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Niagara

National Historic Sites of Canada

Management Plan

2018



2018

Niagara

National Historic Sites of Canada

Management Plan

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Niagara National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan, 2018.

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**For more information about the management plan or about
NIAGARA NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES:**

NIAGARA NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES
26 Queen Street
P.O. Box 787
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON
L0S 1J0

Tel: 905-468-6614
Email: ont-niagara@pc.gc.ca
www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/on/fortgeorge

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top from left to right: Kurt Bickell, Scott Munn, Cosmo Condina
Bottom: Scott Munn

Foreword



Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas belong to all Canadians and offer truly Canadian experiences.

These special places make up one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and cultural heritage areas in the world.

The Government is committed to preserving our natural and cultural heritage, expanding the system of protected places and contributing to the recovery of species-at-risk. At the same time, we must continue to offer new and innovative visitor and outreach programs and activities so that more Canadians can experience Parks Canada places and learn about our environment, history and culture.

This new management plan for Niagara National Historic Sites of Canada supports this vision.

Management plans are developed through extensive consultation and input from various people and organizations, including Indigenous Peoples, local and regional residents, visitors and the dedicated team at Parks Canada.

National parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas are a priority for the Government of Canada. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this plan for their commitment and spirit of co-operation.

As the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, I applaud this collaborative effort and I am pleased to approve the Niagara National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan.

Catherine McKenna

*Minister of Environment and Climate Change and
Minister responsible for Parks Canada*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended by:

Michael Nadler
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada

Trevor Swerdfager
Senior Vice-President, Operations
Parks Canada

Louis R. Lavoie
Field Unit Superintendent
Southwestern Ontario
Parks Canada

Executive Summary

The Niagara National Historic Sites are a collection of seven sites located in the Niagara Region. Primarily reflecting the region's nationally significant military heritage, the sites include: Fort George, Butler's Barracks, Fort Mississauga, Queenston Heights, Navy Island, Mississauga Point Lighthouse and the Battlefield of Fort George.

These sites are located at the epicentre of the primary land battles of the War of 1812 and collectively represent the defence of Canada and the birth of the nation. The sites also include thousands of years of Indigenous heritage and are important markers of the contribution of local Indigenous communities to the defence of Canada during the War of 1812.

With the exception of Brock's Monument (at Queenston) and Navy Island (upstream from Niagara Falls), the national historic sites administered by Parks Canada in the Niagara Region are located within the community of Niagara-on-the-Lake, at the mouth of the Niagara River. Fort George National Historic Site is the primary visitor experience for Parks Canada sites, welcoming, on average, 73,000 visitors each year.

This management plan has been developed with input from Indigenous and public consultations and includes a new vision for Niagara National Historic Sites that will guide management over the next ten years. The following three key strategies and an area management approach frame the management direction for these sites:

Key Strategy 1: Conserving Niagara's Cultural Heritage

This strategy focuses on the maintenance and conservation of the heritage value of buildings, archaeological resources and the cultural landscape to ensure the long term sustainability of the sites. Cultural resource management will be integrated with experiences that not only captivate visitors, but contribute to the stewardship of the site's cultural resources.

Key Strategy 2: Empowering Indigenous Voices

This strategy will invite open dialogue with local and regional Indigenous communities to better understand their needs and interests in the Niagara National Historic Sites and how Indigenous culture can be shared with visitors and Canadians.

Key Strategy 3: Niagara National Historic Sites: A Premier Canadian Heritage Destination

Two important themes make up this strategy. First is a focus on the promotion of a single destination -*Niagara National Historic Sites*- through strategic marketing and partnerships. Second, the portfolio of our seven sites will be used to connect visitors with nature and cultural heritage through creative, innovative and sustainable programs and events.

Management Area: Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and Adjacent Properties

Through preliminary stakeholder and public consultation, five values and principles were developed to set the framework for continued dialogue with the community, partners and stakeholders, and guide Parks Canada's decision-making with regard to these properties in the future. These values and principles are:

Connecting Canadians with our natural and cultural heritage;
Protecting and preserving our natural and cultural resources for future generations;
Commemorating the human history of the Niagara National Historic Sites;

*Facilitating public access and balancing sustainability; and
Fostering community engagement and collaboration.*

The three key strategies and area management approach set the stage for a revitalized collection of national historic sites that will serve as the foundation for unforgettable experiences and special events at Niagara National Historic Sites for years to come. Working with Indigenous peoples, partners and stakeholders in the region and local community will ensure the conservation and maintenance of cultural resources, and increase the profile and visitation for Niagara National Historic Sites.

Table of Contents

Foreword	iii
Recommendations.....	v
Executive Summary.....	vii
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Significance of Niagara National Historic Sites	1
3.0 Planning Context	3
4.0 Vision	6
5.0 Key Strategies	6
6.0 Management Areas.....	10
7.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment	13

Maps

Map 1: Regional Setting	2
Map 2: Niagara National Historic Sites Administered by Parks Canada in Niagara-on-the-Lake	4
Map 3: Lakeshore Properties and Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site	11

1.0 Introduction

Parks Canada manages one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and historic places in the world. The Agency's mandate is to protect and present these places for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. Future-oriented, strategic management of each national park, national marine conservation area, heritage canal and those national historic sites administered by Parks Canada supports the Agency's vision:

"Canada's treasured natural and historic places will be a living legacy, connecting hearts and minds to a stronger, deeper understanding of the very essence of Canada."

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* requires Parks Canada to prepare a management plan for national historic sites administered by the Agency. The Niagara National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan, once approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and tabled in Parliament, ensures Parks Canada's accountability to Canadians, outlining how the management team of these historic sites will achieve measurable results in support of the Agency's mandate.

Indigenous peoples and Canadians were involved in the preparation of the management plan, helping to shape the future direction of the Niagara National Historic Sites. The plan sets clear, strategic direction for the management and operation of the Niagara National Historic Sites by articulating a vision, key strategies and objectives.

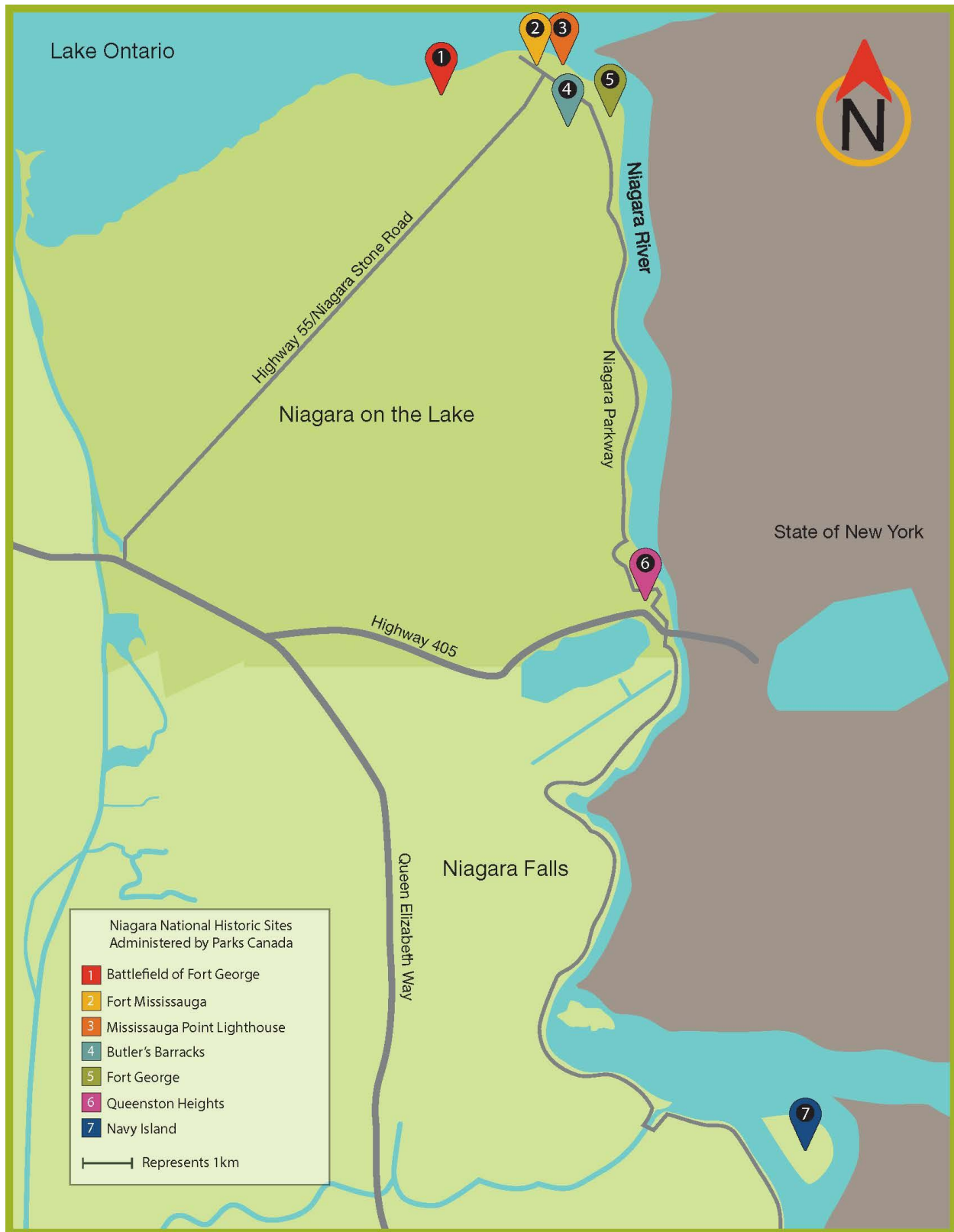
This plan is not an end in itself. Parks Canada will maintain an open dialogue on the implementation of the management plan to ensure that it remains relevant and meaningful. Parks Canada will report annually on progress toward achieving the plan objectives and will review the plan every ten years or sooner if required. The plan will serve as the focus for ongoing engagement on the management of Niagara National Historic Sites in years to come.

2.0 Significance of Niagara National Historic Sites

The Niagara National Historic Sites are a collection of seven sites located in the Niagara Region. Primarily reflecting the region's nationally significant military heritage, the sites are briefly described below and shown on Map 1.

Fort George National Historic Site: Designated in 1921, Fort George is of national historic significance because it served as the principal fortification on the Niagara frontier during the War of 1812, and, as Headquarters of the Centre Division of the British Army, the site played a key role in the defence of Upper Canada. Fort George is the signature element of visitor experience among the seven national historic sites, providing a glimpse into one of the most important chapters of Canadian history. Attacked and destroyed by American soldiers during the War of 1812, the sprawling complex has been faithfully reconstructed, with rebuilt officers' quarters, barracks and other buildings joining an original 1796 stone powder magazine that survived the Battle of Fort George.

Butler's Barracks National Historic Site: Butler's Barracks is of national historic significance because the four remaining 19th century military buildings are essential and integral elements in the complex of military structures at the mouth of the Niagara River; and because of their role in the military history of the area. In addition, the Indian



Map 1 Regional Setting - Niagara National Historic Sites

Council House on the Common adjacent to Butler's Barracks played an important role in consultations between the British Indian Department and their Indigenous allies. Butler's Barracks was designated a national historic site in 1963.

Fort Mississauga National Historic Site: An important example of military construction within a military complex of national historic importance, Fort Mississauga was designated as a national historic site in 1960. Completed after the War of 1812, the fort and its central tower were strategically located at the mouth of the Niagara River to protect the British/Canadian side of the Niagara frontier and to serve as a counter to Fort Niagara.

Navy Island National Historic Site: Navy Island is of national historic significance because of its role as the first British shipyard serving the upper Great Lakes, and for its role in the Mackenzie Rebellion. Navy Island was designated as a national historic site in 1921.

Queenston Heights National Historic Site: Queenston Heights is of national historic significance because of the important battle fought here, when an attempted invasion by American troops was repulsed by British, Canadian and Indigenous forces early in the War of 1812. Brock's Monument, located at Queenston Heights, was transferred to Parks Canada from the Niagara Parks Commission in 2003.

Mississauga Point Lighthouse National Historic Site: Built in 1804, Mississauga Point Lighthouse was commemorated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board in 1937 as the first lighthouse on the Great Lakes. The lighthouse was damaged during the Battle of Fort George in 1813, and demolished by the British a year later in order to construct Fort Mississauga on the same site. The precise location of the lighthouse is unknown.

Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site: The Battlefield of Fort George was designated as a site of national significance in 1921. Fought in May 1813, the battle of Fort George gave the American army temporary control over the entrance to the Niagara River and blocked vital British supply lines to the western posts.

3.0 Planning Context

The Town of Niagara was captured and occupied for seven months in 1813 by American troops and Canadian sympathizers, who burned it to the ground during their retreat that December. Today, the community of Niagara-on-the-Lake, with its 19th century character and charm, is built upon the foundations of the earlier town. The historic core of the town is a National Historic Site.

With the exception of Brock's Monument (at Queenston) and Navy Island (upstream from Niagara Falls), the national historic sites administered by Parks Canada in the Niagara Region are located within the community of Niagara-on-the-Lake, at the mouth of the Niagara River (see Map 2). Fort George National Historic Site is the primary visitor experience for Parks Canada's sites in this area, welcoming, on average, 73,000 visitors each year. In 2016, over 60% of visitors to Fort George National Historic Site were international visitors, mostly from the north eastern United States.



Map 2 National Historic Sites Administered by Parks Canada in Niagara-on-the-Lake

Well known for its wineries and locavore culture, the Niagara Region hosts a number of major tourist attractions that draw millions of visitors each year. Nearby Niagara Falls is one of North America's largest tourism attractions, drawing over 12 million visitors yearly, and is less than a 20 minute drive from the Niagara National Historic Sites. Niagara-on-the-Lake draws more than 2.5 million visitors a year, who enjoy the wineries, fine restaurants, the Shaw Festival Theatre, the ambiance of the town, and the many historic sites. The town is also easily accessible from both Ontario's Golden Horseshoe (including the Greater Toronto Area) and the population centres of western New York State such as Buffalo.

Parks Canada's national historic sites in the Niagara Region share a common theme of military activity. They are part of a larger collection of historic places on the Peninsula, ranging from other national historic sites associated with the War of 1812, such as the Battlefields of Lundy's Lane and Chippewa, to the Willowbank Estate and the early 19th century Niagara Apothecary.

This management plan replaces the 2007 Management Plan for Fort George, Butler's Barracks, Fort Mississauga, Navy Island, Queenston Heights, Mississauga Point Lighthouse and Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Sites which provided management direction for many improvements to commemorative integrity, visitor experience and external relations. Since 2007, the sites have advanced relations with the broader community in all aspects. The sites are more integrated into local tourism infrastructure, relations with Indigenous communities have advanced in demonstrable ways and community organizations are closely connected with Parks Canada's operations.

With respect to cultural integrity, conservation work has progressed on several of the sites and planning is in place for others. A 2015 State of Sites Assessment identified a number of opportunities and challenges that were considered during the review and development of this plan. They include the need to:

- increase the visibility of the Niagara National Historic Sites in the local community and the broader Niagara Region;
- improve dialogue with Indigenous peoples and opportunities for sharing Indigenous culture;
- focus on the declining condition of cultural resources of national significance at Fort Mississauga and Butler's Barracks National Historic Sites; and
- collaborate on the future plans for the Battlefield of Fort George and the adjacent properties.

The three key strategies and area management approach detailed in this plan address these opportunities and challenges and move the sites towards a long term vision.

The objectives and targets presented herein are meant to be achievable within the available resources of Parks Canada.

4.0 Vision

The Niagara National Historic Sites belong to all Canadians and tell the stories of who we are. Together with partners and local communities, we will establish the Niagara National Historic Sites as the premier heritage destination in the Niagara Region where innovative programs and events inspire Canadians and international visitors to discover and connect with our shared history, where family and friends gather to create lasting memories, and where Indigenous communities share their stories and deep connections to these places and this land.

These sites will be cherished as a living legacy, telling the story of the key role they played in shaping Canada's destiny and inspiring a legacy of national pride for generations to come.

To achieve the vision, Parks Canada will:

- present a revitalized collection of national historic sites with cultural resources of national significance in good condition, serving as the foundation for unforgettable experiences and special events;
- work with partners to maintain and conserve historic properties and cultural heritage resources in innovative ways;
- celebrate the connection and collaboration between the Niagara National Historic Sites and Indigenous peoples; and
- manage Niagara National Historic Sites as a single destination, recognized as an integral part of tourism in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

5.0 Key Strategies

Three key strategies frame the management direction for Niagara National Historic Sites for the next 10 years. The strategies and corresponding objectives and targets focus on achieving the vision for the sites through an integrated approach to the protection and presentation of cultural resources. Unless otherwise specified, all objectives and targets apply to all seven individual sites that make up Niagara National Historic Sites.

Key Strategy 1: Conserving Niagara's Cultural Heritage

Cultural resources provide the foundation for unforgettable experiences at the Niagara National Historic Sites. The heritage value of the buildings, archaeological resources and the cultural landscape will be the focus of maintenance and conservation to ensure the long term sustainability of the sites. Cultural resource management will be integrated with experiences that not only captivate visitors, but contribute to the stewardship of the site's cultural resources.

Objective 1.1

The cultural resources of national significance are rehabilitated to stable condition and, where beneficial, community partners are involved in on-going monitoring to ensure Canadians are as fully engaged as possible in protecting their heritage.

Targets

- Measures for archaeological sites have improved ratings from 'fair' to 'good' in the next State of Site Assessment for Fort George.
- By 2021, the stabilizing structure inside Fort Mississauga will be in place and the stabilization and monitoring of the central tower will be on-going.

- The commemorative integrity rating for Fort George is maintained or improved by 2021.

Objective 1.2

The heritage places administered by Parks Canada, including those that are not national historic sites, are proactively maintained and conserved through instruments such as partnering arrangements and memoranda of understanding.

Targets

- Within the first four years of plan implementation, there is an increased monitoring and by-law enforcement presence at all heritage places.
- Within two years of plan approval, a memorandum of understanding is in place with local Indigenous communities to work collaboratively to conserve cultural resources related to Indigenous history at the sites, such as at Navy Island and the British Indian Department Council House.
- Within two years of plan approval, partnerships are sought to ensure maintenance of properties that are heritage places administered by Parks Canada, such as Butler's Burial Ground.

Objective 1.3

The heritage value of the cultural landscapes at the national historic sites administered by Parks Canada are maintained and enhanced to showcase the significance of the sites in new and innovative ways in accordance with cultural resource management principles.

Targets

- The use of historic buildings by third parties increases from 2016 levels.
- Adaptive re-use of the Junior Commissariat Officer's Quarters, Barracks and Commissariat Stores at Butler's Barracks is increased from 2017 levels.

Key Strategy 2: Empowering Indigenous Voices

Open dialogue will be invited with local and regional Indigenous communities to better understand their needs and interests in the Niagara National Historic Sites and how Indigenous culture can be shared with visitors and Canadians. Strengthening and celebrating the connection between the Niagara National Historic Sites and Indigenous peoples will be achieved in a spirit of reconciliation by offering an inclusive environment where Indigenous partners are empowered and encouraged to share their culture and history.

Objective 2.1

Local and regional Indigenous communities are invited to discuss and/or collaborate on future initiatives of mutual interest at Niagara National Historic Sites.

Targets

- Establish a forum for ongoing dialogue and relationship building with local/regional Indigenous communities within the first year of plan approval.
- Bi-annual meetings with Indigenous partners or their designate(s) are held.
- Indigenous communities report that they value the dialogue and/or relationship with Parks Canada.

Objective 2.2

Indigenous communities are invited to create or co-create content that ensures Indigenous culture and history is incorporated into programming at Niagara National Historic Sites.

Targets

- By 2021, increased Indigenous content is present on the website and social media.
- By 2023, Indigenous events for Indigenous communities and/or visitors are held at Niagara National Historic Sites.
- By 2028, new visitor experience(s) are implemented at the Indian Council House site.

Key Strategy 3: Niagara National Historic Sites: A Premier Canadian Heritage Destination

Niagara National Historic Sites will be recognized as the premier cultural heritage destination and leading provider of heritage experiences in the Niagara Region, where visitors can experience and learn about stories that lead to the formation of Canada. This strategy has two important themes. First is a focus on the promotion of a single destination -*Niagara National Historic Sites*- through strategic marketing and partnerships. Secondly, the portfolio of our seven sites will connect visitors with nature and cultural heritage through creative, innovative and sustainable programs and events.

Promoting the Destination

Objective 3.1

The Niagara National Historic Sites are an integral part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake experience.

Targets

- Within two years of plan approval, a concept is developed and implemented for the Fort George location to welcome and orient visitors to the Niagara National Historic Sites and Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- Cross promotional initiatives with local businesses increase from 2016 levels, attracting new visitors to the Niagara National Historic Sites.
- The Niagara National Historic Sites are one of the top 5 most visited places in Niagara-on-the-Lake based on local tourism statistics.

Objective 3.2

Niagara National Historic Sites are recognized and operated as a single destination.

Targets

- By 2023, a signage plan with a common look and feel is established for the seven national historic sites.
- By 2023, an interpretive plan for the seven sites is developed and implemented in collaboration with partners.

Objective 3.3

Promotional reach is maximized through strategic partnering, driving visitation to the Niagara National Historic Sites and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Targets

- Promotional and media coverage show an increasing trend from a 2018 baseline.
- Cross promotion initiatives increase from 2018 baseline.
- New partnering agreements are in place for joint promotions.
- A marketing plan that focuses on positioning the entire historic complex including social media campaigns and cross promotional activities is in place within 2 years of plan approval.

Facilitating Epic Visitor Experiences

Objective 3.4

Visitor experiences and special events that meet the needs and interests of target audiences are implemented at the Niagara National Historic Sites.

Targets:

- One new personal or non-personal program will be implemented each year at Fort George and, based on annual priorities, at one of the other six sites.
- Partnering agreements for development and delivery of visitor experience opportunities have increased by 2023.
- 95% of visitors surveyed report that they enjoyed their visit to Niagara National Historic Sites.
- Satisfaction with value for entry improves to 'good' in the next State of Site Assessment.

Objective 3.5

The Fort George visitor experience is a signature element within the Niagara National Historic Sites destination.

Targets

- Fort George visitation increases 20% from 2016 levels over the duration of the management plan.
- New programs and special events will increase visitation to the Niagara National Historic Sites and draw from tourists already travelling to Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- The feasibility of primitive camping options for Navy Island will be explored in collaboration with partners.
- Collaborative visitor experience initiatives show an increasing trend.

Objective 3.6

New and improved infrastructure supports the delivery of new and existing visitor experiences and special events.

Targets

- The condition of visitor experience assets / facilities improves to 'good' in the next State of Site Assessment.
- The sally port and powder magazines in Fort Mississauga are repaired and stabilized by 2021 to help preserve the etchings made into the brick fabric of these structures by hundreds of soldiers from the 1880s through the First and Second World Wars.
- A viewing platform is installed on Fort Mississauga by 2021 where visitors can experience a breath-taking heritage view of the Lake Ontario shoreline and understand the site's strategic relationship with Old Fort Niagara in New York.
- Visitor transportation options between key sites are explored for feasibility and potential partners by 2023.
- Options for water access are reviewed by 2023.

6.0 Management Areas

One visitor area shown on Map 3 has been identified as requiring a specific management approach due to the complexity and profile of the area.

Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and adjacent properties

Parks Canada owns 110.9 hectares of land along the south shore of Lake Ontario in Niagara-on-the-Lake, known locally as the Lakeshore Road properties. The Lakeshore Road properties contain a mix of land uses and reflect centuries of human history including Indigenous peoples, agricultural development, military training and waste management. Despite the long period of military and municipal use, much of the property remains in a natural state including remnants of Carolinian forest, home to a number of native species including Species at Risk.

The key segments of the property include:

Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site

The boundaries of the Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site include land that Parks Canada owns and land within the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The portion of the land that Parks Canada owns has been leased to the Department of National Defense and used as a Rifle Range for several decades. In 2015, Parks Canada entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lincoln and Welland Regiment Foundation to set aside a parcel of this land near Lakeshore Road for the establishment of a new Niagara Military Heritage Centre.

Niagara Region Wastewater Treatment Plant and Associated Sewage Lagoons

This property is leased to the Niagara Region. Since the former plant has reached its capacity, Parks Canada entered into a land lease agreement with the Niagara Region for the new, more efficient plant with a significantly smaller footprint.

Niagara Shores Park

This section of the property is owned and maintained by Parks Canada. The natural heritage features on the property include a variety of species as well as a diverse woodlot which includes Carolinian Forest species. Due to vandalism and repeated damage to the grounds, vehicular access to the park is now restricted while foot and bike access are encouraged.

Future Land Use

There is significant interest from the local community and stakeholders in the future use of the Battlefield of Fort George and adjacent properties (i.e., the former sewage lagoons and water treatment plant, and Niagara Shores Park). Through preliminary stakeholder and public consultation, the following values and principles were developed. They set the framework for continued dialogue with the community, partners and stakeholders, and guide Parks Canada's decision-making with regard to these properties in the future:

*Connecting Canadians with our natural and cultural heritage;
Protecting and preserving our natural and cultural resources for future generations;
Commemorating the human history of the Niagara National Historic Sites;
Facilitating public access and balancing sustainability; and
Fostering community engagement and collaboration.*



Map 3 Lakeshore Properties and Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site

The shared values and principles are reflected in the initial objectives and targets for the Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and adjacent properties. Once the Department of National Defence has remediated contaminants, removed unexploded ordnance, and returned the land to Parks Canada in an acceptable state, Parks Canada will initiate Indigenous and public engagement to determine future land use and ensure that the values and principles are respected.

Objective 1

Working relationships with partners and stakeholders are in place to advance opportunities for visitors to connect with the Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and adjacent properties.

Target

- A strategy for continued consultation regarding the future use of the Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and adjacent properties is developed by 2021.

Objective 2

Natural heritage features and greenspace are retained and there is public access to the properties.

Targets

- By 2021, natural heritage features and historical resources are inventoried.
- By 2021, the multi-species action plan for Niagara National Historic Sites is complete.
- By 2022, land uses are defined for the Battlefield of Fort George National Historic Site and adjacent properties.

Objective 3

The cultural resources and diverse history of the battlefield are interpreted.

Target

- By 2022, a comprehensive interpretive plan is in place.

Objective 4

Shoreline erosion is examined and options determined.

Target

- By 2022, options to address shoreline erosion are determined.

7.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) was conducted for the Niagara National Historic Sites Management Plan pursuant to the 2010 “Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals” (CEA Agency/Privy Council Office 2010). Strategic Environmental Assessment provides an opportunity to identify broad and unintended impacts of proposed management actions resulting from a proposed policy, plan or program, including the cumulative environmental impacts of multiple activities. Strategic environmental assessment also informs the subsequent assessment of related projects.

The spatial scope of the SEA included areas within the boundaries of the seven Niagara National Historic Sites, and the temporal scope was a period of ten years from the date of plan approval, at which time the plan will be reviewed. In addition to the cultural resources, valued ecological components of note at the sites are Species at Risk and the shoreline components, mainly at Lakeshore Properties.

The most significant positive effect of the management plan will be to expose the Niagara National Historic Sites to many more visitors, improving awareness and appreciation of the historic value of the sites. Enhanced stability and conservation of the cultural and natural resources at these sites will contribute to the overall quality of the visitor experience. Any potential negative environmental effects from increased visitation or third party use of historic buildings can be mitigated through the use of existing policies and instruments. Project level impact assessment will be able to mitigate any potential adverse impacts from individual projects resulting from this plan.

The management plan supports the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) goal “Connecting Canadians with Nature”, and opportunities to address other FSDS goals such as the use of energy and water and reduction of waste can be considered during project development or in day-to-day operations.

If the appropriate mitigation measures are applied, there are no important adverse environmental effects anticipated from implementation of the management plan. The overall environmental effect of the objectives and targets of the plan are expected to be positive.