

Territorial Evolution, 1999

Abstract

Nunavut becomes Canada's third territory on April 1, 1999. For the first time since the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation fifty years before, the internal boundaries of Canada have changed. The boundaries of this new territory respect the traditional Aboriginal concept of territoriality.

Nunavut

Nunavut became Canada's third territory on April 1, 1999. For the first time since the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation fifty years ago, the internal boundaries of Canada had changed. Carved entirely out of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut covers 2 000 000 square kilometres, or approximately one-fifth of Canada's surface. Although the Northwest Territories has been reduced several times in the course of Canadian history, this most recent boundary change is unique in that it is the result of an initiative by the Aboriginal inhabitants of the Territory. Indeed, eighty-three percent of the 26 000 residents of Nunavut are Inuit. "Nunavut" is an Inuktitut word meaning "Our Land."



Figure 1 : Photograph of Pangnirtung Pass, Nunavut

Source: David Kemp.

Historical, Jurisdictional and Political Context

Today's Inuit are thought to be descendants of people who came from Asia several millennia ago. They have lived "off the land", developing and sustaining an unique way of life from the rich mammal, fish and bird life of the Arctic lands and seas. Their lifestyle has adapted to the change introduced into the North by European peoples,

but it has not been submerged by those changes. "Nunavut" is a term that has been part of the vocabulary of generations of Inuit and, viewed in this context of their cultural originality and continuity, Nunavut is not a novel concept.

The Inuit were in the forefront of the political re-awakening of Canada's Aboriginal peoples which took place in the late 1960s and 1970s. For many years, the Inuit conducted research, negotiations and communication; efforts that culminated in the enactment of two pieces of legislation in 1993: the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act, and the Nunavut Act. The land claim settlement, the largest in Canada, gives the Inuit ownership of 355 842 square kilometres of land, including subsurface minerals in 35 257 square kilometres of that total, and compensation from the federal government of \$1.148 billion over 14 years. All other lands are Crown lands where Inuit have the right to hunt, trap, fish and participate in the management of the territory. The Nunavut Act creates the Nunavut territory and its Government and provides an institutional footing as to how laws will be made, executed and interpreted.

Nunavut has the same status and powers that the Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory have. Through their new government, Nunavut residents are in charge of many services, notably education, health, social services, language, culture, housing and justice. Government departments and agencies are to be decentralized to ensure access to services and jobs. A 19 member elected legislative assembly, including cabinet, and a single-level territorial court are the primary institutions. The legislative assembly operates in a consensus-style without political parties. Federally, residents will be represented by one member of parliament and one senator.

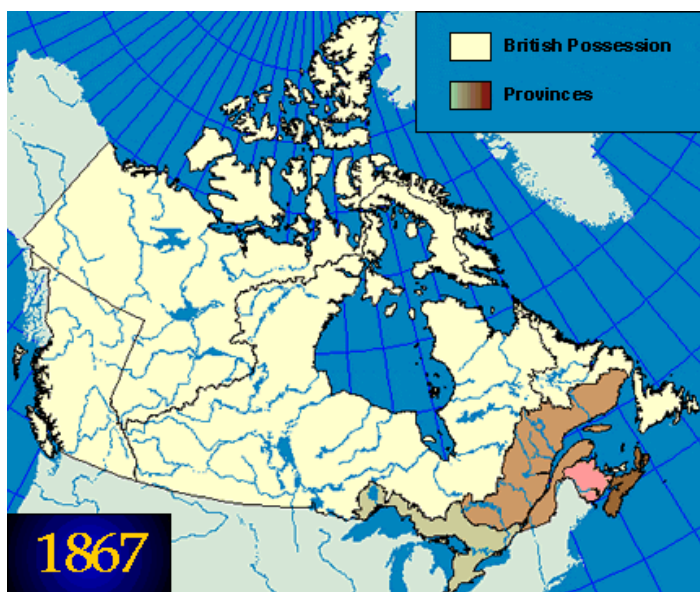
Offshore Boundaries

Canada made agreements concerning a number of offshore boundaries from 1970 onward.

- In 1973, the Kingdom of Denmark and the Government of Canada agreed to a dividing line in the waters between Kalaallit Nunaat and Canada beyond which neither would extend its sovereign rights for the purpose of exploration and exploitation of the natural resources of the continental shelf.
- In 1977, Canada (and many other countries) extended their maritime jurisdictions (Exclusive Economic Zones) to 200 nautical miles off their coasts.
- In 1984, the International Court of Justice gave a binding decision concerning the Canada-U.S. boundary in the Gulf of Maine based on the submissions from the governments of Canada and the United States.
- In 1992, the International Court of Arbitration awarded France exclusive economic jurisdiction to an area around its islands of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon and also a corridor extending out to international waters.

Animation of the territorial evolution of Canada from 1867 to 1999

The animation, *Territorial Evolution 1867 to 1999_e.gif* is located in the animated gif folder.



Canada's boundaries are dynamic political structures that reflect the changing political, economic and cultural conditions of the country through time. This animation shows sequentially the history of boundary changes in Canada from Confederation to the creation of Nunavut.

Map Sources

Provinces and Territories, 1999

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Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Canada: A People's History

<http://www.cbc.ca/history/webdriver?MIval=EpisodeSum2.html&lang=E>

Episode summaries of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's documentary series about the history of Canada.

Government of Canada. Canada's Digital Collections. The Acadian Odyssey



<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/acadian/english/toce/toce.htm>

The History of Acadia and the Acadian Experience in Canada

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/>

Information on the Department and on services offered to First Nations People. See "Publications and Research" for recent data on Aboriginal population, First Nations Profiles, news on treaties and land claims, etc.

National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/>

The National Archives of Canada authorizes the disposal of records by federal government institutions and specifies the terms and conditions for their long-term preservation when they have archival value or historic importance; offers advice and orientation to support government institutions in the business of information management and record keeping; and provides records storage facilities.

The National Library's Canadian Confederation Web site

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/index-e.html>

Provincial/Territorial Government

British Columbia Archives

<http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/index.htm>

Gouvernement du Québec. Archives nationales du Québec (available in French only)

<http://www.banq.qc.ca/accueil/>

Les Archives nationales du Québec conservent des milliers de fonds : 43 km de documents écrits, 7 000 000 de photographies, 800 000 cartes et plans, 53 000 heures d'enregistrements sonores, de films.

Government of Manitoba. Archives of Manitoba

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/>

Manitoba's rich documentary past is accessible to you at the Archives of Manitoba, which also houses the world-renowned archives of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Provincial Archives

<http://www.gov.nf.ca/panl/>

Government of Nunavut

<http://www.gov.nu.ca/Nunavut/English/departments/CLEY/>

Government of Ontario. Archives of Ontario

<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/>

Government of Prince Edward Island. Department of Education. Public Archives and Records Office

<http://www.edu.pe.ca/paro/>

The Public Archives and Records Office of Prince Edward Island (PARO) acquires, preserves, and makes available for public research the records of the government of this province and private-sector papers and records deemed to be of lasting historical value.

Northwest Territories Archives

<http://pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca/programs/nwtarchives.asp>

Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/>

Provincial Archives of Alberta

http://www.culture.alberta.ca/preserving/paa_2002/index.asp

Provincial Archives of New Brunswick

<http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/Default.aspx?culture=en-CA>

Saskatchewan Archives Board

<http://www.saskarchives.com/web/index.html>

Yukon Archives

<http://www.btc.gov.yk.ca/archives/index.html>

Other

Canadian Geographic's Mapping Canada

<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/mapping/default.asp>

Canadian Heritage Gallery

<http://www.canadianheritage.com/index2.htm>

The Canadian Heritage Gallery is a very extensive collection of historical Canadiana on the Internet.

Historical Atlas of Canada Online Learning Project

<http://www.historicalatlas.ca/website/hacolp/>

This site is still under development but promises to be an excellent site for historical maps of Canada. All maps shown on the site have been adapted from the printed version of three-volume Historical Atlas of Canada.

Musée McCord Museum

<http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/>

Founded in 1921 by David Ross McCord, the McCord Museum conserves, studies and presents a remarkable collection of objects, archives and historical photographs, from the 18th century to the present.

The Hudson's Bay Company Archives

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/index.html>

The HBCA offers a wealth of information on the human and natural history of western and northern Canada and the western USA. Whether you are an historian,



genealogist, ethnologist, environmental scientist or land claims researcher, the HBCA may be able to help.

Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives (ACMLA)

<http://www.acmla.org/>

ACMLA actively serves as the representative professional group for Canadian map librarians, cartographic archivists and others interested in geographic information in all formats.

