

Executive Summary

State Party

Canada

State, Province, or Region

Province of Ontario

Name of property

The Rideau Canal

The nominated property consists of the engineering works, associated fortifications, buildings, lockstation grounds and their archaeological resources, and the watercourse of the slackwater canal system.

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

The northern entrance to the canal at Ottawa, on the Ottawa River, is located at 75° 42' west longitude and 45° 26' north latitude. The southern entrance at Kingston, at Lake Ontario, is located at 76° 28' west longitude, and 44° 14' north latitude.

Textual description of the boundaries of the nominated property

The nominated property consists of six elements, the Rideau Canal with its lockstations and the navigable sections of the slackwater canal system, and the fortification sites in Kingston. The boundaries of the Rideau Canal consist of the high water mark of the slackwater canal sections and the Parks Canada Agency's property at the twenty-four lockstations. The boundaries of the Kingston fortifications are defined by Parks Canada Agency and Department of National Defence property.

Maps and plans, showing the boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

Map 1 shows the entire nominated property at the scale of 1:657 296.

Map 2 shows the location of the Rideau Canal within the State Party at the scale of 1:27 718 254.

Map Series 3.0 to 3.57, located in the Map Annex, shows the nominated property and buffer zone at a scale of 1:20 000.

Map Series 4.0 to 4.24, located in the Map Annex, shows the lockstations at a scale of 1:4 800.

Map 5, located in the Map Annex, shows the fortifications at a scale of 1:12 600.

Justification: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

In concept, design, and engineering, the Rideau Canal is the most outstanding surviving example of an early 19th century slackwater canal system in the world, and one of the first canals designed specifically for steam-powered vessels. It is an exceptional example of the transfer of European transportation technology and its ingenious advancement in the North American environment. A rare instance of a canal built primarily for strategic military purposes, the Rideau Canal, together with its ensemble of military fortifications, illustrates the significant stage in human history when Great Britain and the United States of America vied for the control of the northern portion of the North American continent.

Criteria under which the property is nominated

Criterion (i): The Rideau Canal is a masterpiece of human creative genius.

Through a fundamental stroke of creative genius, Lieutenant-Colonel John By of the Royal Engineers envisioned the creation of a slackwater canal on a monumental scale. This approach was highly innovative – and technologically risky. The slackwater system was virtually untried at this time in Europe.

Criterion (ii): The Rideau Canal exhibits an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in technology.

Building the Rideau Canal and its fortifications required adapting existing European technology to the North American environment and to the specific circumstances and geography of its setting. The experience gained in the engineering of canal works and fortifications for the Rideau Canal advanced these technologies to a new level.

Criterion (iv): The Rideau Canal is an outstanding example of a technological ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in human history.

One of the very few canals in the world built primarily for strategic military purposes, the Rideau Canal and its associated defensive works were built at a time when Great Britain and the United States of America vied for control of the northern portion of the North American continent.

Name and contact information of local institution/agency

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