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- For Immediate Release -

ANOTHER WORLD CLASS HONOUR FOR CANADA'S RIDEAU CANAL

Rideau Canal 2nd best on the 2008 National Geographic "Places Rated" Destination survey

The National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations rated the Rideau Canal National Historic Site of Canada second best on the 2008 "Places Rated" Destination Stewardship survey. This annual survey measures the world's top historic sites for authenticity, stewardship and their tourism footprint. Only Austria's Wachau Valley with its Melk Abbey, a Benedictine monastery overlooking the Danube, surpassed the Rideau Canal with top marks.

A panel of 280 experts evaluated 109 sites from all over the world based on the following six criteria: environmental and ecological quality; social and cultural integrity; condition of historic buildings and archaeological sites; aesthetic appeal; quality of tourism management; and outlook for the future. The Rideau Canal was found to be in excellent shape, relatively unspoiled and likely to remain so.

Built in turbulent times for national defence and commerce, the Rideau Canal is a treasured national resource that connects the towns and cities of Eastern Ontario. It provides opportunities for land and water-based recreation and preserves a rare combination of historical and ecological integrity for a unique and complete cultural experience.

Tourists from Canada and all over the world are now visiting sites operated by Parks Canada, including the Rideau Canal, because of the agency's strong belief in sustainable tourism. "The stewardship of the Rideau Canal is a collaborative effort between many community partners as well as the municipalities along the Rideau" explains Gord Giffin, Parks Canada Eastern Region Superintendent.

More details on the 109 destinations ranked for wisely managed tourism www.nationalgeographic.com/traveler

Ian Johnston, President of the Rideau Heritage Route comments that: "This newest award is like a book end to the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation and will definitely provide economic opportunities for this region to propel itself onto the World stage like never before."

The Rideau Heritage Route Tourism Association, a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) comprised of the Rideau Canal, its adjoining towns, villages and the cities of Kingston and Ottawa, works in partnership with area tourism partners to promote the entire Rideau Heritage Route as a tourist destination by highlighting the region's authentic heritage experiences.

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