do they communicate? Is there any plan for connectivity?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: We work closely with Shared Services Canada on mapping where both employees and visitors are able to access cell service, as well as—

Mr. Dan Mazier: Is there any budget for it, for Wi-Fi?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: We use the dollars that were appropriated to manage improvements in all areas. The schedule varies depending on the level of resources available and depending on the level of service that's in there.

One of the innovations that we have achieved recently, following the leadership of our colleagues at Shared Services Canada, is that we now have some abilities to work with local service providers in a much more direct way to allow for access, and that's something new that we're exploring right now.

• (1010)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Is there any involvement with infrastructure? How would a person get into that system to know who to reach out to? Is it the local superintendent?

Mr. Stephen Van Dine: Yes.

Mr. Dan Mazier: On the two billion trees, does Parks Canada plan on being part of the two billion trees the government has announced that it wants to plant?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Yes. The planning is in the early phases, but we're working with both Natural Resources Canada and Environment Canada to look at how that will roll out and what opportunities Parks Canada lands offer.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Does Parks Canada have lands available for planting trees?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Potentially. We're just starting to have the conversations now.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Do you think you have enough room, or are you going to need more room to plant two billion trees?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Two billion is a lot of trees.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Do you have any idea how many acres it might take?

Ms. Darlene Upton: Parks Canada won't be able to deliver...won't be the sole body that would be able to do that. We don't have the estimate right now on what our potential would be.

Mr. Dan Mazier: But you have been made aware. You're part of the plan for the two billion trees.

Ms. Darlene Upton: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Schiefke, you have five minutes.

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank our guests for being here. It's good to see you again.

The question I have is with regard to climate change and how it affects our national parks. Obviously climate change is affecting all facets of Canadian life, and I would imagine that it is also having an impact on our national parks.

I'm wondering if you can share with the committee members what impact it is having, if any, and whether or not Parks Canada has any mitigating or adaptation measures that are being put in place for that.

Ms. Darlene Upton: You will see around Canada, and obviously in our places as well, some of the impacts that we're seeing in relation to climate change. Flooding is certainly something we've been dealing with up north in glacier melting. Particularly in Kluane, we're seeing some impacts.

There's no question that we're seeing impacts. We've done regional assessments for every region to look at what the actual impact of climate change will be in degrees. We've also created an adaptation tool kit of best practices that we've seen used.

We've done six of these regional workshops now. They've brought together partners in the academic world and interested provincial or other partners to take a look at that data and at what the impacts will be specifically in that region. That may be specific to the site or more broadly. We conducted one out in British Columbia and had a look at what is going to happen to the cultural sites that are shoreline sites and to some of our assets and infrastructure, and how we think this is going to impact species at risk in their movement.

All of that work of increasing our knowledge is under way. We're starting to take some of those adaptation actions now, certainly around infrastructure but also in some of our planning. As we look at new park establishment, we're trying to predict what the impact to species will be when we look at zoning or the size of a park boundary that we're trying to establish. We are trying to integrate the impacts of climate change into all elements of park management. With management plans, we're now looking at climate change impacts and trying to predict those as well.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: I look forward to seeing those when they are made available, and I imagine that all committee members do. Thanks for that work.

My second question is on the income stream for Parks Canada.

I was actually pleasantly surprised in my original briefing to hear that up to 25% of the funding comes from revenues from ticket admission prices and that kind of stuff. Has there been any study conducted on how to maximize or increase those revenues to provide greater capacity for Parks Canada to do its work outside of the vast majority of the funding coming from the federal government? If so, what does that look like?

Mr. Michael Nadler: Absolutely, there has, and in fact we're constantly innovating our offer. I mentioned earlier, in my response to a different question, how more and more we're addressing our service and visitor offer to better reflect Canada's diversity. We've seen steady increases in visitation—peaking in 2017, obviously, with free admission—and we're now at roughly the highest level of visitation we've experienced in quite some years.

The Service Fees Act of 2017 has allowed us also to modernize some elements of our fee structure. We continue to look at the requirements of the act in terms of ongoing refinement and improvement of our fee structure. Part of the objective there is to improve our revenues, but it's also to make sure those elements of our ser-

vices that bring a public benefit remain very affordable, while those that are more tied to a private or business benefit reflect a better balance in terms of cost recovery.

• (1015)

Ms. Darlene Upton: If I could add to that, as an example, a few years ago we renegotiated our relationship with the hydro industry. We have 26 hydro dams. We renegotiated that relationship for set fees. That provides a significant amount of revenue into the agency.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Okay.

This is the last question I have. I think it's for the general knowledge of all committee members if they're unaware, but we do have a mascot.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Exactly—I see some faces of confusion.

Can one of you perhaps talk about the nature and history of the mascot and how perhaps we can better utilize this mascot to promote Parks Canada—

The Chair: You have 20 seconds.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: —and provide that in 20 seconds?

Mr. Michael Nadler: Yes. We have a mascot named “Parka”, who is a gender-neutral beaver that comes from Wood Buffalo National Park. Our core audience is families. Parka is there to engage children and appears at a number of events and places. Also, Parka is actually a great partner in the media sector.

[*Translation*]

In fact, Radio-Canada features cartoons produced by Parks Canada and drawn by young people in Quebec.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Pausé, you have two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pausé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to know whether the agency is responsible for promoting 20th century architecture and industrial heritage.

You talked about natural and cultural heritage, but is protecting industrial heritage part of your mandate?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: We have sites like the Lachine Canal, which is part of Canada's industrial heritage. We also have a number of historic sites that are grain elevators.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: How do they become recognized by UNESCO? Is that part of your mandate?

Mr. Andrew Campbell: Our group is responsible for dealing with UNESCO. Right now, no sites in Canada are on UNESCO's list of world heritage sites, except, perhaps, for the Rideau Canal.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: We have a request, and it concerns Arvida, in the Lac-Saint-Jean region.

I have here the Guide to the Parks Canada Environmental Impact Analysis Process. The most recent version we were able to find is from June 2015.

Is that still the one the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada is using, or do you have an updated one?

Ms. Darlene Upton: We've already updated the guidance in the new system, which was created to address the requirements in the new legislation.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: May I say one last thing? In response to one of my earlier questions, you said that you play a leading role in the Canadian Parks Council, which means you're involved in Conservation 2020.

I'd like to commend you on that front. My assistant and I had a look at your website, and it has some wonderful stuff on it—reports that could prove quite useful in this day and age, including the one focused on indigenous peoples.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

[*English*]

Madame Collins, you have two and a half minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: First, could we get the information for how much of the marine protected areas is projected to be protected by 2025, as well as the numbers for 2030 for both the terrestrial and the marine areas?

I also wanted to ask a couple of questions about co-management. You answered some of the questions, but I'm thinking about what one of the directors on a regional district board in a neighbouring riding brought to my attention. There's an indigenous group that's been working with the CRD, the Capital Region District, to try to protect Mary Hill.

If they wanted to approach Parks Canada or somehow partner with the federal government, what are the steps for an indigenous community that's already working with a regional district around protecting an area to kind of loop in Parks Canada?

• (1020)

Ms. Darlene Upton: There is the Indigenous Leadership Initiative, which is something that they may want to connect with. This initiative is supporting about 25 IPCAs, indigenous protected and conserved areas, that received funding recently to explore. That's one avenue they may want to look at.

We're also always open for a conversation. They are welcome to contact us directly to have a conversation and see if there's a fit there, or if not, where we could point them.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Potentially, I'll pass that along to their member of Parliament to connect.

I asked a question about the barriers that are faced in reaching those targets, and even it we're just looking at 3% by 2025, I'm curious what you see as some of the gaps or the areas that need work in order for us to achieve that target.

Ms. Darlene Upton: It just really varies by initiative. Obviously, many of the projects we looked at require indigenous support. We view these as opportunities.

There may be private sector interests or mineral interests that need to be looked at. These are things that are not necessarily road-blocks, but they can take time to figure out.

The way in which we want to establish parks is with broad support from provinces and territories and industry sectors that are around, and indigenous communities. That's really what the feasibility section of establishment is. Feasibilities are opportunities to look at all the interests in the area.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here. There are things that you promised to provide to the clerk, who is going to send them to members.

I'm going to suspend the meeting for a couple of minutes, and then we will go into committee business. It's going to be public.

• (1020) _____ (Pause) _____

• (1020)

The Chair: The clerk is distributing the report from the subcommittee, which met yesterday, Wednesday, February 26, to consider the business of the committee. Therefore, before I speak, I want to see if you all have a copy of the subcommittee report. Do you have it?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Pauzé, you may go ahead.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: My apologies, Madam Chair. I was busy with our witnesses.

I have a point of order.

[*English*]

The Chair: Okay.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: We certainly need to encourage government officials and others who appear before the committee to use both official languages.

However, it uses up a lot of my two and a half minutes or six minutes of speaking time. That's what happened earlier, although I do recognize that the witness made an effort.

I'm not sure whether I should put forward a motion.

Would it be possible for me to have an extra 30 seconds in some instances?

• (1025)

The Chair: Ms. Pauzé, I gave you 30 seconds, if not a minute, more.

[English]

I have been giving it to you.

[Translation]

I realized that the witness didn't speak French or, rather, that he didn't speak it very well.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: You're too kind.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

You have the subcommittee report before you. I would like to have your approval for each of the motions. I will let you know that Mr. Redekopp came before the steering committee to present his motion because it was time sensitive. The committee agreed to put his motion forward.

I'll read our motion, the committee's motion, and then take a vote on it. Then I will go to the second, third, fourth, etc.

The motion is as follows:

That pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee invite witnesses from the University of Saskatchewan's Global Institute for Water Security to brief the committee on its work on Tuesday March 10, 2020; and that 45 minutes be allotted for statements and questions.

All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Next:

That pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee invite the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to brief it on his work, and that 45 minutes be allotted for statements and questions for March 10, 2020.

All in favour?

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Perfect.

Next:

That pursuant to Standing 108(2), the committee receive a briefing from the officials from the Treasury Board Secretariat on the estimates process on March 10, 2020.

All in favour?

The Chair: Madam Collins, you raised your hand.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Which number are you on right now?

The Chair: I'm on number 3.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Okay. It's just that on my sheet, there was no date.

The Chair: It's not on anybody's sheet. The date was supposed to be on all three. The subcommittee decided that the study was taking place—

Ms. Laurel Collins: On March 10?

The Chair: —on March 10, 2020.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you for the clarification.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Can we get that documented?

The Chair: We will.

Mr. Raj Saini: Is that going to be enough time for all three?

The Chair: Yes. It's 45 minutes, 45 minutes and 45 minutes. It's fine.

Sorry. I shouldn't say it's fine. It might be fine. That's what the committee decided—

Mr. Raj Saini: We could do 45 minutes, 45 minutes and 30 minutes then, right?

The Chair: Perhaps. We'll just equalize the time—

Mr. Raj Saini: Okay.

The Chair: —because Mr. Redekopp's motion is very timely, and those guys are coming onto the Hill.

The fourth one is as follows:

That pursuant to Standing Order 81(5), the committee invite the Minister and departmental officials to study the Supplementary Estimates (B); and that if they have been referred to the committee, the Main Estimates for March 12.

Go ahead, Madam Findlay.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Chair, I have a comment. I think it would be more appropriate to invite the minister—as we wish to do, on the 12th—and his officials to take that time to discuss the supplementary estimates (B). They're time sensitive and have to be done by a certain date.

The Chair: It's March 26.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: We could invite him back later for main estimates. We have a much longer time frame for that. That day, I would think, we could certainly take up the time of the committee, perhaps an hour with the minister and an hour with his officials, on supplementary estimates (B). I think it would be more appropriate, and I think more the norm, to invite him back at a later date for the main estimates.

The Chair: If the main estimates have been submitted to the House by then, it will be a good utilization of the time. The ministers sometimes are not available, and I don't want them not to be here to defend the main estimates.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I would like to give him the opportunity to discuss the main estimates.

The Chair: There is a proposal by Ms. Findlay. Is there any discussion?

Go ahead, Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I wouldn't want to exclude the main estimates if they're available and if they've been given to us. I have questions going into the budget cycle. We will hopefully be seeing a budget sometime in the next few weeks after that, so I think it might give us some good context for the budget. I'm thinking of the next steps after that. Maybe two steps down the road is looking at how the main estimates and the budget work together.

I wouldn't want to exclude the main estimates from our discussion.

• (1030)

The Chair: Okay. Are there any others?

Mr. Brad Redekopp: My concern is that if we include the main estimates, that's a lot to cover, and it's going to get very watered down. I agree with the idea that we just focus on the supplementary estimates (B) and then invite the Minister back once we have the main estimates to talk about.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: I echo Brad, especially as new MPs, and there are a lot of new MPs. The supplementary estimates will be enough. As we go through the process, we have lots of time. As Kerry-Lynne has suggested, we have lots of time to review the main estimates. Let's go one step at a time.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Schiefke.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: I would have to disagree. I think if we have an opportunity to discuss the main estimates, this is an opportunity for the committee to be able to dive into them. I think it's up to us to be prepared for that and to ensure that we're using our time, as well as the Minister's time, to its fullest.

If the main estimates are available, I think we should ensure we discuss them and make sure the Minister has a chance to do so.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Aitchison is next.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: I'm a little concerned about having enough time to delve into all of it. I'm not concerned about being prepared. I might be okay with doing it the way you'd like to do it if we knew for certain that we could have another meeting on the main estimates if there were more questions we wanted to ask.

I've never done this before, but I'm certainly not used to people suggesting that we not have enough time to dig into it as deeply as we would like. That's all I'm concerned about.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madam Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I want to echo those concerns. I think if we're allotting time, we want to make sure there's enough time for all the questions to be answered. These meetings go very quickly, and we seem to be only skimming the surface a lot of the time.

I would be in favour of ensuring that we have two potential meetings scheduled so that we have enough time to dig into the material.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Schiefke.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: One option we could look at would be that the Minister would discuss everything in the meetings, particularly if the main estimates are available. We have an opportunity to do that.

Then if there are follow-up questions, we could invite the officials back to be able to respond to those questions. This will ensure that we have a chance to discuss main estimates with the Minister, which is very important, but also if we have any follow-up questions, we can get that information from the officials.

I think the balance here is trying to ensure we have an opportunity to get the information we need but also ensuring that the Minister's time is being maximized as well.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madame Pauzé.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Sorry, but I'm not sure I understood what Mr. Schiefke said. Why wouldn't we leave it open if we have time? Frankly, I don't know how long we'll need to study the supplementary estimates or the main estimates. This will be my first go at it, but I do know that, when it comes to money, people usually have a lot of detailed questions.

The matter was referred to the committee. Has any time been set aside to examine the main estimates? Is it something we can do? Given my inexperience when it comes to the estimates, I'm counting on you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Go ahead, Madam Findlay.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

I think it's very important that we have an opportunity to ask the minister. The minister is ultimately responsible. I think it's important that those meetings be televised as well. I'm sure we will have a lot of questions. I don't think it's sufficient just to have officials follow up later. Officials should be present and available at both meetings.

We do have time to delve into the main estimates. I think the 12th should be spent with officials on supplementary estimates (B). I'm content to say the minister will be in the first hour, officials the second.

We do need time with the minister to discuss the main estimates and ask all the questions we may have, and we need to have it televised.

• (1035)

The Chair: Anyone else for questions?

For those who are new to this—and I'm coming from government operations and public accounts—the reason we have those officials coming on March 10 will be to talk to us about the estimate process. That will give us a little bit of education. If the minister is available for two hours and the main estimates have been deposited in the House, it is important that we do get the minister to respond to the main estimates. The main estimates go into the budget.

Sometimes the ministers are not available. We have that opportunity on March 12. If—and there's an if—the main estimates are deposited into the House, then we can get the minister to do both, but if they are not deposited, then this thing is hypothetical.

Mr. Dan Mazier: If we're only going to focus on the main estimates, why are we even wasting our time with the supplementary estimates? Obviously there are two stages there.

The Chair: The supplementary estimates are where the government gets the opportunity to spend the money. We allow them to spend the money. We can only change it for one dollar.

The supplementary estimates are where we allow the government to at least take a portion of the money and spend it before the budget comes. That's why we thought we could at least ask for the supplementary estimates and then look at the main ones. At government operations we were trying to do the cycle together—

I think I'll go to Mr. Longfield and then Madam Findlay.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I think what you're highlighting is that in the last Parliament we brought the budget and the estimates together. We were always discussing in the wrong period. This gives us an opportunity, before the budget is tabled, to be able to ask questions on the estimates. When the the budget is tabled, we'll have a point of reference for whatever is being allocated for the next fiscal period.

To lose the opportunity to talk about the main estimates before the budget is a lost opportunity I don't want to lose.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: This isn't about a lost opportunity. Having been a minister, I know it is the job of the government caucus to limit the minister's time in front of a committee.

We wish to have the opportunity to ask this minister all the questions that we have. This isn't about limiting time; it's about expanding time. It's about giving us enough time to discuss whatever we want to discuss with him, to ask the questions we want to ask of him and to have the time to do that.

If we deal with the supplementary estimates on the 12th, there is no reason that we can't then ask the minister to come back. There's time in there for him to come back and make himself available to this committee for our questions.

The Chair: Go ahead, Madam Findlay.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Schiefke.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: I would like to respond to that by kindly saying to my honourable colleague that I think this minister has made himself very available to all the members. He has had individual meetings with each and every one of you so far.

Our job is not to try to limit the amount of time that the minister spends with you. That's not his job at all. He actually wants to ensure that he has as much time with you as possible and to respond to any questions that you have.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Perfect. No problem, then.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: However, knowing that the minister is busy—and you would know this very well, honourable member—we want to make sure that time is being utilized as well as possible. In this case, if we have the main estimates available at that meeting, the minister's time can be focused on dealing directly with those. Those directly relate to the budget. It is up to us as committee members to be able to manage that time. That is something I feel very strongly about. It's the way it's worked for the last four years, and even prior to that. It's up to us as committee members to make sure, if we have the opportunity, that we're prepared to ask those questions and that we're very focused on the budget and dealing with the subject matter at hand.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Aitchison.

• (1040)

Mr. Scott Aitchison: With all due respect to my honourable colleague, our job as committee members is not to manage the minister's time and make sure we're helping him manage his schedule. Our job is to be here on behalf of Canadians and ask the questions that need to be asked. All we're saying is that we want to make sure we have enough time to do that.

I don't see that as unreasonable. The minister can manage his own schedule, thank you very much. We're here to ask the questions on behalf of the people of Canada.

The Chair: Mr. Baker is next.

Mr. Yvan Baker: In response to Mr. Aitchison, I would say that I agree that our job is to ask the questions that need to be asked. I think fundamental for me—and I think that's what I'm hearing from some of the members—is that if the mains are available, the questions that should be asked are questions about the mains, and if we don't put that into this motion, then we'll miss that opportunity with the minister while he's available. I think that's what we're really trying to get to here. It's to make sure that we're able to ask questions about the things that Canadians would expect us to ask questions about, which is in this case the mains, and that we do so when they're available.

The Chair: I'm looking at the time.

Here is what I'm hearing. We want the minister for the mains. If we want the minister for the mains and the mains are tabled before the 12th, then the minister's answers respond to the mains. You do not have to worry about the supps—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I'm sorry, but that's not what you're hearing.

The Chair: Okay. I'm trying to find a compromise, saying that if the mains are tabled, your job is to ask questions on the mains because that goes into the budget. However, if that's not what you want and the minister is available for an hour or two hours, we will have ample opportunities to ask him questions, whether only the supps are there or the mains have arrived.

If you're not in agreement, I'll have to take a vote on it. I'm going to take a vote on motion 4, which says:

That pursuant to Standing Order 81(5), the committee invite the Minister and departmental officials to study the Supplementary Estimates (B); and that if they have been referred to the committee, the Main Estimates.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

It is not for the chair to call the question when we're still in debate.

The Chair: I thought we had finished.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: No, we have not. I've had my hand up for some time. I saw the clerk put my name before you. It is not for the chair to do what you're doing right now.

The Chair: I thought you guys had beaten it to death, so if you want to—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: That might be your opinion, but if we feel that we still have something to say, we have the right to say it.

The Chair: Madame Findlay, go for it.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: We have until the end of May to discuss the main estimates with the minister. I think it is important, again, that we separate this out, and I do not appreciate the chair mischaracterizing what we are saying. You are resaying what you started out as wanting, and we are saying something quite different.

With that, I would suggest you do call the question and we have a vote on it.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Can I get a point of clarification? I just want to make sure we're all on the same page.

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Is the honourable member asking for the minister to come for...? She had mentioned earlier—and I'm not sure exactly what the context was—that yes, it's fine if the minister comes for one hour and the departmental officials answer for the other hour. Is she asking for two one-hour sessions with the minister, or is it...?

I'm just trying to clarify. If the minister comes for a two-hour period to discuss the mains if they are available, would that be amenable to you, or would you like it to be one hour at each separate meeting? I just want to make sure we're all on the same page.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: We would like it to be two separate meetings, because we feel there will be enough questions asked on the supplementary estimates, which could be an hour with the minister and an hour with his officials on the 12th, that it warrants another meeting with the minister later, specifically on the main estimates.

Mr. Peter Schiefke: What would be the length of the second meeting? I'm just trying to clarify so that we're all on the same page.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: It would again be a two-hour meeting, which may involve both the minister and the officials.

The Chair: Is everybody understanding the change that Madam Findlay wants to make?

Is the discussion coming to an end? We have discussed it, so I would like to take a vote on this, and then we will take a vote on the new motion.

Will you present that?

● (1045)

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Can I move an amendment to this motion?

The Chair: Absolutely.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: I would suggest that we delete everything after the semicolon.

The Chair: He says that it's the phrase "...and that if they have been referred to the committee, the Main Estimates."

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: It has to state the date, though. We need to add March 12.

The Chair: The first thing I need to do for procedural purposes is defeat this motion. Then your amendment has to be voted on.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: What is the member asking for? Does he want to delete or change the sentence?

The Chair: He wants to delete what comes after "(B)".

[*English*]

We would also add March 12.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

When there is an amendment proposed to a motion, do we not vote on the amendment first and then the main motion, not the other way around?

The Chair: We can. The reason is that I want to ensure that we are defeating this motion and then going with a new motion.

I am fine. If you want, we can ask for a vote on the amendment.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: It doesn't work that way.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: On a point of order, it's 10:45. I have to go.

The Chair: Don't disappear.

Okay, having heard the amendment, can we vote on the amendment?

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: No, I have to go.

The Chair: Can we just vote on this amendment to eliminate what comes after "(B)"? If the amendment goes through, then we are fine. If it is defeated, that's fine too.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: We have to have unanimous consent to go past time.

The Chair: Can I have unanimous consent to go past time?

An hon. member: No.

The Chair: Sorry.

The meeting is adjourned.

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