



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Chignecto Isthmus National Historic Sites Public Consultation Newsletter

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Invitation to participate

The Chignecto Isthmus national historic sites (NHS), which include Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland, Beaubassin, Fort Lawrence and Fort Gaspereaux NHS, have begun the process of reviewing their management plan. To this end, I invite you to participate in this reflection by sharing your viewpoint and your suggestions as part of the public consultation period to be held from January 26 to March 4, 2016.

The purpose of this consultation is to allow the municipalities, First Nations partners, community stakeholders, residents and Canadians to be involved in the decision-making regarding the management of these national historic sites.

The management plan is the official document that will guide management of the historic sites for the next ten years (2016-2026). It provides orientation for the protection of cultural and natural resources, visitor experience, and public education.

This document proposes elements to update the **vision**, as well as three key **strategies**, **objectives**, and **targets** specific to the sites.

Join the Parks Canada team in the development of a common vision and in its continued work to protect and promote the discovery of these unique places.

Géraldine Arsenault
Superintendent
Northern New Brunswick Field Unit

"Thank you very much for the fun activities at Fort Beauséjour! LOL! It was so much fun to learn about the past! This fun outing will remain engraved in our memories! I loved exploring the tunnels and looking for old objects! WOW! In addition, the star is my favorite shape! "

Visitors at the Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland NHS.



Parks Canada's Mandate

On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.



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At a glance: Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland National Historic Site

A little bit of history ...

Designated as a national historic site in January 1920, this site, located in Aulac New Brunswick, commemorates the role of the Fort in the struggle between France and Britain, and subsequently between Britain and the American colonies, for North America.

Fort Beauséjour was built by the French in 1751 to defend their interests in the region and to counterbalance the construction of the British Fort Lawrence. After four years of uneasy stalemate, the Fort fell to British and colonial forces after a two-week siege in June 1755, at which time it was renamed Fort Cumberland.

It also played a role in the Deportation of the Acadians from 1755 to 1763. The Fort remained garrisoned until it was abandoned in 1835.

In the present day ...

The visitor center is open for a period of 9 weeks (late June to early September); however, it does welcome student groups prior to opening up for the season. Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland NHS was converted to a self-guided site in 2012.

In addition to visiting the casemates and fort ruins on the grounds, the site boasts a museum with artefacts from the region including recent additions to the collection, an interpretation video and panels, and fabulous views of the surrounding landscape where modern Nova Scotia and New Brunswick meet.

Quick facts

- ◆ Fort Beauséjour was one of the first known pentagonal five-bastioned forts in North-America.
- ◆ The bronze bell on display at the national historic site was cast in 1734 for the church of Beaubassin.

History worth *Xploring*

Adapting to the changing needs of visitors and changing operational realities, several new initiatives were implemented at Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland National Historic Site. The *Xplorers* program was implemented in 2013 and has been quite successful at providing interesting learning experiences for children.

*"The activities were super fun! If I was one of the critics who rated stuff, I'd give you guys 5 stars *****"*

Visitor at Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland NHS

In addition, the *Explora* program is now available allowing visitors to continue to learn about the area's rich historical significance as this national historic site which transitioned to a self-guided site in 2012.



Development at Beaubassin and Fort Lawrence NHS

Since the designation in 2005 of Beaubassin National Historic Site, important research and preparation work has taken place at this site which also includes the Fort Lawrence NHS.

Several years of public archeology digs have taken place, unearthing thousands of artifacts for analysis and interpretation.

Over the last few years, modern farm buildings have been torn down and debris cleaned up in preparation for the next phase.

In fact, the sites will see the development of a view park with interpretation panels and monuments over the next few years. The site will remain self-guided. **More details to come.**



Taking a look at Fort Gaspereaux, Beaubassin and Fort Lawrence NHS

Complementing the Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland NHS, the following three national historic sites situated in the Chignecto Isthmus region represent important pieces of Canada's heritage. These sites are accessible to visitors free of charge; however, they do not have a Parks Canada staff presence.

Fort Gaspereaux National Historic Site. One of the first sites to be commemorated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the site was designated in January 1920 because of its role in the struggle between France and Britain for North America in the 1750s.

Built as a border outpost by French troops in 1751, it served as a provisioning base for the forts of Acadia during the French regime. It fell to the British in 1755 and renamed Fort Monckton before being burned by the British in September 1756.

Beaubassin National Historic Site. The site was designated in July 2005 because the village of Beaubassin was a major Acadian settlement on the Isthmus of Chignecto, a pivotal place in the 17th and 18th century North American geopolitical struggle between the British and French empires. The reasons for designation also include its archaeological features, deposits and artifacts which attest to its rich history.

These archaeological features attest to the Acadian occupation and way of life at Beaubassin, and speak to the destruction of the village, a prelude to the final clash of the two empires in Acadie for the control of North America.

Fort Lawrence National Historic Site. Fort Lawrence NHS, which sits within the boundaries of the Beaubassin designated place, was designated in May 1923 because of the role played the fort, erected in 1750 by the British, to defend the isthmus of Chignecto before it was abandoned shortly after the capture of Fort Beauséjour which occurred in 1755.

Fort Lawrence was erected by Major Charles Lawrence, who subsequently became the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, among the remnants of what used to be the vibrant village of Beaubassin. The village was evacuated and burned by the French in 1750 just before the arrival of British troops in the area.





With eyes wide open ...

The management plan process is very important! As such, it is crucial to be aware of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that may affect the implementation of the plan so it can remain relevant and support Parks Canada, its stakeholders and its partners in the protection and presentation of these nationally significant examples of Canada's heritage.

Main risks and factors to consider

- ◆ Transformation of Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland NHS to a **self guided site** in 2012.
- ◆ **Decrease in visitation since 2009** (with an increase in 2015) .
- ◆ **Threatened cultural resources** by vegetation, erosion, storms and vandalism.
- ◆ **Limited presentation of Indigenous Peoples' history**, despite its richness in the region.

Main opportunities

- ◆ Leveraging the proximity and thematic link of the four national historic sites to **diversify visitor experiences in collaboration with partners and stakeholders**.
- ◆ **Implementing** comprehensive **vegetation** and **threat mitigation plans** to protect cultural resources for future generations.
- ◆ **Building stronger partnerships** with Indigenous Peoples to present and preserve the rich history of First Nations in the region.

The Proposed Management Approach

The management plan **proposes** a management approach that aims to integrate the three elements of Parks Canada's mandate, i.e. resource protection, public education and visitor experience, in order to contribute to Parks Canada's efforts to carry out its vision and achieve its objectives.

The management plans are reviewed every 10 years and take into account comments and participation from partners, stakeholders and the public, to ensure that the plan remains relevant and effective.

The planning program for the Chignecto Isthmus NHS began with an assessment of the condition of the site, which identified key issues to be addressed when developing the new plan.

The management plan will be submitted to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change for approval. The approved plan will be available on the Fort Beauséjour – Fort Cumberland NHS's website.



What is a VISION?

The **vision statement** is a critical component of the management plan, answering the question, “*What do we want this place to be in 15-20 years?*”.

It is a broad statement that is both inspiring and evocative, yet achievable.

With balance in mind, it normally includes all Parks Canada mandate elements:

- Heritage protection
- Public appreciation and understanding
- Visitor experience



Proposed vision elements for the Chignecto Isthmus sites

- ◆ Visitors from across Canada and beyond marvel at the **brehtaking landscape** of the Chignecto Isthmus and its vast **expanse of dykelands**.
- ◆ Visitors are captivated by four must-see destinations offering an array of **meaningful experiences** and **learning opportunities** .
- ◆ **Bustling with activity**, Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland is widely recognized as the **popular gateway** for a journey of **inspired discovery** to the **thematically-linked sites** of Beaubassin, Fort Lawrence, and Fort Gaspereaux.
 - ◆ **Engaging interpretive events and products** immerse an **increasing number of visitors** in the region’s fascinating history.
 - ◆ As they explore the sites, they are moved by the stories of the rich **Indigenous Peoples’ presence**, thriving **Acadian settlements**, and mounting **rivalry between the British and French empires** to control North America.
 - ◆ **Active involvement** of Indigenous Peoples, the Acadian community, and local stakeholders foster a **sense of pride and personal connection** to these special places.
 - ◆ **Careful management** of the sites’ cultural and natural resources ensure their **continued protection** and **presentation** as part of Parks Canada’s national network of Canadian treasures.

The *Proposed* Key Strategies

Key **strategies** explain how managers intend to achieve the long-term vision for the sites. Meaningful **objectives** and **targets** are then developed for each specific key strategy as a measurable outcome of implementing the key strategies. We have included the ones proposed below.

Parks Canada proposes the following **three** key strategies and corresponding objectives and targets for the national historic sites within the Chignecto Isthmus region over the next ten years.

What are your thoughts?



Key Strategy 1

Establishing the Chignecto Isthmus NHS as linked, “must-see” tourist attractions in the region.

What does it mean?

This strategy focuses on attracting audiences to the four national historic sites. The sites benefit from strategic locations along the TransCanada Highways which provide important opportunities to reach out to potential visitors. Their close proximity and thematic links allows for a joint approach to promotion and the development of a holistic and mutually-supportive visitor experience, with Fort Beauséjour- Fort Cumberland NHS acting as the gateway.

What does success look like?

Objective 1.1: Visitation to the national historic sites has increased.

Target 1.1.1 By 2025, annual paid visitation at Fort Beauséjour—Fort Cumberland has increased by 21% (total of 1,250 visitor increase).

Target 1.1.2 By 2025, visitation by young families and young adults has increased by 10%.

Objective 1.2: New integrated and meaningful visitor experiences are provided at the national historic sites.

Target 1.2.1 By 2017, all four national historic sites are historically and thematically linked through various interpretive methods.

Target 1.2.2 By 2020, the history of the British period and the history of the presence of Indigenous Peoples in the region have been expanded upon in the Chignecto Isthmus NHS.

Target 1.2.3 By 2020, at least one major event with a 3rd party is held annually at a Chignecto Isthmus national historic site.

Objective 1.3: Awareness of the national historic sites has increased.

Target 1.3.1 There are at least four positive media requests or coverage per year of one or more of the national historic sites.

Target 1.3.2 By 2020, visits to the national historic sites’ website has increased by 20%



What does it mean?

This strategy focuses on building relationships with the Indigenous Peoples, local organizations and people who value the Chignecto Isthmus national historic sites. The sites benefit from a passionate stakeholder base whose engagement can help foster support for the continued protection of the sites while broadening the visitor offer and reaching new audiences.

Key Strategy 2

Increasing collaboration with people who value the Chignecto Isthmus national historic sites.

What does success look like?

Objective 2.1: Indigenous Peoples involvement and presence on the national historic sites has increased.

Target 2.1.1 By 2017, at least one Memorandum of Understanding between a national historic site and a First Nations community is established addressing collaboration on events, presentation and research.

Target 2.1.2 By 2018, at least one annual event celebrating Indigenous Peoples heritage is held at a national historic site, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

Objective 2.2: Strong partnerships are established with local communities and stakeholders.

Target 2.2.1 At least one stakeholder meeting is held annually.

Target 2.2.2 By 2025, two new partnerships facilitating the development and presentation of programs, events and research have been established.



Key Strategy 3

Improving the commemorative integrity of the Chignecto Isthmus national historic

What does it mean?

This strategy focuses on the protection of cultural and natural resources. Various tools and programs are available to mitigate threats and ensure the commemorative integrity of the sites for future generations by improving the condition of cultural resources and encouraging the development of tools and programs.

What does success look like?

Objective 3.1: The condition of cultural resources is improved.

Target 3.1.1 By 2025, 100% of cultural resource assets are in fair to good condition.

Objective 3.2: Tools and programs are developed to ensure the continued best management of cultural and natural resources.

Target 3.2.1 By 2020, all four national historic sites have Commemorative Integrity Statements.

Target 3.2.2 By 2018, best management practices for vegetation management, addressing cultural and natural resources including species at risk, are completed for the national historic sites .

What do you think?

This document summarizes and presents the sites, their issues, a management approach, key strategies, objectives and measurable targets. **We now want to hear from you!** This is an opportunity to contribute to the reflection and develop the new management plan together for the Chignecto Isthmus national historic sites. Your knowledge of the area, your experience at the sites, and how you see their future **are important to us.**

How to participate

You can share your opinion in multiple ways:

- ◆ By participating in person at an open house on Thursday March 3, 2016 at Tweedie Hall at Mount Allison University (Sackville, NB) from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- ◆ By emailing your comments to: fort.beausejour@pc.gc.ca.
- ◆ By mail: Att: External Relations department
186, Route 117
Kouchibouguac National Park, NB E4X 2P1
- ◆ By participating in a workshop organized for key stakeholders and partners (contact us for more details).

For more information, visit the Parks Canada website at www.parkscanada.gc.ca/beausejour

You have until **March 4, 2016** to share your opinion, comments, or ideas, or to submit a presentation.

Thank you for your important contribution!



Contact Us

If you have any questions, or if you would like more information on the public consultation process, please contact us.

By email:
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