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GRAND-PRÉ

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

State of the Site Report

2009



State of the Site Report

Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada

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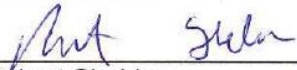
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State of the Site Report

Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada

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April 24, 2009
Date

Acronyms

CIS	Commemorative Integrity Statement
CI evaluation	Commemorative Integrity Evaluation
NHSC	National Historic Site of Canada
VEA	Visitor Experience Assessment
VIP	Visitor Information Program
SoSR	State of the Site Report

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Executive Summary

This State of the Site Report (SoSR) provides a synopsis of the current condition of Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) and assesses performance in meeting established objectives for indicators associated with Parks Canada Agency's mandate.

This is the first SoSR for Grand-Pré NHSC. It will review the accomplishments of the **current management plan tabled in 2001** and will serve as a tool for informed decision-making in the planning review with respect to issues associated with protection, visitor experience and public education. Since the completion of the previous management plan, Parks Canada Agency (PCA) has been in transition. Due to the timing of the changes being carried out in the Agency and the timing of the preparation of this SoSR, this report was prepared using the best available information while trying to incorporate elements of the Agency's new direction. During the next reporting cycle, the integration of Parks Canada's mandate elements related to visitor experience, public education and protection will be better reflected.

The **State of Protected Heritage Areas 1999 Report** was used as the benchmark to assess changes in commemorative integrity.

The state of visitor experience, public outreach education, stakeholder and partner engagement and Aboriginal relations was assessed based on corporate targets where available. The benchmark documents for visitor experience are the **2000** and **2007 Visitor Information Program** visitor surveys. No rating is available for these elements.

SUMMARY - STATE OF THE SITE						
Indicator	Measure	Target	1999 rating	2007 rating	Since 2001	Highlights
State of Resources (Commemorative Integrity)	<i>Condition and threats to cultural and natural resources</i>	Improve elements of commemorative integrity that are rated as poor	● G (Good)	● Y+ (Fair/Good)	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2007 commemorative integrity is rated at 7 out of 10; The overall condition of cultural resources at Grand-Pré NHSC is fair for archaeological resources to good for all other resources, a slight deterioration since the last evaluation in 1999. It is meeting corporate plan targets; The main threats to the site come from vegetation encroachment and potential off-site development; With the construction of the visitor reception and interpretation centre, the site has improved its ability to convey site messages; Opportunities outside of the visitor reception and interpretation centre are available for on-site communication of the site's key messages particularly with regards to conveying all the reasons for designation as a national historic site - such as an understanding of the Acadian settlement and the archaeological resources that speak to it on the site; The inventory of the site's cultural resources is not up-to-date; however, decision-making on activities at the site has been respectful of the presence or potential presence of cultural resources; The inventory of natural resources has been completed; There are no species at risk on the site;
	<i>Effectiveness of communication of messages</i>	Improve elements of commemorative integrity that are rated as poor	● Y (Fair)	● Y (Fair)	↔	
	<i>Selected Management Practices</i>	Improve elements of commemorative integrity that are rated as poor	● G (Good)	● Y (Fair)	↓	

	Overall		N/R	7/10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mustard plant, an invasive species, has been located on-site. Parks Canada is involved with local stakeholders in eradicating the species.
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Indicator	Measure	Target	2000 assessment	2007 assessment	Since 2001	Highlights
State of Visitor Experience	<i>Heritage Presentation</i>	85% overall satisfied, 50% very satisfied with on-site programming, 75% of visitors understand key messages	N/R	● Meets corporate targets	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall state of visitor experience is positive. The 2007 VIP revealed that an overwhelming majority of visitors are satisfied to very satisfied with the site's interpretive programs, visitor services and facilities, meeting Corporate Plan targets. The building of a new visitor reception and interpretation centre in 2003 has played a key role in significantly improving visitors' satisfaction with interpretive programming, site services and facilities. Visitation has decreased significantly in the past decade. A higher percentage of Canadians from outside Atlantic Canada arrived in 2007 as compared to 2000. Seniors and adults make up the overwhelming majority of visitors. Trip planning was noted by visitors as being an area for improvement.
	<i>Visitor Services</i>	Quality Visitor Services achieve 85% overall satisfaction and exceed the expectations of 1 of every 2 visitors.	N/R	● Meets corporate targets	↑	
	<i>Number of Visitors</i>	Visitation to targeted national historic sites increased by 10% (Grand-Pré NHSC not targeted)	61,699	30,535 (2008 figure)	↓	
State of Public Outreach Education	<i>Outreach Education</i>	85% overall satisfied, 50% very satisfied with outreach programming (based on 2003/04 corporate plan) new targets being developed	N/R	● Meets corporate targets	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall state of outreach education is positive. Outreach education activities are limited, but partnering opportunities such as the one with St. Mary's University's archaeological field school have effectively provided visibility to the site.
State of Stakeholder and Partner Engagement	<i>N/A</i>	N/A	N/R	N/R	N/R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall state of stakeholder engagement is positive. National targets were not set by PCA for this indicator, however, quantitative targets will be set for future reporting requirements. Regular communication and interaction with key stakeholders, such as the Acadian community, has fostered continued positive relations between Parks Canada and the community.
State of Aboriginal Relations	<i>N/A</i>	N/A	N/R	N/R	N/R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relationship between the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Parks Canada is positive and growing.

N/A – not available N/R – not reported

Successes include:

- the development of a visitor reception and interpretation centre in partnership with the Acadian community;
- the high level of satisfaction of visitors with their visit overall and overall condition of the facilities (98%);
- the greater amount of time on average spent at the site (119 minutes) by visitors;
- the good condition of buildings, landscapes and objects;
- the unveiling of the Dispersal of the Acadians National Historic Event plaque in 2005;
- the 250th anniversary of the Deportation was celebrated on-site with a number of stakeholders and partners in 2005;
- the moving of the Deportation Cross in 2005;
- working with the Planter community at Horton Landing;
- the designation of the Grand-Pré Rural Historic District National Historic Site of Canada in 2004;
- hosting the 3rd *Congrès Mondial Acadien* event in 2004 at Grand-Pré NHSC, which attracted over 15,000 people to the site; and
- the partnership created with a number of stakeholders to develop a UNESCO nomination for the Grand Pré area.

Challenges include:

- the maintenance of sections of the property that may affect cultural resources and improvement of cultural resource inventories;
- the increased land base;
- the mustard plant infestation;
- declining visitation; and
- trip planning.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the State of the Site Report (SoSR)

The State of the Site Report (SoSR) addresses all aspects of Parks Canada's mandate: protection, visitor experience and public education.

The report:

- portrays the state of the site regarding all aspects of the Agency's mandate;
- reports on the activities and results of actions that have taken place to maintain or improve that state;
- serves as a tool for informed decision-making with respect to issues associated with each of the mandate elements and their interconnection;
- reports back to the CEO on the state of the national historic site every five years; and
- communicates the state of the site to a wide public audience.

1.2 Context for Grand-Pré NHSC

Grand-Pré NHSC was transferred by the Dominion Atlantic Railway to the federal government in 1957 and designated a national historic site of Canada in 1961. The current management plan dates from 2001 and is the third plan since the Government of Canada took over the site's administration.

The Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) was developed in 1997. In 1999, Parks Canada acquired new property, almost doubling the size of the national historic site.

As a result of the acquisition of new property and in the context of the five-year review of the existing management plan, this State of the Site Report (SoSR) reviews the accomplishments of the current management plan cycle. This is the first SoSR for Grand-Pré NHSC.

1.3 Reasons for Designation

The reasons for designation, as derived from the 1982 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada minutes which clarify those reasons, are:

- It was a centre of Acadian activity from 1682 to 1755;
- It commemorates the deportation of the Acadians, which occurred at Grand-Pré in 1755;
- It commemorates the strong attachment that remains to this day among Acadians throughout the world to this area, the heart of their ancestral homeland and symbol of the ties which unite them.

1.4 Description of Designated Place

The designated place consists of the entire property administered by Parks Canada surrounded by cornfields, orchards and rural residential properties. That property is divided in half by a rail line that runs east-west through the site. The designated place is circumscribed on the north side by a gravel road along the marsh. Farmers' fields and orchards form the boundary along the entire length of its southern and western edges. The Grand-Pré Road forms the eastern boundary (cf. Appendix 1 – Map). A portion of the property, which includes parking space and the former visitor centre, is located on the east side of Grand-Pré Road and is surrounded by fields.

The designated place includes the commemorative garden designed by Percy Nobbs, the Memorial Church, the bronze statue of Evangeline that reflects the site's importance as a symbol of Acadian

identity, archaeological resources (including three known Acadian cellars and a burial ground), a visitor reception and interpretation centre built in 2003, a parking lot for that centre, and two HSMBC plaques – one for Grand-Pré Rural Historic District National Historic Site of Canada, designated in 1995, and the other for the Dispersal of the Acadians National Historic Event, designated in 1955. Though the historic village is found throughout the site, there are two concentrated programming areas where the interpretation of Grand-Pré NHSC currently occurs – the new visitor reception and interpretation centre and the 1920s Memorial Church and memorial gardens.

1.5 Methodology and Rating (see Appendix 4 for details)

The objective of this State of the Site Report is to determine the Agency's progress in fulfilling its mandate. To achieve this, a variety of tools are used to evaluate the current state of the site and compare it to the goals set for the site.

In evaluating the current state of the site, Parks Canada uses tools that look at the condition of cultural resources, the effectiveness of the communication, selected management practices, visitor satisfaction with the site's services, and visitation. All the evaluations for Grand-Pré NHSC were carried out in 2007.

The goals for the site are set in the management plan and the Agency's Corporate Plan at the time of the tabling of the management plan. The goals used in this report were set in the 2001 Management Plan and the 2003-04 Corporate Plan.

The rating is the result of a multi-disciplinary team review.

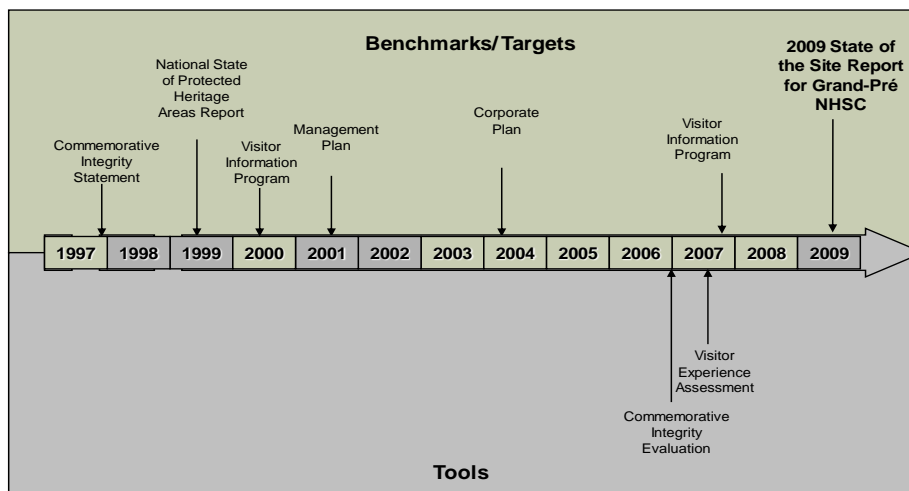


Fig. 1: Monitoring Timeline for Key Components of the State of Grand-Pré NHSC: on top of the arrow are the documents used as benchmarks for evaluations and those that identify targets; at the bottom are the tools used to evaluate progress.

1.6 Indicators and Targets

As this is the first State of the Site Report for Grand-Pré NHSC, the indicators that are used are the ones relating to the states of resources (which for national historic sites refer to Commemorative Integrity), visitor experience, public outreach education, stakeholder and partner engagement, and Aboriginal relations.

Sections such as Aboriginal relations, public outreach education and stakeholder and partner engagement information is presented in a factual manner, focussing on describing actions as they relate to overall Agency mandate and objectives set in the current management plan.

Targets are available for Commemorative Integrity, Visitation, Heritage Presentation, and Visitor Services. These were identified in the Agency's 2003-04 and 2004-05 Corporate Plans, which were in effect at the time of the tabling of the 2001 Management Plan.

For Heritage Presentation these were:

- 85% overall satisfied, 50% very satisfied with on-site programming.
- Visitation to targeted national historic sites increased by 10%.
- 75% of visitors understand key messages.

For Visitor Services these were:

- Quality Visitor Services achieve 85% overall satisfaction and exceed the expectations of 1 of every 2 visitors.

Performance expectations for commemorative integrity were indicated in the Agency's 2004-05 Corporate plan as:

- Improve elements of commemorative integrity that are rated as poor.

1.7 Reliability of Data

The data provided is the most up-to-date available for the site. The CI evaluation, VE assessment and VIP were completed in 2007. The management plan was tabled in Parliament in 2001.

The CI evaluation assessed only the portion of the property owned and administered by Parks Canada prior to the acquisition of new lands in 1999. The rest of the property consists mainly of fields containing significant archaeological features.

1.8 Key Elements of the Vision Statement and Outline of the Key Issues Identified in the Previous Planning Cycle

The key elements of the vision statement include:

- Parks Canada is recognized for its stewardship of Grand-Pré NHSC and for having ensured its commemorative integrity in partnership with its valued stakeholders;
- Grand-Pré NHSC will be known as a significant heritage area where Canadians and others can learn about and understand historic and contemporary *Acadie*;
- the national historic site will demonstrate a greater ability to serve its clients by providing more efficient and improved interpretation and visitor services;
- the agreement for the operation of Grand-Pré NHSC will be recognized as a model of cooperative work between Parks Canada and Canada's Acadian community; and
- the site will be appreciated for its contribution to heritage tourism.

Some of the key issues identified in the previous planning cycle, include:

- the visitor facilities which were considered inadequate for visitor experience and public understanding;
- the need to ensure that Acadian themes presented at Grand-Pré NHSC, Saint Croix Island International Historic Site, and six other national historic sites in Atlantic Canada complement each other; and
- maintaining the grounds and their appearance.

2.0 Evaluation of the State of the Site

2.1 State of Resources (Commemorative Integrity)

The evaluation of the condition and threats to resources considers both cultural and natural resources. The commemorative integrity at Grand-Pré NHSC is rated at seven out of 10.

It is Parks Canada's primary goal to ensure commemorative integrity at all national historic sites. Commemorative integrity describes the health and wholeness of a national historic site. The site possesses CI when: a) the resources directly related to the reasons for designation are not impaired or under threat; b) the reasons for designation are effectively communicated to the public; and c) the site's heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

Highlights

- The 2007 commemorative integrity is rated at seven out of 10.
- The overall condition of cultural resources at Grand-Pré NHSC is fair for archaeological resources to good for all other resources, a slight deterioration since the last evaluation in 1999. It is meeting corporate plan targets.
- The main threats to the site come from vegetation encroachment and potential off-site development.
- With the construction of the visitor reception and interpretation centre, the site has improved its ability to convey site messages.
- Opportunities outside of the visitor reception and interpretation centre are available for on-site communication of the site's key messages particularly with regards to conveying all the reasons for designation as a national historic site, such as the Acadian settlement and the archaeological resources that speak to it on the site.
- The inventory of the site's cultural resources is not up-to-date; however decision-making on activities at the site has been respectful of the presence or potential presence of cultural resources.
- The inventory of natural resources has been completed.
- There are no species at risk on the site.
- The mustard plant, an invasive species, has been located on site. Parks Canada is involved with local stakeholders in eradicating the species.

2.1.1 Condition and Threats to Cultural and Natural Resources

The overall condition of cultural resources at Grand-Pré NHSC is rated "Yellow +" indicating minor deficiencies that will impair the site's commemorative integrity. The condition of most cultural resources was rated as good with the exception of archaeological sites, which were identified as being in fair condition. That rating was achieved because of the archaeological resources located in the "triangular property", where vegetation encroachment may impact potential and existing archaeological resources (cf Fig. 2 Summary Table of Resource Condition).

SUMMARY - RESOURCE CONDITION	RATING *		
Resources Directly Related to the Reasons for Designation	● G -		
Resources Not Related to the Reasons for Designation	● G		
Cultural Resource Types:	Related to Designation	Not Related to Designation	Summary
• Landscapes and Landscape Features	● G	● G	● G
• Buildings and Structures	● G	● G	● G
• Archaeological Sites	● Y	● G	● Y
• Objects	● G	● G	● G
• Designated Place	● G	N/A	● G
Other Heritage Resources (e.g. natural)	N/A		
OVERALL	● Y +		

N/A – not available

Fig. 2: Summary Table of Resource Condition (from the 2007 CI evaluation). * See Appendix 4: Rating guide: 1) Commemorative Integrity Evaluation

The notable threats identified for Grand-Pré NHSC, which were deemed to have a moderate to high immediacy and impact, were both from natural processes and human actions.

Vegetation infestation and higher tides were identified as the two natural processes that may have an impact. The immediacy of the impact of vegetation encroachment was rated as moderate as the triangular property is the key area that is being impacted with a potential for high impact if maintenance is not resumed and the situation monitored. The main impact is on archaeological resources and views on the dykelands.

The main concerns related to human actions come from the possibility of development that would be incompatible with the site's historic values. The immediacy is moderate as currently there are proposals underway, but their impact is deemed to be low since they are not in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The condition and threat to cultural resources were assessed for the portion of the site administered by Parks Canada prior to the acquisition of new properties in 1999.

The State of Protected Heritage Areas 1999 Report reported that buildings and structures, most notably the Memorial Church, Evangeline statue and the well, were deemed to be in good condition, an improvement from the fair condition noted in the State of the Parks 1997 Report. This followed the stabilization and repointing work performed on these structures. The 2007 Commemorative Integrity Evaluation confirms that their condition is good, this as a result of conservation actions and ongoing maintenance.

Also in the 1999 report, the condition of the archaeological sites was deemed to be good. The site inventory at the time was not complete, but the cultural resource management inventory of the known sites was complete. The 1997 report indicated that curatorial objects located on-site were overall good; however 11% of those were rated in poor condition. These were mainly referring to the blacksmith's tools, the condition of which remained the same in the 1999 assessment. The 2007

CI evaluation found that the archaeological resources face challenges as a result of vegetation encroachment. Collections are now deemed to be in good condition as a result of conservation work having been completed.

The state of commemorative integrity meets the Agency's performance measure set in the 2003-2004 Corporate Plan to improve elements of CI rated as poor.

The condition of natural resources was assessed through the CI evaluation and a survey of plant species conducted in 2007. The survey identified the presence of the garlic mustard plant, an invasive species that has the potential of negatively impacting vegetation on- and off-site. Work is underway with partners to contribute to its eradication in the area.

Also to be noted is the encroachment on the site by low shrubbery, in the triangular property. This is mainly due to reduced vegetation maintenance. The 2007 survey did not identify species of particular interest. The Commemorative Integrity evaluation identified this as a possible issue due to the potential impact of roots on the archaeological resources, and to the potential impact on the views towards the dykelands which limit the visitor's appreciation of the site's relationship with its context.

A species at risk inventory was conducted in 2007 which did not identify any species of concern on the site.

2.1.2 Effectiveness of Communication of Messages

The overall assessment of the effectiveness of communication of messages at Grand-Pré NHSC was rated as 'yellow', which indicates the effectiveness is fair and requires improvement (cf Fig. 3 Summary Table of Effectiveness of Communications).

Both the CI evaluation and the VE assessment have noted relatively good results related to the means used for communicating, as the messages are diversified and take into account the interests of various audiences. The new visitor reception and interpretation centre, built in 2003, has had a significant positive effect and has supported the communication of messages. Both the multimedia experience and the exhibit are effective tools to communicate the site's historic values. The VE assessment suggests that an emphasis on non-personal interpretation on-site should be considered.

Challenges remain concerning the communication of the reasons for designation and the communication of messages not related to the reasons for designation outside of the visitor reception and interpretation centre. The link between the reasons for designation, such as Grand-Pré NHSC being a centre of Acadian activity between 1682 and 1755, and the cultural resources related to those reasons is limited on the grounds, but communicated effectively in the exhibit and the multimedia presentation.

However, the understanding by visitors of these reasons was partially confirmed by the VIP. For example, to the question concerning Grand-Pré NHSC as a centre of Acadian activity, 84% of visitors identified the correct answer. As most visitors access the grounds after having viewed the multimedia presentation and the exhibit, this number seems to indicate the communication of that message at the visitor reception and interpretation centre is effective. This highlights the key role that the visitor reception and interpretation centre plays in communicating the messages, an opportunity that is limited outside of the regular seasonal hours. Overall, the results concerning the understanding and knowledge of the site were deemed to achieve the Agency's performance indicators as 77% of all respondents and 78% of all participants in site activities provided the correct answers to the site knowledge questionnaire.

SUMMARY - EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATIONS	RATING *
Reasons for Designation	● Y
Messages not related to the Reasons for Designation	● Y
Audience understanding (data unavailable at the time of the CI evaluation. Later results from VIP indicate that audiences have a good understanding of messages)	N/R
National historic site general values	● G
Effectiveness of media	● G-
Range and complexity of perspectives presented	● G
OVERALL	● Y

N/R – not reported

Fig. 3: Summary Table of Effectiveness of Communications (from the 2007 CI evaluation, the 2007 VIP and the 2007 VE assessment). * See appendix 4: Rating Guide: 1) Commemorative Integrity Evaluation

2.1.3 Selected Management Practices

The 2007 CI evaluation indicated that overall there were opportunities for improvement in the practices. The principles and practices of cultural resource management were generally followed and there is a solid ability within the Field Unit to make decisions based on these. There were, however, gaps with the inventory of cultural resources, both of in-situ and moveable resources. The State of the Park 1997 Report, later echoed in the State of the Protected Heritage Areas 1999 Report, had identified this issue and it remains unchanged. The CI evaluation also identified a lack of up-to-date records, and challenges in implementing a maintenance program in all areas of the site which lead to the overall rating of selected management practices as “yellow” or fair (cf. Fig. 4 Summary Table of Selected Management Practices). The 2001 management plan identified the objective to develop a conservation plan. This is currently being developed.

SUMMARY - SELECTED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	RATING *
Inventory and Cultural Resource Evaluation	● Y
Respect for Cultural Resource Management Principles and Practices	● G
Records	● Y
Maintenance Programs	● G-
Monitoring and Remedial Action	● G-
OVERALL	● Y

Fig. 4: Summary Table of Selected Management Practices. * See Appendix 4: Rating Guide: 1) Commemorative Integrity Evaluation

2.2 States of Visitor Experience, Public Outreach Education, and Stakeholder and Partner Engagement

Connection to place is an essential element of the Parks Canada strategic outcome. Connection to place is achieved through meaningful visits and can lead to a sense of ownership and stewardship of the place. In order to facilitate connection to place, we work with partners to enhance visitor experience opportunities. The 2003-2004 *Corporate Plan* highlights as a priority the engagement of Canadians, so that they feel a strong connection to Canada's protected heritage sites, bringing with it a strong sense of ownership and pride (2003-2004 *Corporate Plan*). Although the connection is strong with some groups, other groups such as the local community, have not used the site as much since the introduction of entry fees.

Highlights

- Overall states of visitor experience, public outreach education, and stakeholder and partner engagement are positive.
- The 2007 VIP revealed that an overwhelming majority of visitors are satisfied to very satisfied with the site's interpretive programs, visitor services and facilities, meeting Corporate Plan targets.
- The building of a new visitor reception and interpretation centre in 2003 has played a key role in significantly improving visitors' satisfaction with interpretive programming, site services and facilities.
- Visitation has decreased significantly in the past decade. The site continues to attract visitors, with a higher percentage of Canadians from outside Atlantic Canada arriving in 2007 as compared to 2000.
- Seniors and adults make up the overwhelming majority of visitors.
- Trip planning was noted by visitors as being an area for improvement.
- Outreach education activities are limited, but partnerships such as the one with St. Mary's University's archaeological field school have effectively provided visibility to the site.
- Regular communication and interaction with key stakeholders, such as the Acadian community, has fostered continued positive relations between Parks Canada and the community.

Recent organizational changes to Parks Canada's corporate direction have resulted in a distinction between Agency program activities related to visitor experience and Agency program activities related to public outreach education and stakeholder and partner engagement. New reporting requirements for visitor experience, public outreach education, and stakeholder and partner engagement were not fully developed to meet the new corporate direction at the time of writing this report. The next reporting cycle will provide a more detailed assessment of visitor experience, public outreach education, and stakeholder and partner engagement in line with the new corporate direction and reporting requirements.

2.2.1 Visitor Experience: Heritage Presentation, Visitor Services, and Visitation

Visitor experience covers aspects of heritage presentation and visitor services. It includes such aspects as personal and non-personal interpretation, diversity of service offer, and quality of facilities. The heritage presentation and visitor services are delivered on contract by the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré*. Parks Canada has no staff on-site delivering heritage presentation or visitor services. Since the 2000 VIP, the site has experienced some significant changes in heritage presentation, visitor services, and visitation.

The main change comes from the building of a visitor reception and interpretation centre in 2003, which hosts a variety of interpretation media, including a multimedia presentation and an exhibit. The number of activities has also increased, resulting in visitors spending significantly more time at the site. Heritage presentation is principally non-personal, and focuses in the multimedia presentation, the exhibit and the grounds. Visitors in the 2007 VIP indicated a desire for additional activities, mentioning in particular Acadian-focused activities and displays (27%), interactive activities (21%), and costumed interpreters (20%). The 2007 VIP also revealed that visitors are overwhelmingly satisfied to very satisfied with the site's interpretive program, services, and facilities (cf. Fig. 5 Summary Table of Visitor Experience and Visitation). These figures meet Corporate Plan targets.

Since 2000, visitation in Nova Scotia has been hovering around 2.1 million visitors. Visitation to national historic sites in Atlantic Canada, and Nova Scotia is no exception, has been steadily declining from approximately 1.6 M to 1.2 M visitors. Grand-Pré NHSC has experienced a similar trend, with about 62,000 visitors in 2000 dropping to a current figure of 30,535. A spike was experienced in 2004 when the site hosted the *Congrès mondial acadien*. Visitation has steadily declined since the first record in 1998. A number of factors need to be taken into account when reading this number including the impact of the introduction of fees to access the site in the late 1990s, which reduced local use of the place, and the way visitation is accounted for. Nevertheless, independently from these considerations, the site has been experiencing a significant visitation decline in the past decade.

In 2000, 40% of visitors came from the United States. In 2007 the majority came from Canada, with the largest group coming from outside Atlantic Canada (35%). Seniors and adults are also the overwhelming majority of visitor age groups (85%), with 62% of visitors being over 50. The 2007 VIP also noted that 20% of visitors identified themselves as Acadians or Cajuns. This, proportionally, is an increase from the 2000 VIP which identified only 12% of visitors as being of Acadian descent. However, in overall numbers, this represents a decrease in the number of visitors of Acadian descent, from around 7,400 in 2000 to 5,500 in 2007.

During the summer of 2007, a Visitor Origin Monitoring Program, part of the national initiative, was also conducted at Grand-Pré NHSC in order to learn more about the site's visitor profile. From this study, it was determined that 66% of visitors to Grand-Pré NHSC are Canadian, while approximately 28% are from the United States. From the Canadian visitors, 35% came from Nova Scotia and a greater portion came from Ontario and Québec (38%). These numbers are similar to the VIP figures.

Access to the site is exclusively by road, mainly coming from Halifax on the way to the Annapolis Valley. The majority of visitors come in individual vehicles (97%), with markedly reduced visitation from tour operators. This reflects the trend in tourism in Nova Scotia. There has been a significant increase in repeat visitation as in 2007, 32% were repeat visitors, compared to the 19% noted in 1997. Trip planning was identified by visitors as being a challenge, as only 74% were satisfied with that aspect.

With respect to other activities that visitors engage in, the 2007 VIP determined that 72% visit towns in the area, 62% visit other historic sites, and 61% scenic areas. A majority had visited other historic sites operated by Parks Canada, including the Halifax Citadel (58%), Port-Royal (52%), Fort Anne (44%) and the Fortress of Louisbourg (39%). Fort Beauséjour–Fort Cumberland (16%), Melanson Settlement (12%) and Fort Edward (11%), which also have direct historical ties with Grand-Pré NHSC, were significantly less visited and were not planned to be visited. Most visitors (36%) considered the multimedia experience to be the highlight of their visit, followed by the site's history and place as a learning experience (20%). Finally, 35% of visitors indicated that site improvements, such as directions and accessibility and 22% of visitors indicated that more interpretation and hands-on activities would enhance their visitor experience. The VE assessment also identified these aspects.

La Société Promotion Grand-Pré, which is under contract to provide visitor services and heritage presentation for the site, conducted a Market Development Study in 2007. The study identified product and market opportunities and recommended a marketing and product development action plan. Potential markets for growth identified in this study were Maritime Acadians, group tours, van tours (smaller groups or special interest groups), cruise ship passengers, Canadian tourists already visiting Nova Scotia and other American and international tourists already visiting Nova Scotia. Programming enhancement was also strongly suggested, such as offering scheduled guided tours for groups, on-site demonstrations, costumed staff, wine, cuisine, and artisan displays. It was also proposed in this study to hire a marketing coordinator, increase interpretation staff for new programming and increase marketing.

Parks Canada and the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré* have partnered with St. Mary's University's department of anthropology since 2001 to host the department's archaeological field school at Grand-Pré NHSC. Although primarily focused on offering field experience to student archaeologists, the program attracts attention from visitors and the media.

Grand-Pré National Historic Site was also included in the National Historic Sites Marketing Initiative (Phase II) and was awarded \$75,000 to develop a long-term marketing plan for the site, work on new product development and implement sustainable actions in efforts to increase visitation to the site. Work on this initiative is ongoing and will address recommendations identified in the Market Development Study conducted by the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré* in 2007 as well as other new initiatives identified through work sessions with the *Société* and Parks Canada.

Measure	2000	2007	Target	Rating *
Number of visitors	61,699	30,535	Visitation to targeted national historic sites increased by 10%. (Grand-Pré NHSC was not targeted)	N/R
% that stayed more than 1 hour	46%	99%		N/R
Satisfaction with Interpretive Programming	N/A	92% overall satisfied, 62% very satisfied	85% overall satisfied, 50% very satisfied with programming	● Meets corporate targets
Satisfaction with Site Services and Facilities	47% overall satisfied	98% overall satisfied, 78 % very satisfied	Quality Visitor Services achieve 85% overall satisfaction and exceed the expectations of 1 of every 2 visitors	● Meets corporate targets

N/R – not reported

Fig. 5: Summary Table of Visitor Experience and Visitation. * See Appendix 4: Rating Guide: 3) Visitor Experience

The relatively new focus on visitor experience for Parks Canada has required a shift from emphasizing the provision of services, facilities and programs in a way that focuses principally on Parks Canada's goals and objectives, to one where visitor motivations, expectations and needs are met and accommodated. This entails proactively addressing all aspects of the trip cycle from pre-visit to post-engagement and ensuring that service delivery is integrated across all functions. The Explorer Quotient has not been incorporated into programming for Grand-Pré NHSC. However, the field unit will review options to introduce this in to the next planning cycle and look at enhancing the visitor experience offer using a market-based approach.

2.2.2 Public Outreach Education

There are no programs offered by the site that can be delivered off-site and the website has minimal content about messages and resources.

The site continues to market itself to visitors of Acadian descent and those who have an interest in Acadian culture. While the site appeals to all Canadians as the numbers demonstrate, certain sectors of the population, such as recent immigrant families and youths, seem to be underrepresented.

Parks Canada archaeologists and St. Mary's University's field school director have given numerous talks - in the local community, at conferences, and interviews with the media on the results of the archaeological work - which have effectively provided Grand-Pré NHSC with additional exposure. The archaeological field school has contributed in part to the fulfillment of Parks Canada's cultural resource management mandate.

2.2.3 Stakeholder and Partner Engagement

Maintaining and nurturing strong stakeholder relations is an important component of the management of Grand-Pré NHSC. The key stakeholders are the Acadian community and the local residents of Grand Pré.

The 2001 Management Plan stated that Parks Canada will continue to cooperate with the *Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse*, la *Société Nationale de l'Acadie* and the other Acadian organizations of Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. This was achieved through maintaining an ongoing relationship with the *Comité consultatif acadien*, the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré*, and *Les Amis de Grand-Pré*.

The *Comité consultatif acadien* was created in 1985 to assist Parks Canada in activities pertaining to research and interpretation of Acadian history. It includes representatives from the Acadian community who are named by the Director General East, on the recommendation of the *Société Nationale de l'Acadie* and the provincial Acadian associations. The *Comité* has been active over the years in advising Parks Canada on issues relating to the management of the national historic sites that have an Acadian theme. There are annual meetings.

Two groups representing Acadian interests, the *Société Nationale de l'Acadie* (SNA) and the *Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse* (FANE), in 1997 created la *Société Promotion Grand-Pré* (SPGP), a not-for-profit organization that includes representatives from the SNA and the FANE, as well as local residents. Since 1997, the SPGP has been providing heritage presentation and client services at the site through a contract arrangement with Parks Canada. The SPGP plays a key role in promoting the site and in seeking resources from third parties, which are invested at Grand-Pré NHSC.

Les Amis de Grand-Pré is a community association that has been in existence since 1990, and was formally incorporated as a society in 1993. Primarily made up of volunteers who live in the Grand Pré area and are linked by a shared interest in Acadian history, culture and genealogy, the group is directly involved with Grand-Pré National Historic Site. *Les Amis* sponsor various programs and activities at the site, including events on the official day commemorating the Deportation, la Fête nationale des Acadiens, and cultural activities, which and engage the local community and give visitors an opportunity to experience local activities.

This positive relationship between the Acadian community and Parks Canada is further demonstrated by events and activities important to the Acadian community at the national historic site. Most notable are the hosting of the *Congrès mondial acadien* in 2004 and the 250th anniversary of the Deportation in 2005, which together attracted large numbers of visitors to events held at Grand-Pré NHSC from Acadian communities throughout the world. The 2007 VIP confirmed that Grand-Pré NHSC is still attracting an important Acadian audience, with 20% of visitors self-identifying as Acadian or Cajun.

A number of successful activities have continued to build on existing partnerships that have celebrated and researched other events and places of national historic significance. These activities include: the unveiling of the Dispersal of the Acadians National Historic Event plaque (2005); the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Deportation on-site with a number of stakeholders and partners (2005); the successful moving of the Deportation Cross (2005) closer to the original location of the Deportation; working with the Planter community at Horton Landing; the designation and unveiling of the plaque for the Grand-Pré Rural Historic District National Historic Site of Canada in 2004; and the partnership created with a number of stakeholders to develop a UNESCO nomination for the Grand Pré area. Parks Canada has also been actively involved in making such events as the 3rd *Congrès Mondial Acadien* (2004) possible, an event that has strengthened and supported the Acadian community. The event was hosted at Grand-Pré NHSC and attracted over 15,000 people to the site.

The relationship with the local residents is positive overall, in particular with heritage associations and marketing bodies. The national historic site is recognized as a place of reference for heritage preservation, which is illustrated by such events as Parks Canada being contacted to assist in the preservation of an “aboiteau” discovered in the dykelands. That collaboration with the community is also demonstrated through addressing “mutually compatible objectives”, such as the resolution of the domestic fly infestation issue, the preservation of viewplanes from the site and land use planning in general, and promoting heritage tourism, marketing and special events (2001 Management Plan, p.22). Parks Canada continues to support the local community by providing a venue to host a number of local activities at the site. These actions have been carried out successfully.

2.3 State of Aboriginal Relations

Highlights

- The relationship between the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Parks Canada is positive and growing.

Due to their long history in the Grand Pré area, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have a vested interest in management actions undertaken at the national historic site. By virtue of this fact, the continued positive relations between the site and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia are a priority in site management.

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have been instrumental in developing the visitor reception and interpretation centre exhibits and multimedia presentation in a way that reflected their perspective, lending their voices to the accounts from their ancestors who interacted with the Acadians and witnessed the Deportation. This collaboration between Parks Canada and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia was fruitful in facilitating a meaningful experience for visitors and in building a positive relationship.

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia were invited by Parks Canada and the SPGP to the *Congrès mondial acadien* in 2004, and to the commemoration of the Deportation in 2005. Their participation was welcomed and enriching, further strengthening the positive relationship between the organizations.

3.0 Overall Site Assessment: Key Successes, Issues, and Challenges

Grand-Pré NHSC is an iconic site in Nova Scotia and Canada. It is a site of cultural and spiritual importance for the Acadians, with a rich concentration of cultural resources that is a testimony to its long history.

The greatest success achieved over the years was Parks Canada's investment of resources in partnering with the Acadian community to develop a visitor reception and interpretation centre, transforming the site into a world-class destination. This is clearly demonstrated by the high level of satisfaction among visitors and the greater amount of time on average spent at the site. Stakeholder relations have been front and centre with Parks Canada, and it is an important element in the delivery of services. Parks Canada has also invested resources to improve the condition of cultural resources on the site. The results were tangible as the condition of buildings, landscapes, and objects has been maintained.

Parks Canada assisted the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré* in marketing the site. Parks Canada helped the *Société* obtain third-party funding to carry out a market research study that has helped the *Société* reach new markets, promote the site and develop new products as well as provided funds for a marketing strategy and capacity-building within its staff.

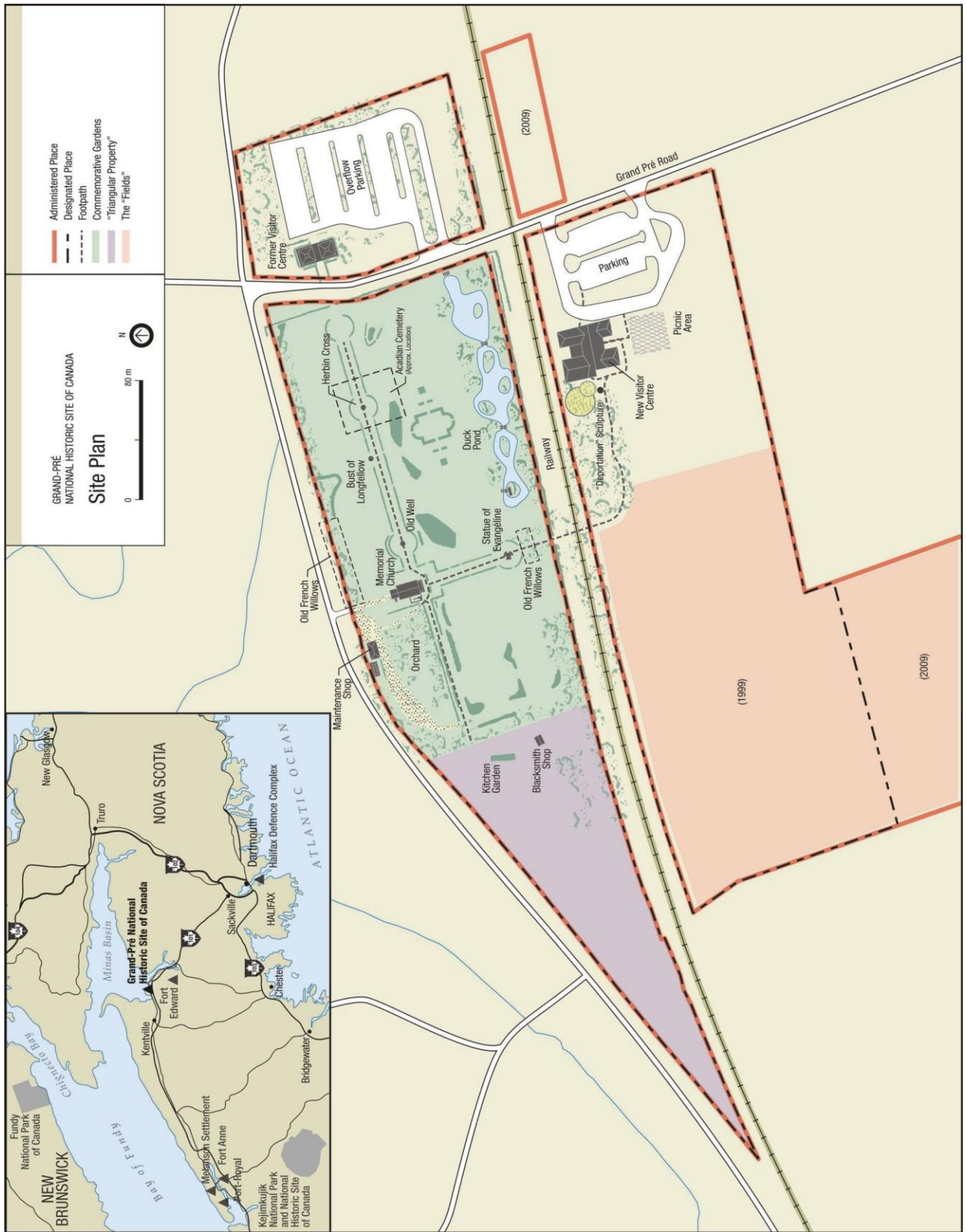
Challenges remain principally linked to the maintenance of the sections of the properties where cultural resources may be affected, for example, by vegetation encroachment in areas dense in archaeological resources. New challenges at the site include the increased land base, which has doubled since 1999, the invasive mustard plant infestation on the site, improving the cultural resource inventories, and the continuing vegetation encroachment which has hampered the historic viewsapes to the area surrounding the site and, in particular, to the dykelands.

Ongoing challenges are associated with declining visitation at national historic sites. Grand-Pré NHSC has seen its visitation drop significantly in the past decade due in part to changing tourism patterns and the addition of entry fees to the site. Faced with declining revenues, Parks Canada made the decision that the Agency would fund only essential personal visitor services at the site while encouraging the *Société Promotion Grand-Pré* to access other sources of funding to enhance these services. Visitors have indicated that they would welcome interactive activities and additional personal heritage presentation. Grand-Pré NHSC is one of a few sites that was included in a national marketing strategy pilot in 2008 to attract new visitors to national historic sites. Visitors also indicated that they would welcome better trip planning information. These issues, as well as changing Canadian demographics, have been the focus of that marketing strategy and the development of new products.

The emphasis of the next management plan for Grand-Pré NHSC will focus on facilitating opportunities for visitor experience to ensure that visitors experience the site in ways that responds to their needs and expectations. Parks Canada will continue to centre its efforts on protecting cultural resources, by integrating them into elements of visitor experiences and educational opportunities. The field unit will build upon its successes with the Acadian community and research organizations. It will continue to engage and enhance its relationships with stakeholders and partners by seeking new opportunities with them and providing opportunities for innovative public outreach education.

The state of Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada has improved as a result of Parks Canada's significant investments in resources and personnel, and the strong and healthy collaboration with stakeholders and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

APPENDIX 1: Map



APPENDIX 2: Bibliography

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APPENDIX 3: Glossary

Commemorative Integrity:

Commemorative integrity describes the health and wholeness of a national historic site. A national historic site possesses commemorative integrity when: the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat; the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public; and the site's heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

Indicator:

A nationally or bio-regionally consistent summary reporting statement that provides a comprehensive synopsis of each element of the Agency mandate. It is based on a combination of data, measures and critical success factors that provide a clear message about current conditions and the change since the last measurement.

Measure:

Data, surveys or other measurements that present conditions or trends. Measures are components of indicators.

Target:

Aim or objective set by managers and to be achieved within a specified time frame.

Threshold:

Level of an indicator or measure that represents a good (green), fair (yellow), or poor (red) condition. It represents the point of transition between the three levels of condition on which the Agency reports.

APPENDIX 4: Methodology, Evaluation Tools, and Rating Guide

The methodology applied for this State of the Site Report consists of evaluating the aspects of the management of a national historic site for which we currently have assessment tools and comparing the results to benchmark indicators available.

Evaluation Tools:

Tools	Commemorative Integrity evaluations (CI evaluation)	Assesses the state of the site's commemorative integrity by looking at the condition of cultural resources, the effectiveness of communication and selected management practices.
	Visitor Experience assessments (VE assessment)	Assesses the delivery of services to facilitate visitor experiences. Reviews available services and identifies priorities for action.
	Visitor Information Programs (VIP)	Provides data on visitation, visitor profile, performance in meeting visitor expectations, and understanding of key messages by visitors.
Benchmark indicators	State of Protected Heritage Areas 1999 Report (latest available information about commemorative integrity)	
	2000 Visitor Information Program	
	Actions in the 2001 management plan	
	Targets included in the Agency's 2003-04 Corporate Plan	

Table 1: General list of tools and indicators used to assess the state of the national historic site

The state of resources (commemorative integrity) is assessed based on the results appearing in the State of Protected Heritage Areas 1999 Report, which serve as the benchmark, and the 2007 CI evaluation and VE assessment, which monitor performance. The 1997 Commemorative Integrity Statement, which was used for the 2007 CI evaluation covers only a portion of the national historic site's current area since in 1999 new properties were acquired by Parks Canada. As a result the assessment of that portion is unavailable.

The state of the natural resources is based on an inventory completed in 2007.

The state of visitor experience is based on the 2007 VE assessment and VIP. The benchmark used was the information provided in the 2000 VIP. The VE assessment looks at the delivery of activities and services at the site and identifies priorities, and the VIP looks at the visitor's appreciation of the site's services. The management plan provides the benchmark information and the direction for the management actions.

Currently, there is no tool to report on the state of stakeholder engagement and Aboriginal relations. To assess Aboriginal relations and stakeholder engagement a description of activities is included and assessed based on the management actions included in the 2001 management plan. There is currently no national baseline or targets for public outreach education indicators for: awareness, understanding, appreciation and learning.

Rating Guide

1) Commemorative Integrity Evaluation

The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation evaluates the overall state of the national historic site's commemorative integrity on a ten-point scale by evaluating:

- The condition and threats to cultural resources;
- The effectiveness of communication;
- Selected management practices.

For each of these measures, a rating is attributed based on the following:

Green = good, effective, or not currently impaired. Any deficiencies are not a threat to the commemorative integrity of the site.
Yellow = fair or minor to moderate impairment or threat. Requires improvement.
Red = poor, ineffective, seriously impaired or a significant attribute missing (whether related to condition, communications or selected management practices).
N/A = not applicable; the question does not apply to this site.
N/R = not rated or not reported on because the information is not available.
+ or - = the actual state is on the high or low borderline side of the colour.
↑ or ↓ = indicates a trend, either improving or deteriorating.

For threats to cultural resources, the following is provided:

Immediacy refers to the likelihood of a particular threat occurring at the site. For example, almost every site is subject to threat from lightning strike but for most this will not have a very high likelihood of happening.
High - refers to a threat that has a high probability of occurring at the site or its cultural resources within the coming year.
Medium - refers to a threat that has a high probability of occurring at the site or its cultural resources within the next 3 years.
Low - refers to a threat which may occur at the site within the next 10 years.
Impact refers to the degree of damage that a particular threat would have on a site or its resources, or on our ability to communicate national historic significance. A wooden building with no fire suppression system, for example, is likely to be highly impaired should a fire take place in it.
High - the threat could result in extensive damage or destruction of the site or resource.
Medium - the threat would impair commemorative integrity but not cause extensive damage or complete devastation.
Low - the impact of the threat is unlikely to have a major effect on commemorative integrity.

2) Visitor Experience

Visitor Experience Assessments review the services provided to visitors and when possible their appreciation by them, and determine priorities for action. These priorities are assessed according to a star system, the higher number of stars indicating a greater level of priority.

In rating visitor experience in this report, the following measures are assessed which are based on Agency commitments and targets included in corporate plans:

- Visitor experience;
- Satisfaction with interpretive programming;
- Satisfaction with site services and facilities;

The rating simply identifies whether the targets have successfully been reached.

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