



# Point Pelee

National Park of Canada

## Management Plan June 2010



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by the Chief Executive Officer of Parks Canada, 2010.

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**Point Pelee National Park of Canada**  
Management Plan

June 2010



## Foreword



Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas offer Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast unique opportunities to experience and understand our wonderful country. They are places of learning, recreation and inspiration where Canadians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Canada.

From our smallest national park to our most visited national historic site to our largest national marine conservation area, each of these places offers Canadians and visitors several experiential opportunities to enjoy Canada's historic and natural heritage. These places of beauty, wonder and learning are valued by Canadians - they are part of our past, our present and our future.

Our Government's goal is to ensure that Canadians form a lasting connection to this heritage and that our protected places are enjoyed in ways that leave them unimpaired for present and future generations.

We see a future in which these special places will further Canadians' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Canada, the economic well-being of communities, and the vitality of our society.

Our Government's vision is to build a culture of heritage conservation in Canada by offering Canadians exceptional opportunities to experience our natural and cultural heritage.

These values form the foundation of the new management plan for Point Pelee National Park of Canada. I offer my appreciation to the many thoughtful Canadians who helped to develop this plan, particularly to our dedicated team from Parks Canada, and to all those local organizations and individuals who have demonstrated their good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In this same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Point Pelee National Park of Canada Management Plan.

Jim Prentice  
*Minister of the Environment*



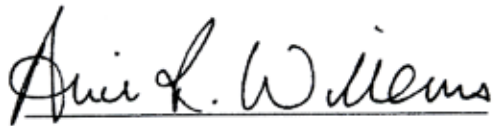
## Recommendations

*Recommended by:*



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## Executive Summary

This management plan for Point Pelee National Park provides renewed direction and enables Parks Canada staff with a framework for decision-making. The framework defines the roadmap for continued fulfillment of the Parks Canada mandate and contributes to current Parks Canada Agency priorities in the face of present issues, challenges and opportunities influencing the integrity of the ecosystems protected in the park, the relevance of the park's visitor experience opportunities and the park's ability to inspire a connection with Canadians and visitors to this irreplaceable natural legacy.



Point Pelee National Park - 2006, Steve Pike

The management plan includes:

- A vision statement;
- Five key strategies, which provide strategic direction and set the course for the park over the next fifteen years;
- Three area management approaches, which provide specific direction for the Mainland – Western Shore, the Mainland – Eastern Shore and Marsh, and Middle Island;
- An updated park zoning plan;
- A summary of administration and operations, including the Environmental Stewardship Strategy for the park;
- A summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment conducted for the management plan; and,
- An implementation strategy summarizing the planned actions.

The following is a description of the five key strategies. The strategies provide concrete direction and set the course for implementation of the management plan, focusing efforts and resources, to achieve the park vision.

### **KEY STRATEGY ONE**

#### **Respecting the Seventh Generation: Honouring First Nations Connections to Point Pelee National Park**

This key strategy honours First Nations connections to Point Pelee National Park and commits Parks Canada to work with the Caldwell First Nation and the Walpole Island First Nation to protect and present the rich natural and cultural heritage of

the park in an authentic and sustainable manner. Adopting the ‘seven generation’ principle encourages consideration of our collective responsibility to the seventh generation when planning for the future of the park. Trusting and respectful advisory relationships enable collaboration for mutually beneficial opportunities to share knowledge and expertise, recognize First Nations connections to the land and provide opportunities for educational, economic and cultural benefits. Actions that contribute to the success of this strategy include: establishing a First Nations Advisory Committee; First Nations cultural training for Parks Canada staff; collaborating on employment programs for First Nations youth; working closely to ensure First Nations cultural resources, cultural heritage and traditional ecological knowledge are considered in protection and presentation efforts; the park as a venue for First Nations to connect with visitors to raise awareness of their history, culture, language, traditions and their connection to the park; and creation of one or more enterprise initiatives.

#### **KEY STRATEGY TWO**

##### **Discovering, Enjoying and Connecting with Point Pelee National Park**

This strategy is about the park visitor experience opportunities and positions Point Pelee National Park as Canada’s southernmost national park, a refuge for nature including many Species at Risk, a place where people can enjoy, discover and relax. It focuses on investing to better understand the needs and interests of visitors to renew and enhance the visitor experience opportunities built on the park’s unique natural and cultural attributes. The park visitor experience will facilitate meaningful experiences that can lead to the creation of a connection with the park through a rich menu of visitor opportunities for leisure, recreation, discovery and learning. Actions that will contribute to the success of this strategy include using social

science information to enable renewal and enhancement of visitor experience opportunities including supporting facilities for current visitor markets and to attract new ones; using the visitor experience cycle to guide planning and development of visitor opportunities; creation of a visitor orientation area near the park entrance; the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the park in 2018 offers an exceptional opportunity to increase the park’s visibility, to inspire Canadians and visitors to connect with this national treasure and to mobilize them for its conservation; and, collaborating with others to plan and deliver the menu of visitor experience opportunities and working closely with tourism partners to develop and deliver promotions.

#### **KEY STRATEGY THREE**

##### **Restoring the Carolinian Habitat Mosaic**

This key strategy focuses on efforts to enhance and maintain the restoration of the Carolinian habitat mosaic – the marsh, savannah, dry forest, swamp forest, dunes and beaches, including Species at Risk - protected in the park. Improving and maintaining the health of park ecosystems will enable revitalizing of the visitor experience by enhancing opportunities for discovery, enjoyment and personal connection. The conservation effort also provides the foundation for public outreach education and learning programs that bring the national park to Canadians where they are. The focus for the first five years of the plan is on the most threatened and rare habitat on the mainland of the park, the Lake Erie Sand Spit Savannah and on implementation of the *Middle Island Conservation Plan*. Actions that contribute to this strategy include: active resource management through fire and mechanical clearing to support the rare savannah habitat; addressing invasive alien plant species; working in collaboration with First Nations, universities, provincial and other federal conservation agencies to further research and monitoring; addressing spe-

cies that are identified as hyperabundant and a threat to biodiversity and ecosystem integrity; completion of recovery strategies identified for Species at Risk; developing a management strategy for the marsh; providing unique visitor opportunities for learning and 'citizen science' that foster connection to, inspire support and engage people in protection; delivering a public outreach education program that highlights park research, monitoring and active resource management activities required to maintain ecological integrity; expanding volunteer opportunities; and expanding curriculum-based formal education program.

#### **KEY STRATEGY FOUR**

##### **Six Thousand Years of Stories: Protecting and Presenting Cultural Resources**

This strategy focuses on protection of cultural resources, delivery of visitor experience opportunities and public outreach education to reveal the thousands of years of interactions of people with this natural landscape. Point Pelee has a long and varied history of human interactions that reach back at least 6,000 years - Native peoples, French explorers, the British military, settlers and squatters, fisherman, farmers, hunters, loggers, cottagers, naturalists, conservationists, picnickers, swimmers, sunbathers and more. In collaboration with First Nations, former park residents as well as families and individuals with connections to Point Pelee, careful consideration will be taken to weave their stories and commemorate this history through the park's visitor experience opportunities and public outreach education. Actions that help achieve this strategy are: a cultural resources inventory and cultural resources management strategy; involving all stakeholders in defining the value of cultural resources in the park; and partnering with communities and cultural groups to present events in the park that celebrate cultural heritage such as homecomings, powwows.

#### **KEY STRATEGY FIVE**

##### **Collaborating: Our Key to Success**

This strategy builds on all of the key strategies by recognizing that collaborating with others is how Parks Canada will succeed in protecting and presenting Point Pelee National Park. The ecosystems and cultural resources will continue to be protected and connected to the hearts and minds of Canadians. Visitor experience opportunities and public outreach education developed and delivered with partners, stakeholders and volunteers will increase the relevance of the park and connection with the park. This will benefit the park as well as the environmental, economic and social health of the region, its communities and its residents. Collaborating and partnering with others to position and promote the unique visitor experience opportunities offered in the park connects the park to regional tourism and community living. Actions that help achieve this strategy include: development of a public education outreach strategy that advances the three elements of the Parks Canada mandate; participating in land use discussions within the Greater Park Ecosystem; collaborating with University of Windsor with their planned field research station; working with others to develop and support a community-based program of stewardship of Species at Risk; being an active partner with the regional tourism sector; expanding the 'park as a venue' for community events; renewing the park website; developing a strategy for corporate engagement; providing an annual update for the public, stakeholders and partners on the progress of management plan implementation; and creating an annual event to celebrate and recognize partner, stakeholder and citizen contributions.



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## 1.0 Introduction



*The southernmost tip of mainland Canada, Parks Canada*

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

On behalf of this and future generations of Canadians, Parks Canada manages an outstanding network of national parks, national marine conservation areas and national historic sites, some of which are UNESCO designated World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves and Wetlands of International Significance.

National parks are representative examples of the natural regions of Canada. Each park offers Canadians a variety of recreational and learning activities as well as opportunities to personally connect with their land. The Parks Canada mandate consists of three elements: protecting heritage resources, facilitating opportunities for visitor experience and promoting public appreciation and understanding. The *Parks Canada Agency Act (1998)*, the *Canada National Parks Act (2000)*, the *Species at Risk Act (2002)* and the *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Opera-*

*tional Policies (1994)* set the legislative and policy context for this responsibility. Management plans are required for each national park. The management plan defines the long-term vision and sets out the strategic direction that guides management of the park. The management plan outlines how the elements of the Parks Canada mandate will be delivered in an integrated fashion and, similarly demonstrates integration in how and where efforts and resources will be invested. The management plan is a forward-looking, fifteen-year document that is publicly reviewed every five years. Signed by the Minister of the Environment and tabled in Parliament, the park management plan is Parks Canada's key accountability document with Canadians.

Parks Canada is working to strengthen and deepen its relationships with First Nations and Aboriginal peoples in and around national parks. Parks Canada acknowledges the Aboriginal rights and traditions of the

Caldwell First Nation and the Walpole Island First Nation, as Point Pelee National Park is located within their traditional homelands in Canada. Parks Canada is committed to ongoing dialogue to build awareness and understanding of these First Nations and their connections to this land, to enable traditional knowledge to inform park planning and management, and to provide opportunities for partnering and economic benefit in delivery of the Parks Canada mandate. Parks Canada is also committed to creating opportunities for First Nations peoples to reconnect with traditional cultural landscapes.

#### **A Management Plan for Point Pelee National Park of Canada**

The current management plan for Point Pelee National Park was approved by the Minister in 1995 and tabled in Parliament in 1996. Most objectives outlined in the plan have been addressed and significant initiatives for heritage resource conservation, visitor experience and public appreciation and understanding realized. This management plan outlines renewed direction and will provide Parks Canada staff with a framework for decision-making that is designed for continued fulfillment of the Parks Canada mandate. The plan contributes to current Parks Canada Agency priorities in the face of the issues, challenges and opportunities influencing the integrity of the ecosystems protected in the park,



University researchers studying the impacts of Emerald Ash Borer, Parks Canada

the relevance of the park's visitor experience opportunities and the park's ability to inspire a connection with Canadians to this irreplaceable natural legacy.

This management plan reflects an integrated approach to achieving the Parks Canada mandate as required by *Parks Canada's Guide to Management Planning (2008)*. The planning and management approach highlights the interdependency and promotes synergies among the three mandate elements: protecting heritage resources; facilitating opportunities for visitor experience; and, promoting public appreciation and understanding. Integrated delivery is key to accomplishing the strategic outcome expected in the *Parks Canada Agency – Corporate Plan (2009 – 2014)*:

*“Canadians have a strong sense of connection, through meaningful experiences, to their national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas, and these protected places are enjoyed in ways that leave them unimpaired for present and future generations.”*

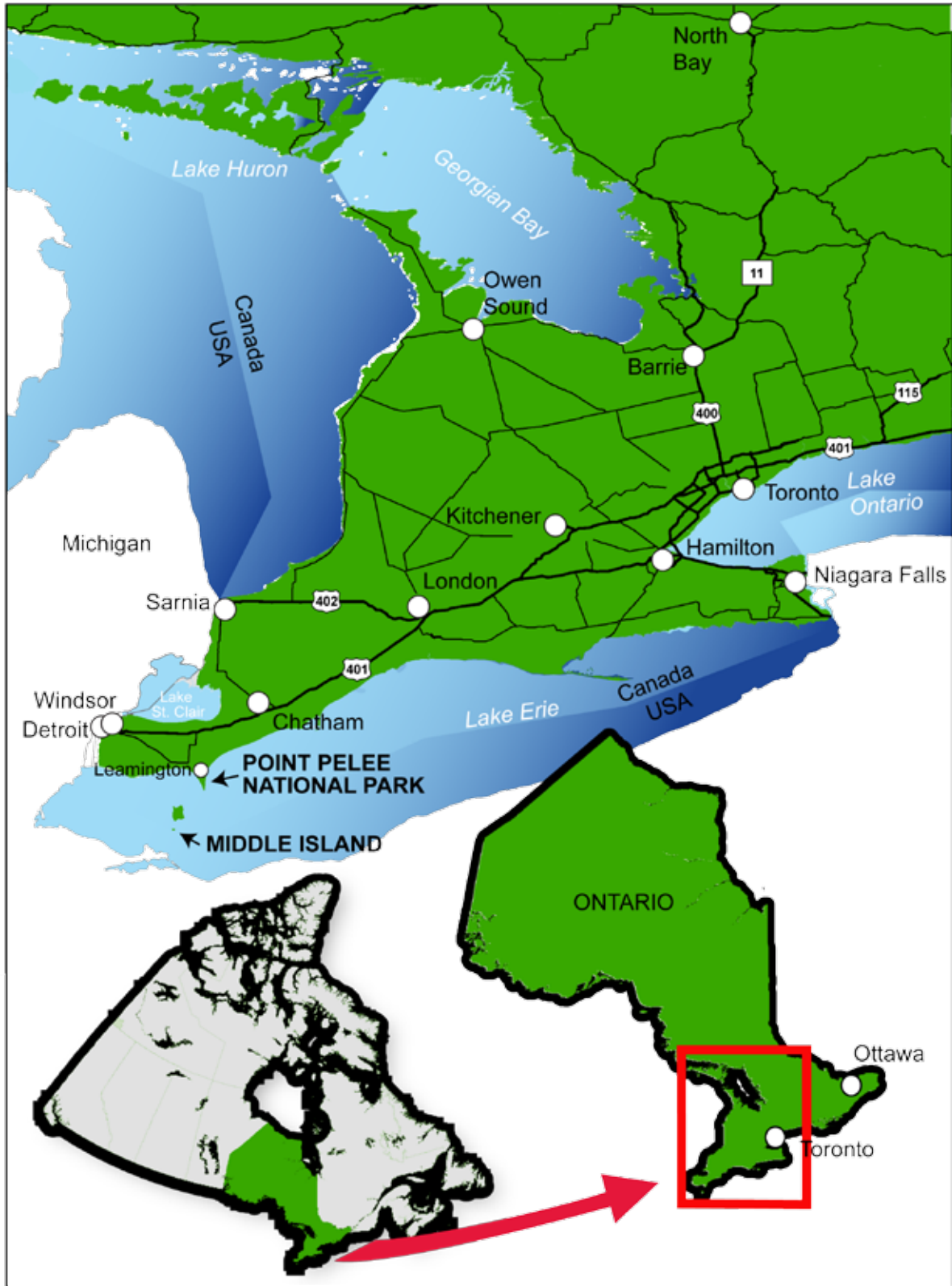
The management plan provides strategic direction for Point Pelee National Park for the next 15 years, and will be reviewed every five years to ensure the plan remains relevant (see Appendix 4). The commitments proposed in the management plan are designed and scheduled to be achievable within the financial capacity of the Southwestern Ontario Field Unit. The first five years of management plan implementation will benefit from additional funds provided by Canada's Economic Action Plan – Accelerated Infrastructure Program and Parks Canada's Action-on-the-Ground program.

#### **1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Point Pelee National Park is 15.5 km<sup>2</sup> in



Figure 1 - Map of Geographical Location



size and located in Essex County, Ontario, in the southernmost part of Canada (see Figure 1). Located at the crossroads of two major North American migratory flyways, the park provides critical habitat for more than 380 species of migrating birds and is recognized internationally as an Important Bird Area, attracting tens of thousands of birding enthusiasts annually.

As defined in the *State of the Park Report (2007)*, the park protects four different ecosystem types – wetland, Great Lakes shore, non-forest (includes savannah) and forest (see Figure 2). The park supports more than 750 species of native vascular plants and is currently identified with 66 Species at Risk (see Appendix 3). The park protects a national icon – the southernmost tip of mainland Canada. Middle Island was added to the park in 2000. The 18.5 hectare island is located south-southwest of the Point Pelee peninsula and is part of the Western Basin Lake Erie Archipelago. Middle Island is home to unique communities of Carolinian ecozone plants and animals, including nine Species at Risk. The island is the southernmost Canadian soil, located less than 100 metres from the international boundary between Canada and the United States of America. From a regional landscape perspective, Point Pelee National Park is isolated from other natural areas. The Essex region has less than 6% native forest cover remaining and only 3% of its original wetlands. This ecological isolation and the small size of the national park mean there is little ‘buffering’ habitat for species needing refuge to ensure their well-being. An extremely high proportion (over 97%) of this area has been altered for agriculture, industry and urban development, emphasizing the park’s ecological significance and fragility.

Point Pelee National Park is located in one of Canada’s most culturally diverse and densely populated areas, on the doorstep of 25% of the Canadian population. When considering southwestern Ontario up to and including the Greater Toronto Area in

Canada, and the Detroit-Toledo metropolitan areas in United States, over 46 million people live within a 450-kilometre radius of the park. In Canada alone, more than half a million people live within a one-hour drive of the park. The region supports eight municipalities plus two cities which include Windsor and Chatham-Kent, 89 elementary and 52 secondary schools, as well as the University of Windsor and St. Clair College. The area is the traditional homelands of the Caldwell First Nation, a community of 285, and the Walpole Island First Nation, a community of 4,258. This illustrates the significant role Point Pelee National Park can play in Parks Canada’s efforts in reaching out to connect with more Canadians, including rural and urban residents, youth, First Nations and new Canadians to engage them in the discovery and enjoyment of the park’s resources.

The region has a very competitive leisure and tourism offer. Large casino hotels, amusement parks like Cedar Point, supersized events such as the North American International Auto Show, Comerica Tastefest, the Henry Ford museum (largest museum complex devoted to American history) and a host of performing arts, major league football, baseball and hockey venues as well as numerous community theatres, museums, libraries, festivals, city parks, gardens and beaches all compete for the leisure time of regional residents and tourists. Toronto’s CN Tower, the Stratford Festival and Niagara Falls, all international icons, are located in Southern Ontario. Although the region is saturated with activities competing for the leisure time of residents and travellers, opportunities for discovery, enjoyment and learning such as those offered by the park are unique as there are few protected heritage places within the region.

Parks Canada has a long tradition in the region of working in collaboration with others to achieve success in protecting heritage resources, facilitating visitor experience opportunities and promoting

Figure 2 - Map of Ecosystems/Habitats

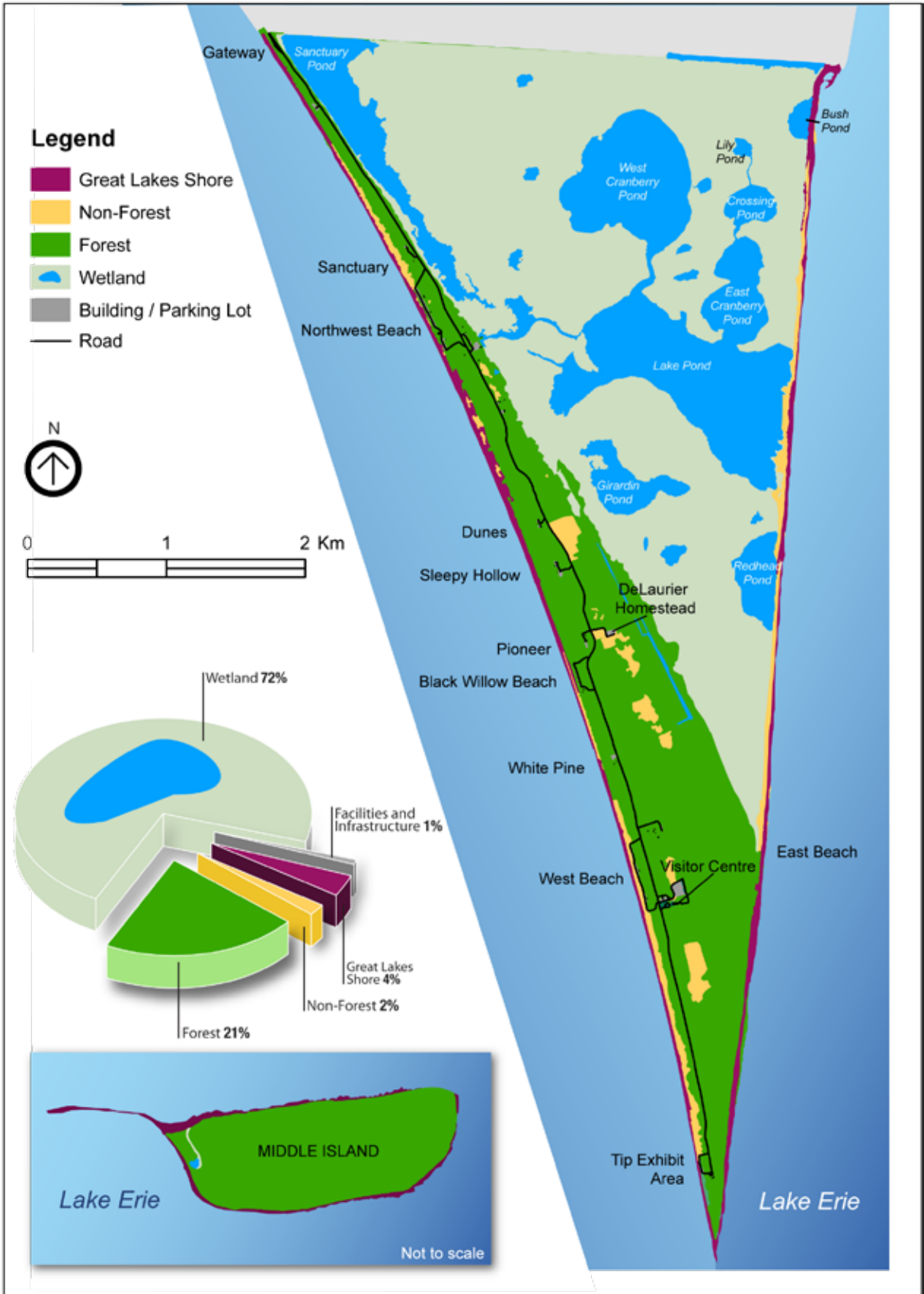


Figure 3 - Map of Regional Setting / Greater Park Ecosystem



public appreciation and understanding of the park. Initial assessments in the *State of the Park Report (2007)* suggest that a reasonable regional planning context for Point Pelee National Park includes all of Essex County, including the offshore Lake Erie islands and the most western and southern portions of Kent County (see Figure 3).

### 1.3 MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW PROCESS AND PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

The *Management Plan Scoping Document (2009)* formally initiated the management plan review process. Guided by the *Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan (2009-2014)*, the *Parks Canada Guide to Management Planning (2008)*, the *Point Pelee National Park: State of the Park Report (2007)*, a review of the 1996 management plan, consideration of social and scientific research, recommendations from a planning workshop focused on issue/opportunity analysis and a Visitor Experience Assessment as well as input from the Caldwell First Nation and the Walpole Island First Nation, the Scoping Document informed public consultations. A newsletter, comment form and presentation were developed for public consultations conducted between mid-January and mid-February of 2010.



*February 2010 Management Plan Consultations, Parks Canada.*

ton), four ‘by invitation’ multi-stakeholder and partner meetings (two in Leamington and two in Toronto) and a series of First Nation meetings, all focused on discussions about the park vision for the future and proposed strategies for protection, visitor experience and public appreciation and understanding; posting of the newsletter and comment form on the park website; mailing of the newsletter and comment form to the park visitor and stakeholder database; and an advertised dedicated email address and phone line. A summary of the public consultations input was prepared.

The comments, ideas and recommendations received through the public consultations were reviewed and carefully considered. This input proved to be very useful for drafting of this management plan. The themes communicated by partners, stakeholders, neighbours, park visitors and interested Canadians are addressed by the key strategies and area management approaches. Where appropriate, objectives and actions incorporate specific ideas from the consultations. Many valuable operational considerations were presented and will be further reviewed for implementation but are not necessarily included in this strategic document. Parks Canada is committed to further involving interested parties during the implementation of the management plan.

Public consultation methods included: two advertised public meetings (in Leaming-



## 2.0 Point Pelee National Park: A Place of International, National and Regional Significance



*Freighter Canoe Tour, Parks Canada*

Point Pelee National Park was established in 1918, primarily for its ecological significance as a stopover for migratory birds. Point Pelee is one of the smallest national parks and is the sole representative of the Carolinian ecozone of the St. Lawrence Lowlands natural region in Canada's system of national parks. Recognized as a Wetland of International Significance by the RAMSAR Convention of UNESCO, much of the park consists of a southern Great Lakes freshwater marsh. The park also includes a nationally significant icon—the southernmost tip of mainland Canada as well as the southernmost land in Canada, Middle Island. The island is designated as a Carolinian Canada Signature Site and provincially designated as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) due to its unique and rare assemblage of plants and animals.

The park protects four different ecosystem types – wetland, Great Lakes shore, non-forest (includes savannah) and forest (see

Figure 2). With more than 750 species of vascular plants, the park supports a rich diversity of native plants. Under the *Species at Risk Act (2002)*, Parks Canada is responsible for the protection and recovery of listed species found in national parks administered by Parks Canada. Currently Point Pelee National Park has 66 designated species (1 which is extinct and 15 of which have completely disappeared from the park) and is considered a Parks Canada 'priority site' for the Species at Risk recovery program (see Appendix 3). Parks Canada has the lead responsibility for the preparation of recovery strategies for seven species that occur within the park and is implicated in recovery strategies for most of the other species.

The park has a rich cultural heritage as a result of a long and varied history of human interaction dating back at least 6,000 years. Native peoples encamped, hunted and inhabited the peninsula. This connection remains strong as the Caldwell First



*Tip Trail, Parks Canada*

Nation and Walpole Island First Nation embrace responsibilities for the environment and the life forms that inhabit this land as well as maintain spiritual ties, as it is part of their traditional territories. Over the last century and a half, settlers made Point Pelee their home. Although the lifestyles of logging, fishing, hunting, farming and cottaging are no longer supported within the national park, there remain strong ancestral ties with many local families. The stories of the thousands of years of people connections to this land provide for unique discovery and learning opportunities for Canadians to connect with the people and events that shaped this land.

As one of the few remaining natural areas in the region, Point Pelee National Park provides regional residents and tourists with unique opportunities for recreational, leisure and educational activities not found elsewhere in the region, along with the opportunity to connect with nature.

Point Pelee National Park's internationally recognized status as a premier destina-

tion for spring bird migrations and more recently, the fall monarch butterfly migration, make the park an important anchor for regional tourism. The 2004 economic impact was assessed at more than ten million dollars annually for a twenty square kilometre radius surrounding the park.

Through the years, Point Pelee National Park has been a leader in Canada's national park system. Point Pelee was the first national park in Canada to be established specifically for conservation values (1918). The park was the first in Canada to have a Visitor Centre (1966) and to integrate needs for resource protection and visitor experience by reducing private vehicle access to the fragile Tip area and providing a shuttle service for visitors (1971). Point Pelee National Park was the first national park in Canada to have a park management plan (1972). Point Pelee was the first national park in Canada to be designated an International Monarch Butterfly Reserve (1995) and to be designated a Dark Sky Preserve (2006).



### 3.0 Planning Context and Current Situation



*The southernmost tip of mainland Canada, c. 1920*

#### 3.1 PARK HISTORY

Human connections to this land reach back at least 6,000 years as evidenced by the earliest archaeological sites. Native peoples appear to have occupied the Point Pelee peninsula during the summer season and harvested the natural resources, particularly relying on the marsh for much of their diet of muskrats, fish, turtles, deer, nuts and wild rice. During the period of AD 900 -1600, there was a significant increase in the number of seasonal habitation sites and, for the first time, there was evidence of limited agriculture. From AD 1100 to European contact, records suggest limited use of Point Pelee. The area may have been avoided at this time, serving as a buffer zone between two warring groups. The first written report in 1799 indicated the land was home to a number of Aboriginal families that lived in cabins and cultivated corn. First Nations peoples are known to have occupied the peninsula through the 19th century and well into the 20th until they were expelled from the park.

French explorers, who learned from the Native peoples of the portage across the marsh to avoid the dangerous currents around the Tip, gave the park its name *pointe-pelée*, meaning bald point. Descriptions and recent geological studies indicate the Tip was much longer. The last few kilometres at best were sparsely covered in vegetation.

In 1799, the British created the Point Pelee Naval Reserve, consisting of the southern 1,554 ha of the peninsula, to protect timber suitable for the masts and spars of ships. Neither the extensive swamps and marshes or the penalties for trespassing on the naval reserve stopped settlement. The 1830s marked the arrival of the Delaurier, LaFleur and a few other families, ushering in the era of squatters and the first European settlement within the naval reserve. By 1891, there were 22 commercial fisheries operating. By the turn of the century, over-fishing and other stressors brought about the decline of most marketable fish,

particularly lake trout, whitefish and lake herring. Initially, the squatters or “Pointers”, as they were called, cleared small plots and grew the basics of potatoes, beans and corn. They continued to clear land, moving to more and more cash crops including grapes, asparagus, peaches and apples. They kept livestock, mainly cattle and pigs, which they let roam. They also hunted deer, which by the late 1800s were gone from the point. Most special to the “Pointers” were the muskrats, which they trapped for food and fur. By the 1880s, the government decided the squatters could purchase their land.

The arrival in 1882 of W.E. Saunders, a young naturalist, was an important event in the conservation story of the park. He came to hunt ducks in the famous marshes and was so taken by the variety and numbers of birds that he introduced Point Pelee to his friends and together they established the Great Lakes Ornithological Club. In 1911, one of the members, Percy Taverner, became the Dominion Ornithologist. In 1915, he proposed to the newly formed federal Commission of Conservation that Point Pelee be declared a national park. The group befriended Jack Miner, who was so excited by Point Pelee that he mustered support of four prominent Leamington men. They persuaded the Essex County Wildlife Protection Association to join the cause. This local support and the grassroots lobbying combined with



*Great Lakes Ornithological Club, c. 1905*

the evidence presented by Taverner and the Club about the unique nature and need for protection led to the establishment of Point Pelee National Park on May 29, 1918.

Initially, national park status had little effect on the lives of naval reserve residents but there was an eventual, and dramatic, altering of their lifestyles. By the end of the 1960s commercial fisheries within the park ceased to exist. Hunting and trapping continued within the game sanctuary under the provisions for removal of noxious and dangerous animals. The establishment proclamation for the national park provided for an annual duck hunt, which, although revoked in 1942, continued under controversy for many years until it was ended in 1989.



*Entrance to Point Pelee National Park, c. 1950*

Recreational use of private lands began even before it was a national park. Pleasure seekers regularly visited Point Pelee as early as the beginning of the 20th century. The first cottage was built in 1910. As salaries, leisure time and the number of automobiles increased so did the visitors coming to swim, picnic, boat and camp. Camping was most popular and visitors set up wherever they wanted, many staying for the summer season. The appearance of each tent site became a matter of social prestige. During the Depression and up to the Second World War, the forest was heavily used this way. In 1922, park officials constructed roadways, improved

parking lots, and built bathhouses, pavilions and picnic grounds. By the end of the 1930s, visitation was at 250,000 annually. In 1939, officials noted many areas of the park had taken on the look of a neat, carefully manicured, urban landscape. This was caused by the camping and brushing, and unregulated automobile traffic. In addition, the pressure was on to sell or lease the naval reserve, which was now crown land for cottage development. Between 1929 and 1958, 11 registered cottage and subdivision sites existed but few were successful in finding buyers. The point even had two hotels, one of which operated up to 1963. Early national parks were looked upon as playgrounds and at first were used only by the wealthy. With increased prosperity, leisure time, development of roads and affordable automobiles, this changed. Point Pelee, the national park that was created because of its importance to migratory birds, became subject to heavy recreational demands. Facilities were expanded again in the late 1940s and early 1950s to further increase the recreational opportunities in the park. Annual visitation peaked in 1963 at 781,000 making Point Pelee, the smallest of the Canadian national parks, the most heavily used. Point Pelee National Park was recommended for removal from the national park system because of the problems with high use and landscape impairment. The argument for its national significance prevailed and the focus became to find a balance with visitor use and preservation.

In 1972, the *Point Pelee National Park Master Plan* was approved. The plan included the elimination of privately-owned property through a buy-back program (the last property was purchased in 2003); phasing out of camping which was deemed too intensive an activity and best provided by the private sector outside the park; the introduction of a public transit system to take visitors on a relaxing and enjoyable ride to designated areas, particularly the fragile Tip area rather than using private vehicles; and as further protection for sen-

sitive areas, the development of a network of trails between the Marsh Boardwalk and the Tip. The first management plan put the park on a successful course so that today Point Pelee National Park supports a much more natural environment and a year round menu of recreational and learning opportunities for park visitors.

### 3.2 BIOPHYSICAL CONTEXT

Point Pelee National Park protects nationally and internationally significant natural resources and processes, particularly those representative of the Carolinian ecozone of the St. Lawrence Lowlands natural region. A ten kilometre long sandspit and marsh complex jutting out into Lake Erie, the park consists of approximately 420 ha of dry land and 1070 ha of freshwater marsh. In 2000, the 18.5 ha Middle Island, was added to the park.

The Carolinian ecozone of the St. Lawrence Lowlands is the most southern biogeographic zone and is restricted to the most southerly part of Ontario. The zone is highly productive due to the moderate climate, flat terrain and rich glacial soils. Despite comprising less than 1% of Canada's land-mass, this zone is the most species-rich in Canada. Many of the native species of plants and animals are at the northern limits of their range. Lake Erie, which is also highly productive and diverse, has a moderating effect on climate but is also a source of disturbance for coastal ecosystems.

Much of the park's interior consists of a southern Great Lakes marsh (72%). A number of forest habitat types are also present in a range of successional stages, including savannah (2%) and dryland and swamp forest (21%) as well as Great Lakes shore (4%). This range of ecosystem types supports a diversity of species including the largest number of native plant species per square kilometre of all Canadian national parks.

Middle Island is located south-southwest of the Point Pelee peninsula and is part of the Lake Erie Western Basin island archipelago. The island is comprised of rocky limestone shelves, exposed bedrock outcrops, gravel beaches and shallow loamy soils. The climate is even warmer than the mainland because of the moderating effect of Lake Erie. This has resulted in unique communities of plants and animals, many of which are rare in Canada, including Canada's only populations of the Lake Erie watersnake and clustered sedge. Seven vegetation communities have been identified on the island, including four variations of hackberry forest, two wetland communities and a more open thicket and field community created by previous human use. The island supports nine Species at Risk. A rich diversity of five colonial waterbird species currently nest on the island, including double-crested cormorants, ring-billed gulls, great blue herons, great egrets and black-crown night herons.

The Essex County region, in which Point Pelee National Park is located, has less than 6% original forest cover, making it amongst the lowest in Ontario and Canada. Similarly, wetlands, which once covered up to 50% of the regional landscape, are now largely eliminated with less than 3% remaining. To the north, the park is completely bordered by drained and dyked agricultural lands, with the exception of the access road to the park, which is lined with homes and cottages.

### **3.3 UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF POINT PELEE NATIONAL PARK RELATING TO VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

Point Pelee National Park is open 365 days a year as a day-use park. The signature visitor experience opportunity each year is the spring migration that attracts tens of thousands of visitors each May. The fall migration of both birds and butterflies also attracts a great deal of interest. The park

offers a menu of other opportunities for recreation and learning for park visitors throughout the year.

The three main visitor nodes in the park are the Marsh Boardwalk, the Visitor Centre and the southernmost Tip of Canada. The Marsh Boardwalk provides visitors access to one of the last remaining freshwater marshes on the Great Lakes through the 1 kilometre boardwalk loop, the observation tower and different paddling opportunities, including canoeing and kayaking. The Visitor Centre introduces park visitors to the natural and cultural significance of the park through exhibits, a hands-on children's play area and an introductory video – "Keep the Songs Alive." The Visitor Centre also serves as the starting point for many interpretive programs such as guided hikes. Visitors reach the Tip during most of the year via an open-air shuttle from the Visitor Centre. Visitors flock to the ever-changing Tip for the iconic experience of standing on the southernmost point of mainland Canada (see Figure 4).

In addition to these three centres of activity, the park also has opportunities for a variety of other activities for visitors. Hiking on 15 kilometres of trails, biking, bird watching, canoeing, kayaking, picnicking, photography and swimming/sunbathing are the most popular activities April through to November. During the remainder of the year, hiking, bird watching and photography continue and, when weather permits, visitors enjoy skating on the maintained ice surface of the frozen marsh (the region's only natural outdoor skating opportunity) and cross-county skiing. Introduced in 2009, geocaching is of growing interest. Camping in the park is limited to groups. Cooperatively operated with a local not-for-profit, the Henry Community Youth Camp hosts youth groups of up to 44 people. The park's group campground accommodates 40 people on two sites.

Each year, the park hosts a number of special events, the primary one being the

Figure 4 - Map of Facilities and Activities



annual Festival of Birds. Other events are Owl Prowls in February, Family Day, March Break activities, Canada Day Celebrations and the Christmas Bird Count.

In addition the park also serves as a venue for community events and activities, such as the annual Southern Footprints <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Marathon, renting of the White Pine Picnic Area for family reunions and weddings.

**The Park Audiences:** During summer months, visitors to the park are primarily from Ontario (75%) and the United States (19%). Of the Ontario visitors, 54% were from Southwestern Ontario while 15% were from Central Ontario. Of the American market, a majority were residents of Michigan (50%) and Ohio (15%). Fifty-nine percent of Ontario visitors were from urban areas while 14% were from rural areas. A majority of park visitors are repeat visitors (66%) with 40% reporting having visited the park three or more times in the last two years. Two main types of groups use the park: adults with children under the age of 16 (39%); and adults only between the age of 17 and 54 (39%). The two most popular activities during the summer months are the trail (76%) and beach (46%) activities (Parks Canada 2005). Current visitation profiles during spring birding are similar, with 74% from Ontario and 24% from the US. This has changed significantly over the decade. In 1999 visitation from the United States during spring was 38%, while Ontario visitation was 51%. The majority of Ontario birders previously came from Central and Eastern Ontario (98%) with only 2% coming from Southwestern Ontario. Today, visitors coming from other parts of Ontario are down to less than 12%. Quebec visitation over the same period has increased from negligible to 6%. 78% of birding visitors are repeat customers, having visited two or more times in the last two years, while party composition is primarily all adults 17 years old and over (79%) (Parks Canada 1999 and 2006).

#### 3.4 UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF POINT PELEE NATIONAL PARK RELATING TO PUBLIC APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING

As Point Pelee National Park is located within a day's drive of more than a quarter of the Canadian population, an investment in externally-focused programs and services to bring the Point Pelee National Park experience and park stories to Canadians, where they are – at home, at school, at leisure, and in their community- is required to take advantage of this exceptional opportunity. Currently, the park focus is on public outreach education into the Essex region of the Greater Park Ecosystem. There is the 'Park In Your School' curriculum-based formal education program, with units for:

- Grade 9 Geography - Monitoring Point Pelee Shorelines: Full day GPS and GIS Adventure;
- Grade 7 Science - The Wonders of Wetlands: Learn about Point Pelee's marsh and conduct water quality monitoring tests; and,
- Grade 4 Science- Habitats and Communities: A close look at habitats, some special Species at Risk animals and how they are protected.



*Grade 9 GPS school program, Parks Canada*

The park also participates in a 'Park in Your Community' program, participating in various local events and festivals throughout the year including the Essex Region Children's Water Festival, the Leamington Santa Claus Parade, and Earth Day at Ojibway Prairie Nature Centre.

Point Pelee National Park has faced and continues to face conservation challenges and, over the years, has achieved success such as the re-introduction of the southern flying squirrel, habitat rehabilitation with the removal of roads and buildings, deer herd management and collaborative research with several academic institutions.

During public consultations for this management plan review, numerous comments were received with regard to the valuable opportunity and great importance of using the park as an educational and learning tool. Active resource management decisions, such as the double-crested cormorant cull on Middle Island, can serve as examples of conservation challenges to help in understanding biodiversity, ecosystem health and why these are important. This affords opportunities for engagement with Canadians, which then can build awareness, understanding and actions for environmental stewardship. Internet technologies and new media can be used to create compelling and comprehensive opportunities to profile the research and monitoring, restoration, resource management tools and techniques used by Parks Canada to maintain and enhance ecological integrity.

### 3.5 THE STATE OF THE PARK

The *Point Pelee National Park: State of the Park Report* (2007) was the first 'state of' report for the park and a pilot for Parks Canada's state of the park reporting. The 2007 State of the Park Report provides a synopsis of the current condition of the

park and assesses performance in meeting objectives associated with the Parks Canada mandate. Overall, with regard to protecting heritage resources, facilitating the visitor experience, and promoting awareness and understanding, the 2007 State of the Park Report assessed the current state of the park as fair.

#### 3.5.1 STATE OF ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

Parks Canada is actively managing ecological integrity issues within the park and has been successful with actions implemented at the park scale such as control of hyper-abundant white-tailed deer, the re-introduction of the southern flying squirrel, and increasing the park's terrestrial ecosystem area by about 200 hectares through habitat restoration and reduction of the human footprint. Although some species-level measures have shown recent good conditions, the landscape-level measures are more telling of the park's ecological state. The impact of the park's small size and the rare and fragmented state of remaining natural habitat at the regional scale is made evident by the condition of many measures in the park and is the crucial factor in the overall fair assessment for the state of park ecosystems and the declining condition of three of the four indicators for ecosystem integrity as assessed in the 2007 State of the Park Report.

The forest ecosystem indicator (21% of the park area) was assessed as Fair and Stable, the wetland ecosystem indicator (72% of the park area) as Fair and In Decline, the Great Lakes Shore ecosystem indicator (4% of the park area) as Poor and In Decline, and the non-forest (includes savannah) ecosystem indicator (2 % of the park area) as Fair and In Decline.

In addition, the Ecological Monitoring and Reporting Work Plan (2008) provides details on the park's monitoring program, measures, and long-term ecological integrity monitoring strategy. Since the 2007

State of the Park Report, the emerald ash borer, a non-native insect, has invaded the park forests and begun to kill green ash trees, which comprise about 10% of the park forests.

### **3.5.2 STATE OF CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

The overall state of cultural resources based on the protected and communicated cultural resources indicator was assessed as fair in the 2007 State of the Park Report. Point Pelee National Park has an inventory of 25 burial sites and an additional 25 archaeological sites that range from Aboriginal habitation and portage camps to historic farmsteads and other historic dwellings. All sites including those with human remains have been comprehensively mapped to ensure protection and minimize disturbance. Currently, there is no strategy to guide cultural resources management. Parks Canada archaeologists are present during all major construction and development initiatives undertaken in the park to ensure cultural resources are not destroyed or to identify new sites. Aboriginal history is featured in a Visitor Centre exhibit, adding to cultural exhibits along the Tip trail and at the DeLaurier Homestead. Third-party publications about the cultural significance of the park are available in the Friends of Point Pelee Gift Shop. Relevance and understanding of cultural messages have not been tested.

### **3.5.3 STATE OF VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

The 'state of the visitor experience facilitation in Point Pelee National Park was assessed in the 2007 State of the Park Report based on the following indicators: visitor needs; targeted opportunities; delivering high quality service; and connecting visitors personally with place; and was rated as fair.

Since 1996, visitation to the park has declined. This appears to be changing as visitation in 2009 increased by 20%. Currently annual visitation is 238,752. At this time no research is available to explain or assess if this increase is a trend.

There is a gap in the social science data for Visitor Experience needed to guide the planning and the offer of relevant visitor opportunities where, how and when current and potential visitors want to discover and experience the park resources.

#### **The Visitor Experience Cycle at Point Pelee National Park**

##### **Wishing:**

The Visitor Experience Cycle starts with the wishing stage, which begins when a person first becomes aware of and interested in experiencing the park. Positioning and understanding national and regional trends affecting tourism are areas that need improvement. Although the park is well positioned with birders, awareness as to the significance of the park and the opportunities offered is not high in other markets, including the regional market. Point Pelee National Park needs to refresh its position within the Parks Canada brand and reach out to new audiences through targeted promotions, working with partners and using appropriate techniques and forums to appeal to specific targeted audiences. To date, social media has not been used to raise awareness and pique interest in Point Pelee National Park.

##### **Planning:**

The park does well at providing trip planning information through promotional media, email, telephone and the park's website. However, web updates are slow and do not always address specific topics (e.g., special events or festivals) in a timely and effective manner. More detailed information on how to get to the park and sample itineraries are not available. Point Pelee National Park has a low profile on





*Birding in May, Parks Canada*

the Internet particularly in third-party trip planning websites and directories.

**Traveling:**

Way-finding to the park is clear, with signs on most routes to the park, good directions on the park's website and a blitz of visitor guides/promotional material is distributed to tourism promoters and partners every spring. There is a need to review way-finding to ensure all routes to the park are signed. Currently, visitors arriving at Point Pelee National Park arrive almost exclusively in private vehicles. There are limited public transportation options to reach Leamington and none linking the municipality to the park. Although cyclists can bike to the park entrance, there are no dedicated bike trails from the municipality to the park.

**Arriving:**

The physical approach to Point Pelee National Park is welcoming and clear throughout most of the year. Signage is good, friendly Parks Canada gate staff get high approval ratings from visitors, the visitor guide (with maps and photos) is well received, and there is a new park radio station (Point Pelee Radio FM 90.7). However, as the Visitor Centre is located

toward the south end of the park, initial visitor orientation and itinerary setting is limited. Arrival in winter is another area of concern as the park entrance is unstaffed and the Visitor Centre is open only on weekends and holidays between November 1 and March 31.

**Visiting:**

Park visitors give high satisfaction ratings overall when considering services and facilities. The park implements successful in-park educational programs that rate high in terms of visitor participation and satisfaction. Research indicates that Point Pelee National Park is successful at creating place attachment, especially among children (Halpenny, 2006). Visitors avail themselves of a wide range of activities that provide opportunities for visitors to experience the unique aspects of the park throughout the year.

However, the park as a tourism destination product has been described as "lacking" and, in many aspects, is near or at the end of its product life cycle. While some re-investments have been made (e.g., Marsh Boardwalk Tower, Visitor Centre exhibits), the main visitor nodes have non-personal media and facilities that are well beyond

their life cycle. The current program offer is not balanced between the different traveller types, favouring more heavily the “learning” types than the “social” or “reluctant” travellers. Efforts have been made to expand the menu of programs and services, based in part on Visitor Information Program survey results, but lack of detailed social science information, capacity, a dated marketing plan and a lack of defined target markets makes effective planning and product/service development difficult. Planning interpretation is another area that needs improvement. A significant gap is the development of new key visitor experience opportunities that respond to a broader audience of visitors, their needs and interests.

#### **Departing and Remembering:**

Point Pelee National Park often provides visitors with reminders of their visit when they participate in park programs and events. The Friends of Point Pelee Gift Shop offers an extensive range of souvenirs and gifts that can be purchased as a memento of a visit. Photography is one of the most popular visitor activities. The “Let’s Keep in Touch” program facilitates communications with visitors after their visit. The park continues to work on building an ongoing relationship with park annual pass holders. Social media has not been used to date to help visitors share and remember their park experiences.

#### **3.5.4 STATE OF PUBLIC OUTREACH EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Park outreach programs are limited to and reach only a small fraction of the critical audiences in the surrounding region. Considering the population density surrounding Point Pelee National Park, the identification of regional land use as a key ecosystem stressor and the limited capacity to reach and sustain efforts with all critical audiences in the Greater Park Ecosystem, the Active Support indicator of Canadians, regional residents and visitors

was reported as poor.

Media in the region is saturated with two Canadian and four American daily newspapers, seven Canadian TV stations, twelve American TV stations, 14 AM/FM Canadian radio stations, 46 AM/FM American radio stations as well as numerous weekly papers and Internet news distribution channels. As a consequence, key messages about Parks Canada’s mandate are easily diluted without careful consideration of target audiences and key tools/techniques for effectively working with media outlets. Despite such a challenging media market, the park attracts sizeable attention. During 2006, the total media profile for Point Pelee National Park exceeded 14 million media viewers/readers and included front page profile in Canada’s national newspapers, stories in some of Canada’s largest magazines and profile on CBC National News. However, National Poll data suggests residents in the park’s Greater Park Ecosystem lack an understanding of the park’s science, monitoring and ecological integrity mandate (Parks Canada Agency 2005).

The park needs to gather social science information to inform and guide investments in order to effectively determine how, where, when Canadians want to discover and learn about the park – social media, museums, Internet, magazines, TV, etc.

#### **3.5.5 STATE OF STAKEHOLDER AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT**

As a result of ongoing collaborations, open communications, a commitment to relationship building and the provision of opportunities for meaningful involvement in park initiatives for protecting heritage resources, facilitating visitor experience and promoting public awareness and understanding, Point Pelee National Park enjoys the support of a wide range of stakeholders and partners. These include many individual volunteers, community interest groups, universities and colleges – scien-

tists, students and researchers working both with natural and cultural resources, elementary and secondary schools, other conservation organizations, outdoor clubs, other levels of government, the tourism sector, businesses and others in local communities. Community connections with the park include the Point Pelee National Park Advisory Committee of Local Citizens with roots that date back to 1925; the Henry Community Youth Camp which has operated within the park since the early 1930s, and the Friends of Point Pelee who have worked to enhance the visitor experience and support for conservation of the natural and cultural resources in the park since 1981. Over the last few years, the park has benefited from the involvement of the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation with various initiatives including research and monitoring, resource management, student employment, and interpretation/education programs. The park has benefited from input and feedback from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the Carolinian Canada Coalition. Important government partners include the Essex Region Conservation Authority and Parks Ontario, local municipalities and federally, Environment Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Service. As well, international collaborations include the US Fish & Wildlife Service – Ohio and the US National Park Service – Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Point Pelee National Park also works with local businesses, tourism associations, chambers of commerce and the new Tourism Windsor-Essex-Pelee Island to facilitate meaningful visitor experiences and to support sustainable tourism in the region.

### **3.6 KEY ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In 2009, through Parks Canada Action-on-the-Ground funding, Point Pelee National Park received an investment of 3.17 million

dollars for the next five years. This investment sets the course to undertake the resource management required to maintain the mosaic of Carolinian habitats. The first five years of the management plan will emphasize Lake Erie Sand Spit Savannah restoration and Middle Island resource management, including recovery of Species at Risk. In addition, the park will receive 3.4 million dollars for expenditure by March 2011 to undertake critical infrastructure renewal including the Marsh Boardwalk, the Tip shuttle, the park road, Visitor Centre sewage system, and various visitor orientation/education exhibits and displays. These initiatives provide the platform for renewal, revitalization and enrichment of the visitor experience to enable meaningful experiences and to build strong connections to place. This is also a means by which Parks Canada can broaden the base of support and create relevance by engaging existing and new stakeholders and partners in opportunities to protect and present the park. The management plan incorporates these priority initiatives as vehicles to help achieve the key strategies and area management approaches.

The significant issues and challenges to be addressed by the key strategies for this renewed Point Pelee National Park management plan are:

#### **Visitor Experience:**

The Park as a destination has been described as ‘lacking’ and near the end of its life cycle (Sawler 2006). Although visitors have given Point Pelee National Park high satisfaction ratings overall in Visitor Information Program surveys, when considering services and facilities, recent visitor information data suggests quality of service and perceived value for entry fees requires improvement. The Visitor Experience Assessment conducted in September 2009 confirmed that social science research to better understand the needs and values of visitors and potential visitors is lacking. In 2009, visitation to the park increased



*Monarch butterfly and caterpillar on milkweed, Parks Canada*

by about 20%. However, declining visitation has predominated since 1996 and remains a challenge. New tools for market segmentation and audience research will provide a wealth of information not previously known about park visitors. Additionally, these tools will help to identify how to expand the current visitor base by moving into new markets and building on existing markets as well as to design and deliver a menu of visitor opportunities based on visitor needs and interests.

**Public Appreciation and Understanding:**

Although the potential associated with Point Pelee National Park for externally focussed efforts is significant, the park and the Field Unit have had limited expertise and capacity to develop and sustain the full suite of external relations products designed to reach Canadians where they are. Efforts have focused on special events and ceremonies, media relations, formal public outreach education, website, volunteers and partner engagement. With Parks Canada's external relations and visitor experience re-alignment, expertise will be more focused within the Field Unit. This new expertise is needed to leverage existing park capacity as well as to develop additional opportunities for volunteers, First

Nations, the Carolinian Canada Coalition and others. Working with tourism partners, a new regional tourism framework is needed to position and promote Point Pelee National Park as the sustainable tourism flagship for the region.

**Cultural Resource Management:**

While archaeological sites and collections are well documented and protected, a Cultural Resource Management Strategy is required to help further develop assessment factors for protection and monitoring of the park's cultural resources, and to assess effectiveness of communication of the human history of the park. The strategy will need to identify visitor experience and public outreach education opportunities including potential for partnering with First Nations and families with ancestral ties to Point Pelee.

**Heritage Resource Conservation:**

There is a need to review and renew existing, as well as, identify and implement new active resource management and restoration programs needed to reduce ecological stressors, such as invasive alien species, road mortality, hyper-abundant species, contaminants, etc. within the park. Strate-

gies are also needed to address the landscape scale stressors, such as fragmentation of wetlands and other natural areas, altered drainage schemes as well as altered disturbance regimes and coastal processes. The park's small size, isolation and the fragmentation of remaining natural habitat within the region are critical factors impacting the integrity of the ecosystems protected in the park. Altered or lost disturbance regimes, such as fire, coastal erosion processes, flooding, ice scar have led to a decrease in Lake Erie Sandspit Savannah. Active resource management is required to restore and maintain this open habitat, which supports many Species at Risk.

Research has confirmed the western shoreline, historically an accreting shoreline, is now eroding at rates that without mitigation could see a loss of 126 hectares within the next 50 years. The eastern shoreline, a naturally eroding shoreline, continues to see accelerated erosion rates. At current rates some 49 hectares could be lost within 50 years. Research has confirmed that a collaborative regional approach to shoreline erosion mitigation and management, with partners and stakeholders, could substantially reduce erosion rates. Erosion impacts not only the ecosystems but also threatens cultural resources and the visitor experience.

The large number of Species at Risk, the relatively small land area, ecological stressors within the park and the regional landscape context make protection and recovery of these species complex. Hyper-abundant species and invasive alien species add to the challenge. Recovery strategies are a legislative requirement and with the number of Species at Risk associated with Point Pelee National Park, this will require an ongoing investment.



*Saw-whet owl, Dennis Rupert*

**First Nations:**

Although the park is working with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation, formalized advisory relationships are needed to facilitate support and engagement for protection, visitor experience and education as well as to provide for traditional cultural activities and economic benefits.



## 4.0 Vision Statement For Point Pelee National Park



*Exploring nature with park interpreter, Parks Canada*

A lush oasis of nature at the southern tip of Canada, Point Pelee National Park is home to a rich diversity of Carolinian plants and animals including many rare species. A dynamic environment, the park resounds with migrating songbirds in the spring, hums with cicadas in the summer, flutters with Monarch butterflies in the fall and is a peaceful place of reflection in the winter. This unique and magical place is where people gather to experience the park and create their own memories.

Visitors connect with nature while strolling the boardwalk, beaches and trails enjoying meaningful time on their own or with families and friends through a rich menu of activities designed to meet their needs and interests, such as canoeing, bird watching, bicycling and picnicking. People have opportunities to experience and personally connect with the park's special mosaic of habitats. The internationally significant coastal freshwater marsh, barrier beaches, dunes, swamp and dry forests,

and savannah are protected and restored so native species, many of which are at risk elsewhere, not only survive but also thrive. The story of this irreplaceable heritage resource is presented on the Internet, through various new media, public outreach education activities and partnering opportunities to engage all Canadians with the successes and challenges of protecting and presenting this living legacy.

The stories of the thousands of years of people connections to this land are woven through the visitor experience. A cooperative advisory relationship ensures inclusion of First Nations in all aspects of park operations and management enabling authentic visitor experiences and creating opportunities for economic benefit and traditional cultural activities.

The health and sustainability of the park, its unique habitats and Species at Risk are maintained by passionate Parks Canada staff and through strong relationships with

Point Pelee's neighbours. Parks Canada is a leader in conservation and, through education, experiential programs, citizen science, volunteers and cooperative land stewardship the park is present in the hearts and minds of Canadians. First Nations, Friends of Point Pelee, universities and colleges, local communities, students, scientists, researchers, environmental groups, local businesses, municipalities, and landowners have all joined together to ensure the future of the park. Point Pelee National Park has regained its relevance and is once again an important part of people's lives, not only in the region but also across Canada. Canadians are drawn to Point Pelee's stories of migration - birds, butterflies, bats, people and the tip of the park itself. The understanding that the park is fragile inspires them to protect Point Pelee National Park for all to discover and enjoy.



*Family Geocaching Adventure - Lindsey Peters*



## 5.0 Key Strategies



*Strolling the Marsh Boardwalk, Parks Canada*

Five key strategies address the major challenges, issues and opportunities for Point Pelee National Park. The strategies provide concrete direction and set the course, focusing efforts and resources, to achieve the park vision over the 15-year life span of the management plan. Each strategy is defined by a series of objectives and actions, which integrate the delivery of the three elements of the Parks Canada mandate - natural and cultural resource protection, visitor experience and education. Most objectives are long-term and will require the life of the plan to realize. Some, however, will be achieved in the first five-year cycle of the plan (see Appendix 1). The targets are intended to facilitate reporting on progress for the required five-year management plan review.

Effectiveness in achieving results will be reported on in the State of the Park Report. The key strategies in the management plan are expected to:

- Move the Lake Erie Sandspit Savannah (Non-Forest Ecosystem Indicator) from Fair and In Decline to Good;
- Move the Visitor Experience Indicators from Fair to Good;
- Move the Public Appreciation & Understanding Indicator for Active Support from Poor and up the scale, building the culture of conservation and stewardship needed to improve and sustain the ecological integrity of Point Pelee National Park and the health of the Greater Park Ecosystem, and to connect Canadians with their land; and
- Address protection of cultural resources in the park including implementation of monitoring protocols and the development of visitor experience and public outreach programs to share the stories of the people connected to this land.



*First Nations tapestry on display in the Visitor Centre, Parks Canada*

## 5.1 KEY STRATEGY ONE

### **Respecting the Seventh Generation: Honouring First Nations Connections to Point Pelee National Park**

The purpose of this strategy is to honour First Nations' connections to Point Pelee National Park by working together to protect and present the rich natural and cultural heritage of the national park in an authentic and sustainable manner.

Point Pelee National Park is referred to as “our home” by the Caldwell First Nation and “part of our house” by the Walpole Island First Nation. These powerful statements illustrate the importance of the national park to these First Nations. In the spirit of reconciliation and friendship, Parks Canada is committed to relationship building with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation and welcomes their participation in the planning and delivery of services and programs for Point Pelee National Park. Parks Canada and First Nations share a similar desire to protect and present heritage and can share knowledge in mutually beneficial ways. Adopting the ‘seven generation’ principle encourages consideration of our collective responsibility to the seventh generation when planning for the future of the national park. The objectives and actions presented here are based on input from the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.

#### **Objective 5.1.1**

**To realize trusting and respectful advisory relationships with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation that enable Parks Canada and the First Nations to collaborate in a productive way; that enable mutually beneficial opportunities to share knowledge and expertise in pursuit of our common goals; that recognize First Nations' connections to Point Pelee National Park; and that provide opportunities for educational, economic, and cultural benefits.**

*Targets:*

- Establish a First Nations Advisory Committee for Point Pelee National Park by March 2011.
- Increase the number of Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation members that are part of the Parks Canada workforce (baseline 2010/11).
- Establish one or more enterprise initiatives with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation by March 2015.

*Actions:*

- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize relationships and enable establishment of a First Nations Advisory Committee for Point Pelee National Park.
- Provide First Nations cultural training for Parks Canada staff.
- Work with First Nations to facilitate visitation and enjoyment of the park by First Nations communities.
- Work with First Nations to explore and enable opportunities for traditional cultural activities in the park.
- Provide regular opportunities for the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation to evaluate progress made with Point Pelee National Park and Parks Canada with respect to their specific needs and interests.
- Work with First Nations to expand employment programs for First Nations youth and recent graduates.
- Engage First Nations as members of the Parks Canada team at Point Pelee National Park.
- Share best practices and planning tools for protecting and presenting heritage resources between the Caldwell First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation and Parks Canada.

- Explore opportunities to improve joint economies of scale for presentation and protection between the Caldwell First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation and Parks Canada.
- Work cooperatively with First Nations and other stakeholders to integrate First Nations networks, commerce, social and political structures to promote cultural awareness, regional First Nations tourism and First Nation connections within the region.

**Objective 5.1.2**

**The natural and cultural resources of Point Pelee National Park are protected and presented in collaboration with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.**

*Targets:*

- Increase the number of resource protection programs developed and implemented with First Nations input and collaboration (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase the number of visitor experience programs developed and implemented with First Nations input and collaboration (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase the number of public appreciation and understanding programs developed and implemented with First Nations input and collaboration (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Work closely with First Nations to ensure cultural resources, cultural heritage and traditional ecological knowledge are appropriately considered and incorporated into research, monitoring, visitor experience and public outreach education programs.
- Involve First Nations in the delivery of active resource management and restoration programs in the park.
- Utilize traditional ecological knowledge and western science.

- Work cooperatively with First Nations to maintain and improve the ecological integrity of the park and the Greater Park Ecosystem.
- Provide interpreter training to First Nations students.
- Develop a lecture series and speaker exchange between Point Pelee National Park, the Caldwell First Nation community and the Walpole Island First Nation community.
- Facilitate opportunities for First Nations to be engaged with the park by forming linkages for collaborative research and conservation; restoration and recovery efforts for Species at Risk; and ecological integrity.
- Explore potential for sustainable plant and wildlife harvesting for traditional cultural activities.

### **Objective 5.1.3**

**Point Pelee National Park is a venue for the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation to connect with fellow Canadians to raise awareness of First Nations history, culture, language, traditional ecological knowledge and reconciliation through opportunities for visitor experience and education.**

#### *Targets:*

- Increase the number of visitor experience programs developed and implemented with First Nations input and collaboration (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase the number of public appreciation and understanding programs developed and implemented with First Nations input and collaboration (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase the number of traditional cultural activities enabled within the park (baseline 2010/11).

#### *Actions:*

- Raise awareness of First Nations' history, culture, language and the importance of reconciliation, with content input, support and participation of the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.

- Provide the opportunity for First Nations to tell their story of Point Pelee in their own words, from their own perspective, through exhibits, programs and/or events.
- Consult with First Nations through all stages of visitor experience and public outreach education planning.
- Collaborate with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation to explore opportunities for park visitors to purchase authentic, locally produced First Nations products.
- Working with the Friends of Point Pelee and the First Nations, develop a business agreement to reproduce the First Nations tapestry, which is part of the Visitor Centre exhibit, into a quilt to be sold at the Friends Gift Shop in the park.
- Explore how to bring the First Nations languages to the park visitor experience and public outreach education to enhance understanding of the park's history and First Nations connections to this land.
- Explore options for signage that commemorates areas of First Nations significance in the park and that identifies the area as the traditional homelands of the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.
- Explore development and delivery of formal education programs that are relevant to First Nations, as defined by them, and that foster a stronger sense of connection for First Nations youth with the park.
- Explore development of a social science tool to assess visitor awareness



*School group on the shuttle to the most southern tip of mainland Canada, Lindsey Peters*

of First Nations history and continuing connections to Point Pelee National Park.

## **5.2 KEY STRATEGY TWO**

### **Discovering, Enjoying and Connecting with Point Pelee National Park**

The purpose of this strategy is to position Point Pelee National Park as Canada's southernmost national park, a refuge for nature including many Species at Risk, a place where people can enjoy, discover and connect. A visitor experience concept for the park guides the review, renewal, revitalization and enhancement of the visitor activities, services, programs, products, events and supporting facilities provided in the park. This will ensure the new menu of visitor opportunities meets the needs and expectations of current and new park visitors and is built on the park's unique natural and cultural heritage. The Point Pelee National Park visitor experience will facilitate meaningful and memorable experiences that can lead to creation of a connection to the park through a rich menu of visitor opportunities for leisure,

recreation, discovery and learning.

Research conducted at Point Pelee National Park in 2006 demonstrated that people who frequently visit a national park, especially as children, become attached, take ownership, and become environmental stewards. A greater emphasis on creating opportunities for high quality visitor experiences based on social science research and trends, and the natural and cultural attributes of the park will ensure a rich menu of visitor opportunities including: discovering the park and its many facets; pursuing recreational and leisure activities; feeding or inspiring an interest to learn; pursuing citizen science. The goal is to ensure Point Pelee National Park is relevant and fosters connections as this then can lead to greater support for the park and build awareness of Parks Canada.

Despite an increase in 2009, the trend has been that visitation to the park has declined over the last fifteen years. This is due to many factors including: a significant drop in beach use due to changed lifestyles, water quality and sun protection; the continued perception the park is crowded in May during the spring migra-

tion; Canada-US border crossing issues; the value of the Canadian dollar; and a visitor experience offer that is dated and not fully addressing visitor needs and interests.

Parks Canada will revitalize, enhance and expand the Point Pelee National Park visitor experience to offer a year-round menu of opportunities that embrace visitor needs and interests. The results of the Visitor Experience Assessment conducted in September 2009 and emerging traveller and audience segmentation tools based on social values, travel motivations, integration of psychographic characteristics and geographic location to identify lifestyle clusters will play key roles in learning more about current visitors, identifying potential new markets and tailoring opportunities to meet visitor needs and interests. The goal is to increase visitation in all seasons with a particular focus on the summer and fall, and to capitalize on the potential for follow-up outreach and engagement opportunities. Research, renewal, re-vitalization and investment in the programs, services and infrastructure that provide a rich menu of opportunities for the visitor experience of the park and heritage resource management to maintain the mosaic of Carolinian habitats, which attract and support a diversity of plants and animals that people want to see, com-

bined with an innovative marketing and communications program are required to sustain and increase visitation into the future. Connecting with nature fits well with the Parks Canada brand of “Real. Inspiring” and provides opportunities to meaningfully engage Canadians. The migration phenomenon will continue to be a premier visitor experience opportunity for Point Pelee National Park.

The year 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the creation of Point Pelee National Park. This event offers an exceptional opportunity to increase the park’s visibility, to inspire Canadians to connect with this national treasure, to mobilize them for its conservation and to profile the whole family of national parks and Parks Canada.

#### **Objective 5.2.1**

**Success in facilitating a year-round high quality visitor experience program with a menu of opportunities for discovery, leisure and learning, which responds to visitor needs and interests, is enabled through a solid understanding of social science research and trends.**

#### *Targets:*

- 90% of visitors are satisfied, and 50% are very satisfied, with their visit.



*Photographers in the park, Parks Canada*



*March Break Children's Program, Parks Canada*

- 90% of visitors enjoyed their visit.
- 85% of visitors find the park meaningful to them.
- 60% of visitors consider they learned about the heritage of the park.

*Actions:*

- Develop a visitor experience concept, using social science research and trends, to build a menu of programs, activities, products, services, events and supporting facilities for leisure, recreation, enjoyment, learning and discovery that meet the needs of current and potential visitors.
- Use social science to identify markets and their needs and interests; renew and enhance visitor facilities, programs, services and products to meet market expectations.
- Re-vitalize infrastructure, as informed by social science and the visitor experience concept, which supports visitor experience opportunities,

including the shuttle service, Tip, Marsh Boardwalk and Delaurier Homestead.

- Retire underused facilities, as informed by social science, at Northwest Beach and continue to monitor visitor interests to determine what supporting facilities are needed.
- In preparation for the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Point Pelee National Park in 2018, undertake planning, engaging stakeholders and partners, for celebrations and a legacy initiative to commemorate this significant milestone in the history of the park.
- Move forward with the creation of a visitor orientation/welcome node near the park entrance to engage visitors as early as possible in their visit.
- Design services and programs to increase the park's appeal to casual and novice birdwatchers and wildlife viewers, including providing targeted yet diversified facilities, products, programs and services that are created through strategic alliances with key stakeholders and partners.
- Promote the park designation as a Dark Sky Preserve and develop opportunities for visitors and local residents to understand and appreciate the dark sky, its importance to the natural environment and its role in folklore and cultures.
- Based on the survey information from the Visitor Information Program, integrate conservation/protection activities and learning opportunities into the menu of visitor opportunities.
- Use market-based approach that focuses on visitor needs, interests and patterns of use to introduce new discovery, leisure and learning-based visitor experience opportunities that focus on Species at Risk and their recovery.



Sanctuary Pond lookout, Lindsey Peters

#### **Objective 5.2.2**

**The park's menu of opportunities for visitor experience is effectively promoted and visitation to the park is increased.**

##### *Target:*

- 16% increase in park visitation by 2012 met or exceeded (baseline 2008).

##### *Actions:*

- Use traveller segmentation tools to build understanding of the target visitor markets and their needs to design relevant opportunities and market to these audiences.
- Access research on visitor market travel motivations and characteristics.
- Develop relevant opportunities and products for visitor experience that meet visitor needs and interests.
- Work with interested partners to deliver the program of visitor opportunities and to promote the park.

#### **Objective 5.2.3**

**A renewed and enhanced Point Pelee National Park visitor experience program that is enriched by partnering initiatives.**

##### *Target:*

- An increased number of visitor experience opportunities involve partnering (baseline 2010/11).

##### *Actions:*

- Work with the Friends of Point Pelee to review and revitalize their suite of visitor services and programs.
- Explore opportunities with First Nations and others with ancestral connections to the park to develop visitor opportunities and products that highlight their stories.
- Encourage public involvement by expanding and enhancing the current Parks Canada and Friends of Point Pelee volunteer programs, including more opportunities of interest and relevance to volunteers.
- Collaborate with other regional protected heritage areas, including First Nations, to create a network of birding locations that offer excellent birding opportunities throughout the year.
- Partner with local and regional business interests to promote



- the region as a premier tourism destination for birding in North America.
- Work with the Camp Henry Operating Committee to invest in and position the Henry Community Youth Camp as a unique outdoor education centre in the Essex region where children experience Canada's most southern national park with its ecologically rich and rare natural habitats and plants and animals - all without having to venture far from home.
  - Work collaboratively with Tourism Essex-Windsor-Pelee Island and the regional tourism sector to explore opportunities for the park to connect with the travel trade industry, which includes motor coach tours, tour operators, travel agents, and destination marketing.

### 5.3 KEY STRATEGY THREE

#### Restoring the Carolinian Habitat Mosaic

The purpose of this strategy is to implement active resource management programs, including ongoing research and monitoring, to enhance and maintain restoration of the Carolinian habitat mosaic - the marsh, savannah, dry forest, swamp forest, dunes and beach, including the recovery of Species at Risk - protected within Point Pelee National Park. Improving and maintaining the health of park ecosystems will enable the revitalization of the visitor experience by enhancing opportunities for discovery, enjoyment and personal connection. The conservation effort also provides the foundation for public outreach education and learning programs that bring the national park and Parks Canada's conservation efforts for ecological integrity to Canadians at home, at school, at leisure and in their communities.

To address the complete mosaic of habitats will take the full 15-year life span of the management plan and beyond. The first five-year cycle of the management plan will focus on the most threatened and rare habitat in the mainland of the park, the Lake Erie Sand Spit Savannah (found along the back beaches of the shorelines and the higher dry central ridge of the park), and implementation of the approved *Middle Island Conservation Plan*. It is expected the program of active resource management will help mitigate the threats of habitat loss and decreased biodiversity, particularly as the savannah and Middle Island habitats support a significant number of Species at Risk designated plants and animals. Investment for these conservation initiatives, for the most part, will be provided by Action-on-the Ground funding. Monitoring requirements will be integrated with the park Ecological Integrity Monitoring Program.

Conservation efforts for the other habitats that make up the park mosaic will continue as part of the park resource conservation program with the focus on ongoing assessments informed by monitoring and research to maintain an understanding of the state of these habitats, and by addressing urgent/emerging threats to ecological integrity in a timely manner. The marsh is a closed ecosystem as a result of human and naturally caused disturbances over the last century. There is a need for research and monitoring focused specifically to inform discussions and decisions for development of a strategy to maintain integrity and biodiversity of this unique example of a southern Great Lakes marsh.

On the mainland, restoration of the savannah will enable opportunities for more diverse and authentic visitor experiences, thus increasing the appeal of this protected heritage place to both traditional park visitors and to new visitor audiences. The

conservation and restoration activities will provide opportunities for partnering with First Nations, the Friends of Point Pelee and other conservation organizations. Through 'citizen science' based programs, unique involvement and learning opportunities for visitors, residents, youth, interest groups, local communities and the Canadian public will be provided. As part of Action-on-the-Ground, the 3-year contribution agreement with the Carolinian Canada Coalition will enable ecosystem and Species at Risk recovery through interactive awareness and education programs such as stewardship rangers, student work teams and Caring for Nature workshops in the Greater Park Ecosystem and beyond.

#### **Objective 5.3.1**

**A more representative habitat mosaic is restored and maintained to reflect the natural biodiversity of the Carolinian ecosystems and contribute to the recovery of Species at Risk protected in Point Pelee National Park.**

#### *Targets:*

- Lake Erie Sandspit Savannah aerial



*Eastern fox snake, Jim Flynn*

extent shows dry central ridge savannah of 8 ha and beach savannah of 2 ha.

- Five-lined skink population size remains within expected range of natural variation and shows an increased area of occupancy.
- Eastern prickly pear cactus population size remains stable or increasing, predominately with establishment of new individuals within existing micro sites.
- Number of eastern prickly pear cactus in the shade is reduced by 5%.
- Increased trend in abundance and diversity of open habitat bird species.
- Increased trend in abundance and diversity of open habitat butterfly species.
- Populations of dwarf hackberry, eastern foxsnake, yellow-breasted chat, white-eyed vireo, common hoptree remain stable or increased.
- Reduced area of the park taken over by invasive alien plant species.

#### *Actions:*

- Prepare an Integrated Vegetation Communities Management Plan, incorporating critical habitat considerations for Species at Risk, to serve as the blueprint to guide restoration for the Carolinian habitat mosaic.
- Prepare and implement a Fire Management Plan for the park.
- Reintroduce fire and mechanical clearing to ensure an open mosaic of habitats and maintenance of the internationally rare Savannah within the mainland of the park.
- Develop and implement an Invasive Alien Plant Management Plan for the park.
- Enable research into the potential

- beneficial uses of invasive species as a possible control measure while also providing new economic, visitor experience or learning opportunities.
- Restore areas where infrastructure has been removed, continuing to follow the policy of removing infrastructure to 'right size' the human footprint and restore Carolinian habitat.
  - As red mulberry is a Species at Risk, conduct genetic sampling to identify the pure red mulberry trees and permanently mark them.
  - Engage and consult First Nations, the scientific community, other protected heritage area managers and local naturalists' groups to enable their meaningful participation in conservation, protection of critical habitat for Species at Risk and proposing feasible approaches to control invasive species.
  - Work with universities, provincial agencies and other protected heritage areas to further collaborative research and monitoring programs to investigate restoration needs, methods and techniques for Middle Island.



*Eastern prickly pear cactus, Parks Canada*

- Prepare a plan for restoration of the Middle Island ecosystem following reduction of double-crested cormorant nest densities to goal levels.
- Develop a management strategy for the marsh addressing water quality and including restoration of natural processes to enhance ecological integrity and maintain biodiversity representative of a Southern Great Lakes marsh ecosystem.

#### **Objective 5.3.2**

**Hyper-abundant species are successfully managed in continued collaboration with the scientific community, other conservation organizations and First Nations.**

#### *Targets:*

- Number of double-crested cormorant nests on Middle Island is between 30-60 nests per hectare.
- Updated inventories of Species at Risk plants on Middle Island show a halt in their decline.
- Significantly reduce the loss of healthy forest canopy on Middle Island.
- Middle Island wild hyacinth population and area of occupancy measures indicate no further loss.
- Update and complete Deer Management Plan, with targets, by December 2010.

#### *Actions:*

- Review and update active resource management program for white-tailed deer on the mainland of the park to reflect the new Parks Canada Hyper-abundant Species Management Policy and to incorporate the most current research and monitoring available.
- Carry out active resource management of the nesting population of double-crested cormorants on Middle Island through a program of culling, nest

removals and deterrents as outlined in the *Middle Island Conservation Plan*.

- Protect individual Species at Risk trees and plants from direct impacts of cormorant nesting through use of deterrents.
- Update inventories of Species at Risk plants on Middle Island.
- Undertake ongoing monitoring of the forest canopy on Middle Island to assess health.
- Carry out research and monitoring and develop the required action plans for species of concern in the park, as relates to invasive, alien, non-native, and hyper-abundant species, in collaboration with the scientific community, other conservation organizations and First Nations.
- Prepare additional active resource management plans, as per the Parks Canada Hyper-abundant Species Management Policy, for species that research and monitoring confirm as hyper-abundant and a threat to ecological integrity.

#### **Objective 5.3.3**

**Species at Risk recovery strategies are prepared and approved as required.**

##### *Target:*

- Complete 100% of the Species at Risk recovery strategies required, as directed by the Species at Risk legislation, by March 2014.

##### *Actions:*

- Complete recovery strategies in accordance with the Species at Risk legislation for the following:
  - Eastern prickly pear cactus
  - Red mulberry
  - Common hoptree
  - Dwarf hackberry
  - American waterwillow

- Eastern hognose snake
- Tiger salamander

- Integrate considerations for Species at Risk recovery into park programs for active resource management and restoration, visitor experience and public outreach education.
- Collaborate with First Nations on Species at Risk recovery efforts.

#### **Objective 5.3.4**

**Park visitors are provided with unique, high quality and diverse opportunities, guided by social science information, that facilitate memorable experiences, foster connection to, inspire support for and engage them in protection of the park.**

##### *Targets:*

- 85% of visitors consider the park meaningful to them.
- 90% of visitors are satisfied and 50% are very satisfied with their visit.
- 60% of visitors considered they learned about the natural heritage of the park.
- 90% of visitors enjoyed their visit.
- 60% of visitors appreciate the significance of the park.

##### *Actions:*

- Design and develop new and re-vitalized visitor experience and learning opportunities, informed by social science research and trends.
- Develop opportunities for hands-on participation, in response to visitor interest, in conservation activities such as monitoring and habitat restoration.
- Use the Visitor Information Program survey as an evaluation and monitoring tool to assess effectiveness of the new and re-vitalized visitor opportunities.
- Highlight on-going restoration activities through a comprehensive interpretive program throughout the park.

- Learning programs for park visitors highlight the theme of the Carolinian habitat mosaic protected in the park and the ongoing restoration activities.
- Create new and improved opportunities to enhance wildlife viewing, particularly for birding and butterfly watching, within the restored savannah habitat.
- Create an interpretive program throughout the park and on the park website to promote the Action-on-the-Ground initiative including the themes of Middle Island recovery, Species at Risk, the Carolinian habitat mosaic, shoreline coastal processes, and fire as a resource management tool.
- Incorporate conservation stories as part of the new high definition park video focusing on the Pelee migration phenomenon.
- Develop a strategy to re-vitalize the Henry Community Youth Camp, located in the park, into an outdoor education facility for youth.
- Create on-site habitat showcase nodes at key locations throughout the park to help visitors experience and learn about the diversity of habitats and conservation efforts including research and monitoring.

**Objective 5.3.5**

**A program of public outreach education and communications, guided by social science information, excites interest in visiting the park and fosters environmental stewardship.**

*Targets:*

- Increase in number of media stories such as newspaper, TV, radio, magazines, social media, and online news, which promote interest in visiting and provide insight and learning into protection and conservation (baseline 2010/11).

- Increase in number of hits on the park website (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase in the number of students engaged in the formal education program (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase in menu of ‘citizen science’ volunteer opportunities (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Assess whether resource conservation and restoration messages are relevant and successful in engaging visitors, residents within the Greater Park Ecosystem and the Canadian public.
- Design and develop public outreach education and communications programs informed by social science research and trends for the target audiences and their interests that highlight park research, monitoring and active resource management required to maintain ecological integrity.
- Develop a range of Internet resources including: online habitat showcases highlighting key habitats throughout the park; information profiling park research, monitoring and restoration activities; and promotion of the Action-on-the-Ground conservation initiative.
- Include conservation, particularly the Action-on-the-Ground initiative, as part of the program of the ‘Park in Your Community’ outreach to festivals and events.
- Develop a media strategy, including a media kit, to promote the Action-on-the-Ground initiative.
- Develop programs that enable participation in research, monitoring and restoration as part of the ‘Park in Your School’ curriculum-based formal education.
- Enhance and expand awareness and learning opportunities on Species at Risk, such as engaging Canadians in

fascinating life histories via videos and web cams.

- Encourage public involvement by expanding and enhancing the Parks Canada and Friends of Point Pelee volunteer programs, including more opportunities of interest and relevance to volunteers focused on ‘citizen science’.

#### 5.4 KEY STRATEGY FOUR

##### **Six Thousand Years of Stories: Protecting and Presenting Cultural Resources**

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure protection of the cultural resources within the park while undertaking active resource management and restoration of the natural resources, and when developing and delivering visitor experience opportunities. The strategy also focuses on communication of the history and significance of these cultural resources as they reveal the interactions of people and this natural landscape in the visitor experience and public outreach education.



*Artifact found at Point Pelee National Park, Parks Canada*

Point Pelee National Park has a long and varied history of human interaction that reaches back at least 6,000 years. As a result, the park is rich with stories and cultural resources. Cultural resource management will ensure these resources are protected and visitors have opportunities to discover and experience them and understand their value. Cultural resource management will consider and respect ecological values and will be consistent with the maintenance of natural ecological processes, such as prescribed burns. Active resource management and restoration of ecological resources will also respect the need to protect cultural resources.

In collaboration with First Nations, former park residents as well as families and individuals with connections to Point Pelee, careful consideration will be taken to weave their stories and commemorate this history through the park’s visitor experience and public outreach education. Recognizing and honouring the past will help build a future with mutual respect and trust.

##### **Objective 5.4.1**

**Complete an inventory of landscape features, buildings and structures, other inventories and holdings, and a Cultural Resources Management Strategy, which includes collaboration with First Nations, former park residents and others with connections to the park.**

##### *Target:*

- Complete a cultural resource inventory and a Cultural Resource Value Statement by March 2012.
- Complete a Cultural Resources Management Strategy, including a monitoring program by March 2015.

##### *Actions:*

- Complete and maintain an inventory of park cultural resources.



*Tree planting at Gore Hill Elementary School,  
Parks Canada*

#### **Objective 5.4.2**

**A market-based approach enables the development of relevant and engaging cultural resource programs and products for visitor experience and public outreach education.**

#### *Targets:*

- Increased number of cultural resources integrated into visitor experience and public outreach education (baseline 2010/11).
- Increased number of signs, events and/or programs that honour and commemorate park history and cultural heritage (baseline 2010/11).
- Increased number of public outreach education initiatives that feature the park history and cultural heritage (baseline 2010/11).

#### *Actions:*

- Engage First Nations, former residents and others in the development and delivery of visitor experience and public outreach education programs.
- Ensure marketing and public outreach education strategies highlight opportunities for discovery, enjoyment and learning of the cultural heritage of the park.
- Partnering with communities and cultural groups, encourage events in the park that celebrate cultural heritage (homecomings, 'doors open' days, powwows).
- Pursue the opportunity of a postage stamp, designed in collaboration with local artists, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Point Pelee National Park.

- Undertake the development of a Cultural Resource Value Statement.
- Complete a Cultural Resources Management Strategy, which includes a management framework and cultural resources monitoring program.
- Work with First Nations, former park residents and others with connections to the park to gather their stories and traditional knowledge and connections to this land.
- Engage the regional farm community, who have their own connection to the land, and gather their stories in order to learn about their traditional knowledge and connection to the land.
- Ensure all stakeholders are involved in defining the value of cultural resources in the park.



*Cardinal Carter Secondary School native species seed propagation program, Parks Canada*

## 5.5 KEY STRATEGY FIVE

### **Collaborating: Our Key to Success**

The purpose of this strategy is to expand and enhance efforts to work with First Nations, local communities, partners, stakeholders, neighbours, residents and the Canadian public throughout the Greater Park Ecosystem and beyond to gain recognition, understanding and cooperation in realizing heritage protection and public education goals as well as to facilitate meaningful and relevant visitor experience opportunities, tourism relationships and partnering.

The ecosystems protected in Point Pelee National Park will continue to be protected and connected to the hearts and minds of Canadians by partnering and expanding our collaborations. Parks Canada will work with others, both within the national park and beyond its boundaries, to support conservation and sustainable management, which incorporates ecological, cultural, economic and social needs. Regional conservation efforts will be enhanced by visitor experience opportunities in the park and a program of public outreach education. The focus will be on environ-

mental stewardship, 'citizen science' and Species at Risk recovery activities that enhance opportunities for engagement with park visitors, neighbours, residents, First Nations, business, tourism, other conservation organizations, municipalities and Canadians.

Building partner and stakeholder engagement that promotes understanding, opportunities for involvement and support for efforts to maintain and improve ecological integrity will further enable conservation efforts and increase the relevance of the park and connection with the park. This will benefit the park as well as the environmental, economic and social health of the region, its communities and its residents. Informing, educating and engaging rural and urban residents, youth and others in stewardship education and activities will enhance ecological integrity in Point Pelee National Park and the surrounding region as well as raise awareness of the Parks Canada mandate.

Collaborating and partnering with others to position and promote the unique visitor experience offered by Point Pelee National Park connects the park to regional tourism and community living opportunities.



**Objective 5.5.1**

**Public outreach education and communications successfully targets decision-makers, landowners, residents, youth and the diversity of Canadians to promote stewardship and raise awareness and knowledge about how our activities can impact the environment and human health in general and the ecological integrity of park specifically.**

*Targets:*

- Increase number of stakeholders and partners that support protection and presentation of Point Pelee National Park each year of the plan (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase public/volunteer involvement in monitoring, protection and restoration programs (baseline 2010/11).
- Increase number of hits to the park website (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Develop a broad and innovative public outreach education strategy that will advance the three core elements of the mandate – protection, education, and facilitating visitor experience.
- Expand focus of public outreach education to include connecting with Canadians in their homes, communities and at leisure as well as current efforts to reach Canadians in their schools.
- Develop a strategy to increase the park's profile in the Greater Toronto Area.
- Develop a more effective and interactive park website with links to partners and First Nations, including research, active resource management, environmental education and stewardship.
- Expand the current Parks Canada and Friends of Point Pelee volunteer



*Creature Feature Summer Visitor Experience Program, Parks Canada*

programs to incorporate a suite of 'citizen science' opportunities of interest to volunteers.

- Expand the 'Park in Your School' curriculum-based formal education program.
- Support the Carolinian Canada Coalition in the delivery of the programs and services defined in their contribution agreement with Parks Canada.

**Objective 5.5.2**

**Parks Canada participates in land use discussions within the Greater Park Ecosystem to highlight the ecological, cultural, economic and social benefits Point Pelee National Park provides.**

*Target:*

- Increase participation in committees and working groups (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Build on work with the Essex Region Conservation Authority, Environment Canada, the Essex County Stewardship Network and other partners to implement the Essex County Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
- Participate in discussion and environmental assessments of renewable energy projects, particularly wind farm proposals as they relate to the protection of the North American migratory corridor within which the park is located, impacts to ecological integrity and fostering of meaningful visitor experiences.
- Build stronger relationships with local municipalities, the Caldwell First Nation and the Walpole Island First Nation in areas of land use management and conservation.
- Collaborate with the University of Windsor with the planned field research station dedicated to Great Lakes and Carolinian ecozone research. This research station has the potential to become a national and international research destination and offers an excellent opportunity for Parks Canada to become involved in multi-disciplinary research that promotes a better understanding and conservation of the Carolinian ecosystems protected within Point Pelee National Park and the Carolinian ecozone in Canada.

- Work with other national parks, regional conservation organizations, First Nations and ENGOs to develop and support community-based program of stewardship of Species at Risk.

**Objective 5.5.3**

**Parks Canada renews and builds new collaborations with the regional tourism and community living sectors.**

*Targets:*

- Increase visitation to the park and region (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Complete renewal and enhancement of the visitor experience offer of the park.
- Update and revitalize the park marketing plan.
- Be an active partner with Tourism Windsor-Essex-Pelee Island.
- Participate in community tourism planning and events.
- Update the socio-economic impact statement for the park.
- Work with the local business community to explore ways to promote and profile the park in the region and the businesses in the park.
- Expand the 'park as a venue' for community events.
- Develop new initiatives in collaboration with the Friends of Point Pelee and First Nations.
- Renew the park website to promote visitation, facilitate inspired discovery, highlight leisure and recreational activities and meaningful learning opportunities.

**Objective 5.5.4**

**Meaningful opportunities exist for First Nations, local communities, partners, stakeholders, neighbours, residents and Canadians to influence and contribute to management of Point Pelee National Park.**

*Target:*

- Increase number of stakeholders and partners that confirm they are influencing and contributing to Parks Canada's management of Point Pelee National Park each year of the plan (baseline 2010/11).

*Actions:*

- Develop and deliver an annual update for the public, stakeholders and partners on the progress of management plan implementation.
- Develop a web-based program, which allows for questions, concerns, and ideas from the public to the park and with updates, recognitions, and answers from the park.
- Connect with the local community on an ongoing basis via the Point Pelee National Park Advisory Committee of Local Citizens.
- Develop and deliver an annual program to celebrate and recognize partner, stakeholder and citizen's contributions.
- Develop and implement a strategy for corporate engagement.



## 6.0 Area Management Approach



*Returning from the Tip, Lindsey Peters*

The key strategies focus on management actions that address Point Pelee National Park as a whole. The area management approach recognizes distinct areas within the park that require specific management approaches to address challenges and to ensure the Parks Canada mandate for heritage resource protection, visitor experience and education is appropriately addressed within each area. While distinct, management within the areas is informed and guided by the key strategies.

### **6.1 MAINLAND: WESTERN SHORE**

This thin wedge of less than five square kilometres supports the majority of visitor experience opportunities in the park and includes the western shoreline beaches, the Marsh Boardwalk, Delaurier Homestead, hiking and bicycling trails, Henry Community Youth Camp, group camping, picnic areas, the Visitor Centre and the Tip. This area contains visitor facilities,

roads and trails as well as other supporting infrastructure related to visitor enjoyment and discovery. The management approach must ensure visitor needs and interests and protecting ecological integrity and Species at Risk are integrated and mutually supportive. Although the beach areas remain important, visitation patterns have shifted to the forest and savannah trail systems and Marsh Boardwalk area. The Tip, the southernmost point of mainland Canada, remains a significant attraction. It is recommended that visitors be engaged early in their visit, with an orientation/welcome to the park and its visitor opportunities, located close to the park entrance.

Research and erosion studies on the western shoreline of the national park and beyond have confirmed the shoreline is experiencing significant erosion. This is of concern as this is naturally an accreting (building) shoreline. Without mitigation there can be impacts on protection of the natural and cultural resources and the visitor experience of the park.

**Objective 6.1.1**

**Re-vitalized infrastructure, informed by social science information, to determine visitor needs, ensures safe, high quality and relevant visitor experience opportunities and maintains ecological integrity.**

*Actions:*

- Use the Visitor Experience Concept to guide revitalization, renewal and development of new visitor experience opportunities.
- Maintain the 'no net loss' of park ecosystems principle when developing or revitalizing park infrastructure and visitor experience opportunities.
- Revitalize the Marsh Boardwalk area infrastructure and the visitor experience opportunities associated with this visitor node.
- Replace the Tip shuttle, considering information from the visitor needs and interests survey and considering 'green energy' technology to renew this signature visitor experience opportunity and to ensure protection of the fragile Tip area of the park.
- Guided by social science information, retire facilities at Northwest Beach, restore the dune habitat and continue to monitor visitation to determine what facilities are needed. Develop a restoration plan for the active dune area.
- Redevelop the Visitor Centre experience guided by social science information.
- Guided by social science information, create a visitor orientation/welcome node near the park entrance to engage visitors early in their park visit.

**Objective 6.1.2**

**In collaboration with landowners, residents, local municipalities, federal and provincial governments and others, participate in the development of an erosion management strategy to mitigate and manage erosion along the western shoreline.**

*Actions:*

- Participate and invest in regional studies to better understand shoreline processes and dynamics and develop management options.
- Create a greater awareness and understanding of the ecological issue caused by the erosion versus accretion of this shoreline.
- Work with the community and all levels of government responsible to seek a sustainable solution.

## **6.2 MAINLAND: EASTERN SHORE AND MARSH**

Designated as a UNESCO Wetland of International Significance, about two thirds of the park's 15.5 square kilometres is marsh. As such, the marsh is designated as Zone 1 (Special Preservation) with visitor access provided by the boardwalk or via non-motorized vessels, primarily canoes and kayaks. Recognizing that the eastern shoreline is a naturally eroding shoreline, accelerated rates of erosion over the last few decades have resulted in a significant loss of the east coast beaches. This narrow east beach ridge is all that protects the marsh from Lake Erie. Sustained breaching of the east beach ridge could alter the marsh ecosystem and lead to the eventual loss of the habitat and many Species at Risk. This, combined with the fact that the marsh is now a closed ecosystem that is much smaller than its natural configuration, makes the marsh even more vulnerable to species loss. Parks Canada will

continue to work with the local community and all stakeholders to identify viable economic and environmental options that will meet the future needs of the area.

#### **Objective 6.2.1**

**In accordance with the Zone 1- Special Preservation Area and Wetland of International Significance designations, visitor experience opportunities and resource protection activities, including Species at Risk, are integrated.**

##### *Actions:*

- Undertake a review of all visitor experience opportunities offered in the marsh, including canoeing, kayaking, fishing, to assess ecological impacts, verify visitor needs and interests and assure safety.
- Develop a strategy to address recommendations of the review.
- In consultation with visitor and tourism stakeholders, develop a menu of visitor experience opportunities that ensures natural and cultural resources enabling visitor experiences remain protected.

#### **Objective 6.2.2**

**Participation in the development of a path forward, in collaboration with landowners, residents, local municipalities, federal and provincial governments, First Nations and others, for a Southeast Leamington area landscape strategy that provides for economic, ecological and social sustainability.**

##### *Actions:*

- Work with stakeholders, the community and all levels of government responsible for and impacted by land use planning decisions.

- Provide information as required on the ecological significance as well as the recreational, economic and social contributions of the park.

#### **Objective 6.2.3**

**In collaboration with landowners, residents, local municipalities, federal and provincial governments and others, participate in the development of an erosion management strategy to mitigate and manage erosion along the eastern shoreline.**

##### *Actions:*

- Participate and invest in regional studies to better understand shoreline processes and dynamics and develop management options.
- Create a greater awareness and understanding of the ecological issue caused by the accelerated rates of erosion.
- Work with stakeholders, the community and all levels of government responsible to seek a sustainable solution.

### **6.3 MIDDLE ISLAND**

Middle Island was added to Point Pelee National Park in 2000 to protect the island's rare Carolinian ecosystem and nine Species at Risk. The hyper-abundant nesting population of double-crested cormorants is too large and threatens to denude the island flora and extirpate the associated fauna. Active resource management to reduce the number of nesting cormorants to levels that will permit the survival of the island's natural biodiversity, rare Carolinian ecosystem and Species at Risk was initiated in 2008.

The *Middle Island Conservation Plan* outlines an adaptive management strategy, based on current scientific knowledge,

research and collaboration with provincial, federal and U.S. authorities as well as First Nations. The island is a Zone 1- Special Preservation Area due to the island's significant ecological features and for public safety. This means that no visitor experience facilities or opportunities will be provided on the island. Middle Island is closed to public access between April 1 and September 30 annually to protect the nesting colonies of the five species of colonial waterbirds located on the island. Learning opportunities will be provided on the mainland of the park and through a program of public outreach education. Media and public relations, and web-based learning will be very important to raise awareness and understanding and to maintain public support for ecosystem conservation.

**Objective 6.3.1**

**A broader awareness and understanding of ecosystem conservation is achieved through multi-media public outreach education and communication programs.**

*Actions:*

- Based on social science information, identify priority audiences within the broad spectrum of Canadians and design public outreach education and communications programs responsive to varying levels of awareness and understanding of ecosystems and ecological integrity, the role of national parks in protecting biodiversity, Species at Risk, ecological integrity, and resource conservation management techniques.
- Use Parks Canada's effectiveness monitoring and evaluation program to demonstrate success in creating awareness and understanding.



## 7.0 Park Zoning



*DeLaurier Homestead, Parks Canada*

Parks Canada’s zoning system has five categories: Zone I - Special Preservation; Zone II - Wilderness; Zone III - Natural Environment; Zone IV - Outdoor Recreation; and Zone V - Parks Services. This system classifies areas of the park according to their ecosystem and cultural resource protection requirements and directs visitor activities to appropriate and compatible areas. Zoning is thus an important tool for management planning as it spatially organizes the integrated delivery of the three core elements of the Parks Canada mandate: heritage resource protection, visitor experience and public appreciation and understanding.

This management plan review confirms two changes to the Point Pelee National Park zoning:

- Middle Island is a Zone I- Special Preservation area due to the island’s significant ecological features and public safety factors. Within Zone I, pres-

ervation is the primary management concern, visitor access is controlled and learning and appreciation opportunities are provided off-site; and

- The two Zone 5- Park Services areas are removed. The Maintenance Compound and Warden Building complex and the old Administration Building were removed as part of the park’s policy for removing infrastructure in the park to ‘right size’ the human footprint and restore Carolinian habitat. As such, there are now no Zone 5 areas in the park.

Current zoning in the park is applied as follows (see Figure 5):

### **Zone I: Special Preservation**

Applied to areas that deserve special preservation because they contain or support unique, threatened, or endangered natural or cultural features, or are among the



*Picnicking at Northwest beach, Lindsey Peters*

best examples of features that represent a natural region. Preservation is the primary management concern. Motorized vehicle access is not permitted and visitor access is controlled.

- Marsh and East Beach Ridge
- Ridge and Trough Swamp Forest
- Middle Island
- Sections along western shoreline

### **Zone III: Natural Environment**

Areas are managed as natural environments where visitors experience natural and cultural heritage through outdoor recreational activities and learning opportunities that require minimal services and facilities. Motorized access is controlled.

- Henry Community Youth Camp
- East Beach (south of marsh to Tip)
- Western shoreline between Dunes and Pioneer
- DeLaurier Homestead
- White Pine

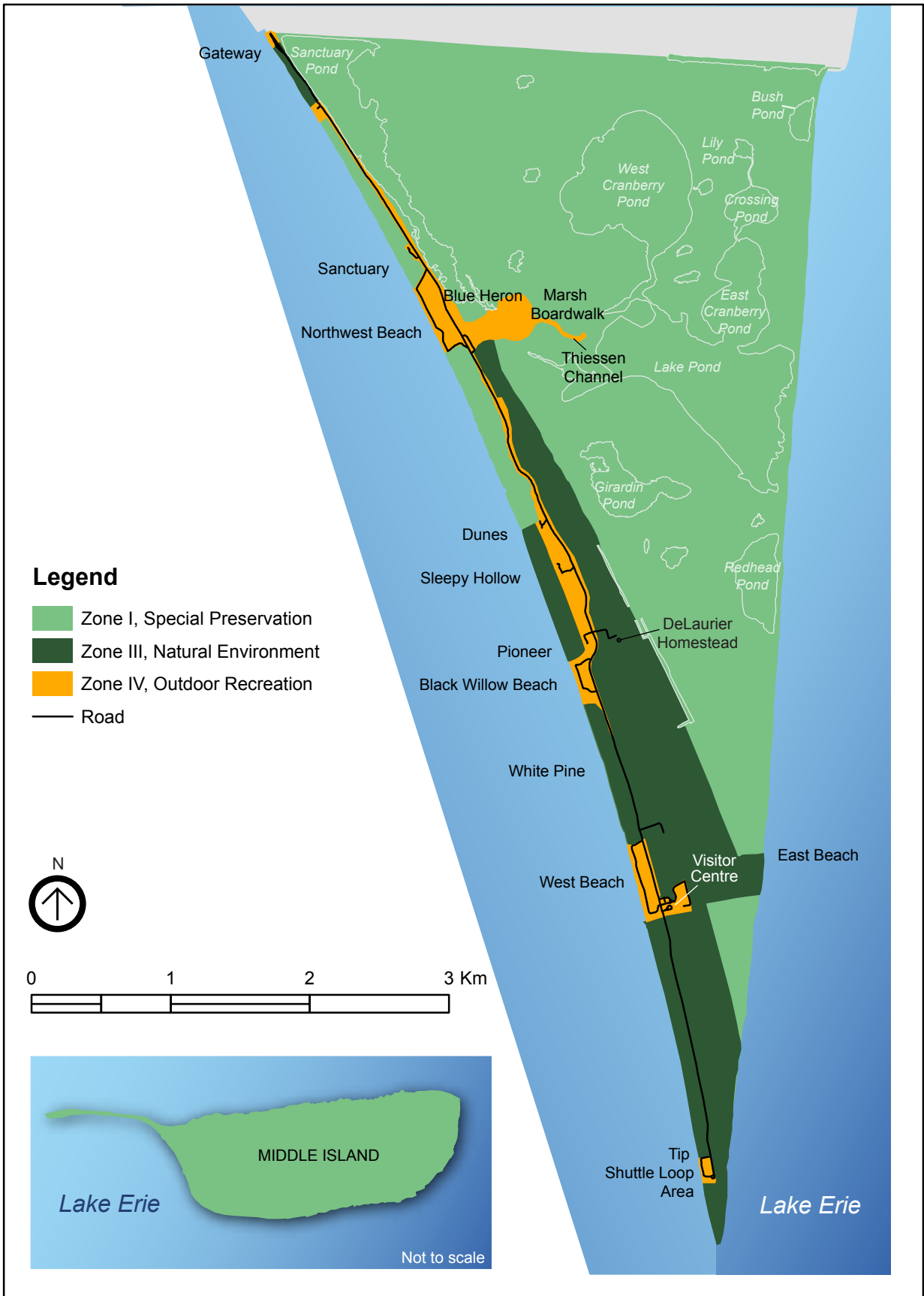
### **Zone IV: Outdoor Recreation**

Areas accommodate a broad range of opportunities for experiencing, understanding and enjoying the park's natural and cultural heritage. Essential services and facilities are provided for visitor experience in ways that minimize potential impacts to ecological integrity. Direct motor vehicle access is allowed.

- Blue Heron, Northwest Beach, Marsh Boardwalk, and Thiessen Channel
- Dunes, Sleepy Hollow, Pioneer, and Black Willow Beach
- West Beach and Visitor Centre Area
- Tip Shuttle Loop Area

A number of areas within the park have been designated **Environmentally Sensitive Sites** and **Culturally Sensitive Sites**. These are smaller areas that contain significant and sensitive resources that require special protection or management. Visitor access may be permitted with appropriate management and monitoring to ensure continued protection of the resources. Within Point Pelee National Park, these areas include natural resources and archaeological sites, including First Nations burial sites. The locations of these

Figure 5 - Map of Park Zoning



sites are not shown on the zoning map, in order to ensure the protection of these sensitive areas.

In accordance with the *Species at Risk Act* (2002), **Critical Habitat** will be identified for Species at Risk in the park as part of recovery strategies.

## 8.0 Administration and Operations



*Point Pelee National Park c. 2000*

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998), *Canada National Parks Act* (2000), *Species At Risk Act* (2002) and *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (1994) set the legislative and policy context for the administration and operations of Point Pelee National Park. Parks Canada strives to operate efficiently, effectively and fiscally responsibly, and also to demonstrate environmental stewardship in Point Pelee National Park's administration and operations. There are no major changes planned for the park administration and operational facilities, which are located outside of the national park, other than partnering with private industry to install a solar electric tracking system at the Administration/Maintenance facility. This system will supply a positive net gain to the power grid and is an excellent example of the park's ongoing efforts to "green" its operations. Further examples are summarized in the park's Environmental Stewardship Strategy.

### **Environmental Stewardship Strategy**

This strategy identifies actions that Point Pelee National Park is taking in order to follow best environmental practices in its daily activities and to meet or exceed environmental laws and policies. The park's actions to reduce its environmental impact also provide benefits to visitor experience. For example, the replacement of the Marsh Boardwalk includes plans for increased rest stops with benches, enhanced accessibility features such as wheelchair viewing areas, and shaded areas where visitors can relax and enjoy the marsh. Similarly, informing Canadians of the park's environmental stewardship actions and encouraging participation from visitors, partners and stakeholders is an important part of promoting public appreciation and understanding of stewardship and, on a broader level, the Parks Canada mandate.

**Objectives**

**Be a leader in the use and promotion of green technologies. Continue efforts to reduce the in-park infrastructure footprint and to minimize impacts on ecological integrity as part of park operations.**

*Actions:*

- Replace the Visitor Centre and White Pine day-use area sewage treatment systems with state of the art green technology, complete with interpretation panels for technology promotion.
- Replace the Marsh floating boardwalk with a boardwalk constructed using environmentally friendly materials.
- Decommission the Marsh Boardwalk Spur.
- Partner with private industry to install a solar electric tracking system at the Administration / Maintenance facility.
- Continue to optimize green technologies in fleet replacement (eg. replacement of a full sized sedan with multiple electric carts for in-park transportation).
- Promote the Dark Sky designation through special event partnering with Friends of Point Pelee and the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.
- Educate the public on the benefits of Dark Sky, both from an energy conservation perspective as well as preserving and restoring natural habitats.
- Decommission and restore twelve well sites within the Park.
- Convert all park water-related receptacles from manual to hands free. This will facilitate water conservation as well as enhance the visitor experience.

## 9.0 Monitoring



*Turtle Nest Monitoring, Parks Canada*

Monitoring is a key element of this management plan as it allows Parks Canada to report to Canadians on the progress made towards achieving the objectives and targets (expected results) outlined in the key strategies of the plan. Monitoring the results of management actions enables Parks Canada to track successes, identify obstacles and, when necessary, adjust implementation strategies in the park. On a larger scale, monitoring also contributes to reporting on the overall state of Parks Canada's system of protected heritage places and progress made towards achieving corporate targets as outlined in the *Parks Canada Corporate Plan*.

Parks Canada utilizes two types of monitoring: effectiveness monitoring (measuring results of management actions and comparing them to the previously set targets) and condition monitoring (for Point Pelee National Park, this involves measuring the state of ecosystem health, visitor experience, and public appreciation

and understanding). Annual implementation reports focus on the park's performance with regards to implementing the management plan. The State of the Park Report, required every five years as part of the management plan review, assesses the park's condition and trends relative to the three elements of the Parks Canada mandate. As well, the state of Aboriginal advisory relationships and the state of the park as assessed from an Aboriginal perspective are required. For Point Pelee National Park this will involve input from the Caldwell First Nation and the Walpole Island First Nation. The next Point Pelee National Park: State of the Park Report is due in 2012.

The Ecological Integrity Monitoring Program for Point Pelee National Park evaluates conditions and trends of ecosystem health and also tracks a series of management plan initiatives for effectiveness, including deer abundance monitoring, the *Middle Island Conservation Plan* active

resource management actions, progress made towards a fire management plan, reintroduction and population recovery of the southern flying squirrel, and recovery of the five-lined skink through habitat rehabilitation (see Appendix 2). Additional targets that measure the effectiveness of management actions relative to ecological integrity and resource protection are included throughout this management plan.

With external relations and visitor experience re-alignment, expected results for public appreciation and understanding and visitor experience are now defined. Parks Canada is in the process of developing and implementing a monitoring program that measures the success in facilitating a sense of connection for the visitor to the park and a national program to measure Canadians' level of awareness and understanding of Parks Canada's protected heritage places, and to assess the level of stakeholder and partner engagement in protection and presentation.

In the meantime, both the visitor experience and public appreciation and understanding assessments in the *Point Pelee National Park: State of the Park Report* (2007) have provided a useful starting point. Indicators in the 2007 State of the

Park Report to assess visitor experience included: visitor needs influence management, targeted opportunities, delivering high quality service and connecting visitors personally with place. Monitoring tools for visitor experience include the Visitor Information Program surveys, custom surveys such as birder surveys, the park 'Let's Keep In Touch' program, revenue tracking from program and activity fees, visitor statistics (including attendance), stakeholder consultation and public feedback. In the 2007 State of the Park Report, the indicator to assess public appreciation and understanding was active support. Monitoring tools for public appreciation and understanding include tracking numbers of targeted audiences contacted via park outreach initiatives, and measuring increases in opportunities for stakeholders and partners to become engaged with development and delivery of park activities, programs, services, products, events and supporting facilities.



## 10.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment



*Tilden Woods Trail, Kathryn Dufour*

A Strategic Environmental Assessment was completed on this management plan in accordance with the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals (2004). The Cabinet Directive states: “Ministers expect the strategic environmental assessment to consider the scope and nature of the likely environmental effects, the need for mitigation to reduce or eliminate adverse effects, and the likely importance of any adverse environmental effects, taking mitigation into account.” The Directive further states that: “the environmental considerations should be fully integrated into the analysis of each of the options developed for consideration, and the decision should incorporate the results of the strategic environmental assessment.” Within the consideration section of the Cabinet Directive, the importance of follow-up is also stated: “The strategic environmental assessment also should consider the need for follow-up measures to monitor environmental effects of the policy, plan or program.” Within

Parks Canada, follow-up with respect to the implementation of park management plans is largely achieved through subsequent reporting in the State of the Park Report, more specifically, the ecological integrity related indicators and measures.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment considered the vision of Point Pelee National Park, the five key strategies with their seventeen objectives and one hundred and twenty-three management actions presented in the management plan. The Strategic Environmental Assessment also considered the three management areas, which include six objectives and twenty management actions. The strategic direction and actions proposed in the management plan are not likely to result in any unacceptable adverse environmental effects. The proposed strategies and actions are consistent with Parks Canada and Government of Canada policy.



*Fall visit to Point Pelee National Park, Parks Canada*

Progress on the implementation of the management plan will be tracked by park management and reported internally through annual reporting on business plan performance. The 2007 State of the Park Report indicated that the overall assessment for the state of the park ecosystems

was fair. However; three of the four indicators for ecosystem integrity show a declining condition. The implementation of the Ecological Integrity Monitoring Plan for Point Pelee National Park will also provide management with a great deal of information to determine whether the actions proposed in this management plan are successful in improving the ecological integrity of the park for those indicators and measures requiring improvement and ensuring the maintenance of ecological integrity for the remaining indicators and measures. For those actions where an individual environmental assessment is required, follow-up as a component of the environmental assessment will help determine if proposed mitigation measures have been successful and allow for adaptive management should unforeseen adverse effects arise.

The cumulative effects resulting from reduction of the human footprint and the replacement of infrastructure with more environmentally sustainable design methods and materials will create an overall positive effect and improve ecological integrity while enhancing opportunities for visitor experience. The vast majority of management actions collectively will contribute towards: fostering positive relations with First Nations; protecting and presenting cultural resources; enhancing visitor experience; public appreciation; understanding and education, while minimizing the potential for adverse environmental effects.

Overall, the Strategic Environmental Assessment concluded that the strategic direction proposed in the *Point Pelee National Park Management Plan* is consistent with Parks Canada policy and that the majority of the proposed actions will result in positive environmental effects. No adverse residual effects are expected as a result of the implementation of the *Point Pelee National Park Management Plan*.

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## 12.0 Glossary

**Accretion:** Process by which land on a shoreline gradually increases as a result of deposits of sand or soil upon the shore.

**Active resource management:** Any prescribed course of action directed towards maintaining or changing the condition of cultural, physical or biological resources to achieve Parks Canada objectives.

**Adaptive Management:** A policy framework that recognizes biological uncertainty, while accepting the mandate to proceed on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge. An adaptive policy treats the program as a set of experiments designed to test and extend the scientific basis of management.

**Area of Scientific and Natural Interest (ANSI):** ANSIs are areas of land and water that represent significant geological (earth science) and biological (life science) features ([www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca)).

**Area Management Approach:** An approach to ensure the integrated delivery of the Agency mandate in a specific geographic area. The area can be based on the complexity of issues; the size of the heritage place; the logical grouping of resources; the special attachment to the area by local residents or visitors; or simply lends itself to a distinct management approach.

**Biodiversity:** Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

**Carolinian Canada Signature Site:** Refer to the Carolinian Canada Coalition website: [www.carolinian.org](http://www.carolinian.org).

**Citizen Science:** Projects or programs of scientific work in which volunteers, many without formal scientific training, participate in research-related tasks.

**Connection to Place:** Reflects the relevance and importance of heritage places to Canadians. The concept expresses the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual attachment Canadians and visitors feel towards our natural and cultural heritage places.

**Cultural Resource:** A human work or place that gives evidence of human activity or has spiritual or cultural meaning, and which has been determined to have historic value.

**Cultural Resource Value Statement:** A strategic document that identifies cultural resources and values for places, other than national historic sites, which are under the responsibility of Parks Canada. It identifies historic and other heritage values and their character-defining elements (both tangible and intangible) associated with a national park or national marine conservation area as a whole, as well as the range of cultural resources that contribute to these values.

**Culturally Sensitive Sites:** Sites that warrant special management, due to the sensitive nature of the cultural resources found there. Guidelines for the protection and use of these sites may be required.

**Dark Sky Preserve:** A Dark Sky Preserve is an area in which no artificial lighting is visible and active measures are in place to educate and promote the reduction of light pollution to the public and nearby municipalities. Sky glow from beyond the borders of the Preserve will be of comparable intensity, or less, to that of natural sky glow ([www.rasc.ca/lpa/darksky.shtml](http://www.rasc.ca/lpa/darksky.shtml)).

**Ecological Integrity:** With respect to a park, a condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and likely to persist, including abiotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes.

**Ecosystem:** An ecosystem is a community of organisms, including humans, and its non-living environment interacting with one another and intimately linked by a variety of biological, chemical and physical processes. Ecosystems are often embedded within other, larger ecosystems.

**Environmental Stewardship:** Taking care of the land, air, water, plants, animals and culture in such a way that they can be passed on to future generations.

**Erosion:** Process that causes a gradual wearing away of land by water, ice and wind.

**Exotic Invasive Species:** Introduced, non-indigenous species that can establish and proliferate within natural or semi-natural habitats, successfully competing with and displacing at least some of the native flora and fauna, impacting biodiversity and altering the natural structure and function of the ecosystem.

**Explorer Quotient (EQ):** a tool that helps identify visitor needs, interests, and expectations based on their personal values and travel motivations ([www.pc.gc.ca/voyage-travel/qe-eq/qe-eq\\_e.asp](http://www.pc.gc.ca/voyage-travel/qe-eq/qe-eq_e.asp)).

**Field Unit:** An administrative division developed by Parks Canada, combining the management and administration of one or more national parks, national historic sites, marine conservation areas or historic canals. There are 33 Field Units across Canada.

**Hyper-abundant species:** Native species in a national park can be defined as hyper-abundant when their numbers clearly exceed the upper range of natural variability that is characteristic of the ecosystem, and where there is a demonstrated long-term negative impact on ecological integrity.

**Indicator:** A nationally or bio-regionally consistent summary reporting statement that provides a comprehensive synopsis of each component of the Agency's 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.

**International Bird Area (IBA):** IBAs are key sites for conservation that do one (or more) of three things: hold significant numbers of one or more globally threatened species; are one of a set of sites that together hold a suite of restricted-range species or biome-restricted species; or, have exceptionally large numbers of migratory or congregatory species ([www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/](http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/)).

**Key Strategy:** Concrete expression of the vision statement that provides heritage place-wide direction. Must give a clear overview of how the protected heritage place will be managed and how the three mandate elements will be achieved in a mutually supportive manner.

**No Net Loss:** A concept that means that conservation losses that occur in one area are balanced by a gain elsewhere.

**Public appreciation and understanding:** Parks Canada aims to reach Canadians at home, at leisure, at school and in their communities through communication and education opportunities designed to increase understanding and appreciation of the significance of Parks Canada's heritage places and the importance of protecting and presenting them. Parks Canada also seeks to broaden its base of support by engaging its stakeholders and partners, and encouraging shared leadership through active participation in the development and implementation of the Agency's future direction.

**RAMSAR:** The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is "an intergovernmental treaty that embodies the commitments of its member countries to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and to plan for the "wise use", or sustainable use, of all of the wetlands in their territories" ([www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-about/main/ramsar/1-36\\_4000\\_0\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-about/main/ramsar/1-36_4000_0_)).

**Resource protection:** In national parks, resource protection includes all those activities related to the protection of cultural and natural resources and natural processes.

**Restoration:** The process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed (Canadian Parks Council 2008: 8, 15).

**SARA:** The *Species at Risk Act* is a key federal government commitment to prevent wildlife species from becoming extinct and secure the necessary actions for their recovery. It provides for the legal protection of wildlife species and the conservation of their biological diversity.

**Seven Generations principle/  
Seventh Generation principle:** Decision-making is guided by consideration of the welfare and wellbeing of the seventh generation to come.

**Social media:** Primarily Internet and mobile-based tools for freely sharing and discussing information.

**Species at Risk:** Extirpated, endangered or threatened species or a species of special concern. "Extirpated species" means a species that no longer exists in the wild in Canada, but exists elsewhere in the wild. "Endangered species" means a wildlife species that is facing imminent extirpation or extinction. "Threatened species" means a wildlife species that is likely to become an endangered species if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction. "Species of special concern" means a wildlife species that may become a threatened or an endangered species because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

**Stakeholder:** A person or organization with an interest in Point Pelee National Park of Canada. Organizations may include both government and non-government organizations, commercial, and for profit and non-profit organizations.

**State of the Park Report:** This report provides a synopsis of the current condition of a national park, national historic site, or national marine conservation area, and assesses performance in meeting established goals and objectives for indicators associated with the Agency's mandate. These reports are produced on a five-year cycle, and are the basis for the five-year management plan review.

**Target:** Established to facilitate measuring and reporting on progress in achieving results.

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, founded in 1945 with an aim to build peace in the world through knowledge, social progress, exchange and mutual understanding among peoples.

**Vision Statement:** A passionate, inspirational, unique, picture of the heritage place at its desired future. It must portray the integrated relationship between the mandate components and be prepared with the involvement of the public, Aboriginal communities, stakeholders and partners.

**Visitor Experience:** the sum total of a visitor's personal interaction with heritage places and people that awakens their senses, affects their emotions, stimulates their mind and helps the visitor create a connection and a sense of attachment to these places.



**APPENDIX 1**  
 Summary of Planned Actions: Implementation Strategy

Implementation of this management plan is the responsibility of the Southwestern Ontario Field Unit Superintendent. The management actions proposed in the management plan will be implemented through the Field Unit Sustainable Business Plan, which identifies the management plan actions that will be implemented annually, along with the costs and specific timing.

A summary of the priority actions is presented in the table below. This is not a comprehensive list of actions but, rather, an indication of where priorities lie and where efforts will be directed in the first five years of the planning cycle. The table does not include ongoing, routine

management activities. Priorities have been assigned to indicate which actions will proceed immediately (by 2011), which will be implemented during the first planning cycle (2010-2015), and which are assigned to the longer term (2015-2020). Some actions will be ongoing and thus implemented in more than one time period.

Reporting on progress will occur through the annual management plan implementation update and within the State of the Park Report, after which the management plan will be reviewed. The State of the Park Report and the management plan review process will occur in 2012 and 2015 successively.

<b>KEY STRATEGY ONE                      Respecting the Seventh Generation: Honouring First Nations                      Connections to Point Pelee National Park</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize relationships and enable establishment of a First Nations Advisory Committee for Point Pelee National Park.	•		
Work with First Nations to facilitate visitation and enjoyment of the park by First Nations communities.		•	•
Work with First Nations to explore and enable opportunities for traditional cultural activities in the park.	•	•	•
Work with First Nations to expand employment programs for First Nations youth and recent graduates.	•	•	•
Engage First Nations as members of the Parks Canada team at Point Pelee National Park.		•	•
Share best practices and planning tools for protecting and presenting heritage resources between the Caldwell First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation and Parks Canada.	•	•	•

<b>KEY STRATEGY ONE</b> <b>Respecting the Seventh Generation: Honouring First Nations</b> <b>Connections to Point Pelee National Park</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2012-2015</b>	<b>2015-2020</b>
Facilitate opportunities for First Nations to be engaged with the park by forming linkages for collaborative research and conservation, restoration and recovery efforts for Species at Risk, and ecological integrity.		•	•
Raise awareness of First Nations history, culture, language and the importance of reconciliation, with content input, support and participation of the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.	•	•	•
Collaborate with the Caldwell First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation to explore opportunities for park visitors to purchase authentic, locally produced First Nations products.		•	•
Explore development and delivery of formal education programs that are relevant to First Nations, as defined by them, and that foster a stronger sense of connection for First Nations youth with the park.		•	•

<b>KEY STRATEGY TWO</b> <b>Discovering, Enjoying and Connecting with Point Pelee National Park</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2012-2015</b>	<b>2015-2020</b>
Develop a visitor experience concept, using social science research and trends, to build a menu of programs, activities, products, services, events and supporting facilities for leisure, recreation, enjoyment, learning and discovery that meet the needs of current and potential visitors.	•	•	•
Use social science to identify markets and needs and interests; renew and enhance visitor facilities, programs, services and products to meet market expectations.		•	•
Revitalize infrastructure, as informed by social science and the visitor experience concept, which supports visitor experience opportunities, including the shuttle service, Tip, Marsh Boardwalk and Delaurier Homestead.	•		
Retire under used facilities, as informed by social science, at Northwest Beach and continue to monitor visitor interests to determine what supporting facilities are needed.		•	
Undertake planning, engaging stakeholders and partners, for celebrations and a legacy initiative to commemorate the 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Point Pelee National Park in 2018.		•	•
Move forward with the creation of a visitor orientation/welcome node near the park entrance to engage visitors as early as possible in their visit.	•		

<b>KEY STRATEGY 2</b> <b>Discovering, Enjoying and Connecting with Point Pelee National Park</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2012-2015</b>	<b>2015-2020</b>
Design services and programs to increase the park's appeal to casual and novice birdwatchers and wildlife viewers, including providing targeted yet diversified facilities, products, programs and services that are created through strategic alliances with key stakeholders and partners.		•	
Promote the park designation as a Dark Sky Preserve and develop opportunities for visitors and local residents to understand and appreciate the dark sky, its importance to the natural environment and its role in folklore and cultures.	•	•	•
Use market-based approach that focuses on visitor needs, interests and patterns of use to introduce new discovery, leisure and learning-based visitor experience opportunities that focus on Species at Risk and their recovery.		•	•
Use traveller segmentation tools to build understanding of the target visitor markets and their needs to design relevant opportunities and market to these audiences.		•	
Work with interested partners to deliver the program of visitor opportunities and to promote the park.		•	•
Encourage public involvement by expanding and enhancing the current Parks Canada and Friends of Point Pelee volunteer programs, including more opportunities of interest and relevance to volunteers.		•	•
Partner with local and regional business interests to promote the region as a premier tourism destination for birding in North America.	•	•	•
Work with the Camp Henry Operating Committee to invest in and position the Henry Community Youth Camp as a unique outdoor education centre in the Essex region where children experience Canada's most southern national park with its ecologically rich and rare natural habitats and plants and animals - all without having to venture far from home.			•

<b>KEY STRATEGY THREE Restoring the Carolinian Habitat Mosaic</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Prepare and implement Integrated Vegetation Communities Management Plan.	•		
Prepare and implement Fire Management Plan for the park.	•		
Develop and implement Invasive Alien Plant Management Plan for the park.		•	
Prepare a plan for restoration of the Middle Island ecosystem following reduction of double-crested cormorant nest densities to goal levels.		•	
Complete recovery strategies in accordance with the Species at Risk legislation for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastern prickly pear cactus</li> <li>• Red mulberry</li> <li>• Common hoptree</li> <li>• Dwarf hackberry</li> <li>• American waterwillow</li> <li>• Eastern hognose snake</li> <li>• Tiger salamander</li> </ul>	•	•	
Integrate considerations for Species at Risk recovery into park programs for active resource management and restoration, visitor experience and public outreach education.	•	•	•
Engage and consult First Nations, the scientific community, other protected heritage area managers and local naturalists' groups to enable their meaningful participation in conservation, protection of critical habitat for Species at Risk and proposing feasible approaches to control invasive species.		•	•
Enable research into the potential beneficial uses of invasive species as a possible control measure while also providing new economic, visitor experience or learning opportunities.			•
Carry out active resource management of the nesting population of double-crested cormorants on Middle Island through a program of culling, nest removals and deterrents as outlined in the Middle Island Conservation Plan.	•	•	
Carry out research and monitoring and develop the required action plans for species of concern in the park, as relates to invasive, alien, non-native, and hyper-abundant species, in collaboration with the scientific community, other conservation organizations and First Nations.		•	•
Develop a management strategy for the marsh addressing water quality and including restoration of natural processes to enhance ecological integrity and maintain biodiversity representative of a Southern Great Lakes marsh ecosystem.		•	
Develop programs that enable participation in research, monitoring and restoration as part of the Park in Your School curriculum-based formal education.		•	•
Design and develop public outreach education and communications programs informed by social science research and trends for the target audiences and their interests that highlight park research, monitoring and active management required to maintain ecological integrity.		•	•

<b>KEY STRATEGY FOUR</b> <b>Six Thousand Years of Stories: Protecting and Presenting Cultural Resources</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2012-2015</b>	<b>2015-2020</b>
Complete and maintain an inventory of park cultural resources.		•	
Undertake the development of a Cultural Resource Value Statement.		•	
Complete a Cultural Resources Management Strategy, which includes a management framework and cultural resources monitoring program.		•	
Work with First Nations, former park residents and others with connection to the park to gather their stories and traditional knowledge and connections to this land.		•	•
Ensure all stakeholders are involved in defining the value of cultural resources in the park.		•	
Engage First Nations, former residents and others in the development and delivery of visitor experience and public outreach education programs.	•	•	•
Ensure marketing and public outreach education strategies highlight opportunities for discovery, enjoyment and learning of the cultural heritage of the park.		•	•
Partner with communities and cultural groups, encourage events in the park that celebrate cultural heritage (homecomings, 'doors open' days, powwows).		•	•
Pursue the opportunity of a postage stamp, designed in collaboration with local artists, to commemorate the 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Point Pelee National Park.		•	

<b>KEY STRATEGY FIVE</b> <b>Collaborating: Our Key to Success</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2012-2015</b>	<b>2015-2020</b>
Develop a broad and innovative public outreach education strategy that will advance the three core elements of the mandate – protection, education, and facilitating visitor experience.		•	
Develop a strategy to increase the park's profile in the Greater Toronto Area.		•	
Develop a more effective and interactive park website with links to partners and First Nations, including research, active management, environmental education and stewardship.		•	
Expand the current Parks Canada and Friends of Point Pelee volunteer programs to incorporate a suite of 'citizen science' opportunities of interest to volunteers.		•	
Expand the Park in Your School curriculum-based formal education program.		•	•
Support the Carolinian Canada Coalition in the delivery of the programs and services defined in their contribution agreement with Parks Canada.	•	•	

<b>KEY STRATEGY FIVE Collaborating: Our Key to Success</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Participate in discussion and environmental assessments of renewable energy projects.	•	•	•
Complete renewal and enhancement of the visitor experience offer of the park.		•	
Be an active partner with Tourism Windsor-Essex-Pelee Island.	•	•	•
Participate in community tourism planning and events.		•	•
Work with the local business community to explore ways to promote and profile the park in the region and the businesses in the park.		•	•
Expand the 'park as a venue' for community events.		•	•
Develop and deliver an annual update for the public, stakeholders and partners on the progress of management plan implementation.	•	•	•
Develop and deliver an annual program to celebrate and recognize partner, stakeholder and citizen's contributions.		•	•
Develop and implement a strategy for corporate engagement.		•	•

<b>Area Management Approach Mainland: Western Shore</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Use the Visitor Experience Concept to guide revitalization, renewal and development of new visitor experience opportunities.		•	
Revitalize the Marsh Boardwalk area infrastructure and the visitor experience opportunities associated with this visitor node.	•	•	
Replace the Tip shuttle, considering information from the visitor needs and interests survey and considering 'green energy' technology to renew this signature visitor experience opportunity and to ensure protection of the fragile Tip area of the park.	•		
Guided by social science information, retire facilities at Northwest Beach, restore the dune habitat and continue to monitor visitation to determine what facilities are needed. Develop a restoration plan for the active dune area.		•	
Redevelop the Visitor Centre experience guided by social science information.		•	
Guided by social science information, create a visitor orientation/welcome node near the park entrance to engage visitors early in their park visit.	•		
Participate and invest in regional studies to better understand shoreline processes and dynamics and develop management options.	•		
Create a greater awareness and understanding of the ecological issues caused by the erosion versus accretion of this shoreline.		•	•
Work with the community and all levels of government responsible to seek a sustainable solution.		•	•

<b>Area Management Approach Mainland: Eastern Shore and Marsh</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Undertake a review of all visitor experience opportunities offered in the marsh including canoeing, kayaking, fishing to assess ecological impacts, verify visitor needs and interests and assure safety.		•	
Develop a strategy to address recommendations of the review.		•	
In consultation with visitor and tourism stakeholders, develop a menu of visitor experience opportunities that ensures natural and cultural resources enabling visitor experience remain protected.		•	
Work with stakeholders, the community and all levels of government responsible for and impacted by land use planning decisions.	•	•	•
Provide information as required on the ecological significance as well as the recreational, economic and social contributions of the park.	•	•	•
Participate and invest in regional studies to better understand shoreline processes and dynamics and develop management options.	•		
Create a greater awareness and understanding of the ecological issue caused by the accelerated rates of erosion.		•	
Work with stakeholders, the community and all levels of government responsible to seek a sustainable solution.		•	•

<b>Area Management Approach Middle Island</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2012- 2015</b>	<b>2015- 2020</b>
Based on social science information, identify priority audiences within the broad spectrum of Canadians and design public outreach education and communications programs responsive to varying levels of awareness and understanding of ecosystems and ecological integrity, the role of national parks in protecting biodiversity, Species at Risk, ecological integrity, and resource conservation management techniques.	•	•	
Use Parks Canada's effectiveness monitoring and evaluation program to demonstrate success in creating awareness and understanding.		•	•





**APPENDIX 2**

**Ecological Integrity Monitoring for Point Pelee National Park**

**Management Effectiveness Monitoring**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>General Ecological Integrity Objective</b>	<b>Ecological Integrity Measures</b>	<b>Target</b>
Deer Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce excessive deer grazing impact on Park's vegetation.</li> <li>Reduce pressure on herbaceous vegetation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deer abundance</li> <li>White Trillium height</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain an estimated carrying capacity of 6-8 deer per km<sup>2</sup> by 2012</li> <li>Trilliums' height show an increasing trend</li> </ul>
Middle Island Conservation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and restore Middle Island ecological integrity, including Species at Risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vegetation health and regeneration</li> <li>Cormorant nest density</li> <li>Species at risk plant monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rate of vegetation decline reduced or halted by 2012</li> <li>30-60 nests/ha by 2012</li> <li>Rate of species at risk plant decline reduced or halted by 2012</li> </ul>
Action on the Ground LESS Restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the LESS area extent</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine the fire impacts on the LESS communities by evaluating how the main plant species (indicators) recover from fire in terms of occupancy (percent cover per plot).</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the light conditions for the Eastern prickly pear cactus</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve habitat (LESS) conditions for open habitat birds</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve habitat (LESS) conditions for related butterflies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LESS aerial extent (ha)</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant species indicators' presence and abundance (cover)</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mean light/canopy cover conditions over cactus.</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open habitat birds diversity</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Butterfly diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase up to 8 ha of LESS habitat in the fields.</li> <li>Increase up to 2 ha of LESS habitat in the west beach area (for 5 years)</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase LESS plant species cover on <math>\pm</math> 2sd of mean annual value from baseline data.</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of cactus in shade decreases by 5%</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an increasing trend for open habitat birds</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Butterfly diversity shows increasing trend</li> </ul>
Five-lined skink recovery through habitat rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat augmentation for species conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five-lined skink abundance</li> <li>Five-lined skink habitat increment as per the LESS aerial extent measure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No targets established</li> </ul>

**Ecological Integrity Monitoring for  
Point Pelee National Park: Condition Monitoring**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>General Ecological Integrity Objective</b>	<b>Ecological Integrity Measures</b>	<b>Target</b>
Southern Flying Squirrel reintroduction and population recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore the species population at self-sustainable levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flying squirrel abundance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A population of 600 individuals</li> </ul>
Forest, LESS and Marsh birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve park biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breeding bird abundance and diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain or improve the current level of bird diversity</li> </ul>
Frogs and Toads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To preserve park biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Species abundance and diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain or improve the current level of anuran diversity.</li> </ul>
Forest and Marsh Landscape characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase habitat amount and connectivity in the Greater Park ecosystem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective forest amount</li> <li>Effective forest connectivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reach an effective size and connectivity of forest and marsh areas in the Greater Park Ecosystem.</li> </ul>
Tree Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To monitor the forest health condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree crown condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain plot trees below 25% of crown dieback</li> </ul>
Birding Trail impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce impact on vegetation from visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Length of unofficial seasonal trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce length of unofficial seasonal trails</li> </ul>
Invasive Alien Plants (Spotted Knapweed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the LESS vegetation conditions by reducing Spotted Knapweed cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Species' cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Spotted Knapweed cover on <math>\pm 2</math> sd of mean annual value from baseline by 2013</li> </ul>
Water Quality in the Marsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the water quality of Pelee's Marsh ponds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water quality parameters: turbidity, pH, nutrients, dissolved oxygen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the water quality to "good" level as defined in an established index</li> </ul>

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### Species of Conservation Concern

### **Point Pelee National Park COSEWIC-Listed Species at Risk**

This list includes COSEWIC-listed Species at Risk for Point Pelee National Park. The status listed after each species represents its national status as assigned by COSEWIC and is not necessarily the status of the species in the park. Species no longer found in the park are identified with an asterisk (\*).

#### **Birds (25)**

PASSENGER PIGEON (Extinct) \*  
 NORTHERN BOBWHITE (Endangered) \*  
 KING RAIL (Endangered)  
 PIPING PLOVER (circumcinctus subspecies) (Endangered)  
 BARN OWL (Endangered) \*  
 KIRTLAND'S WARBLER (Endangered)  
 ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (Endangered)  
 PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (Endangered)  
 HENSLOW'S SPARROW (Endangered)  
 EASTERN LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (Endangered)  
 RED KNOT (rufa subspecies) (Endangered)  
 HOODED WARBLER (Threatened)  
 LEAST BITTERN (Threatened)  
 GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (Threatened)  
 CHIMNEY SWIFT (Threatened)  
 COMMON NIGHTHAWK (Threatened)  
 RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (Threatened)  
 OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER (Threatened)  
 CANADA WARBLER (Threatened)  
 WHIP-POOR-WILL (Threatened)  
 PEREGRINE FALCON (anatum subspecies) (Species of Concern)  
 SHORT-EARED OWL (Species of Concern)  
 CERULEAN WARBLER (Species of Concern)  
 LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (Species of Concern)  
 EASTERN YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (Species of Concern)  
 RUSTY BLACKBIRD (Species of Concern)  
 HORNED GREBE (Species of Concern)

#### **Mammals (3)**

GREY FOX (Threatened) \*  
 EASTERN MOLE (Species of Concern)  
 EASTERN WOLF (Species of Concern)\*

**Amphibians (3)**

TIGER SALAMANDER (Great Lakes population) (Extirpated) \*  
NORTHERN (BLANCHARD'S) CRICKET FROG (Endangered) \*  
FOWLER'S TOAD (Threatened) \*

**Insects (1)**

MONARCH (Species of Concern)

**Molluscs (1)**

EASTERN PONDMUSSEL (Endangered)

**Reptiles (15)**

TIMBER RATTLESNAKE (Extirpated) \*  
BLUE RACER (Endangered) \*  
LAKE ERIE WATERSNAKE (Endangered)  
GRAY RATSNAKE (Carolinian population) (Endangered) \*  
FIVE-LINED SKINK (Carolinian population) (Endangered)  
EASTERN FOXSNAKE (Carolinian population) (Endangered)  
SPOTTED TURTLE (Endangered) \*  
MASSASAUGA (Threatened) \*  
STINKPOT (Threatened)  
SPINY SOFTSHELL (Threatened)  
BLANDING'S TURTLE (Great Lakes/St. Lawrence population) (Threatened)  
EASTERN HOG-NOSED SNAKE (Threatened)  
NORTHERN MAP TURTLE (Species of Concern)  
SNAPPING TURTLE (Species of Concern)  
MILKSNAKE (Species of Concern) \*

**Fish (6)**

PUGNOSE SHINER (Endangered) \*  
LAKE CHUBSUCKER (Endangered)  
SPOTTED GAR (Threatened)  
WARMOUTH (Species of Concern)  
GRASS PICKEREL (Species of Concern)  
LAKE STURGEON (Great Lakes/Upper St. Lawrence populations) (Threatened)\*

**Plants (11)**

EASTERN PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS (Endangered)

RED MULBERRY (Endangered)

BUTTERNUT (Endangered)

WILD HYACINTH (Middle Island population) (Threatened)

KENTUCKY COFFEE-TREE (Middle Island population) (Threatened)

AMERICAN WATER-WILLOW (Threatened)

COMMON HOPTREE (Threatened)

DWARF HACKBERRY (Threatened)

BLUE ASH (Species of Concern)

SWAMP ROSE-MALLOW (Species of Concern)

CLIMBING PRAIRIE ROSE (Species of Concern)

**Non-vascular Plants (1)**

SPOON-LEAVED MOSS (Endangered)



**APPENDIX 4**

Point Pelee National Park Management Plan: Key Strategies and Objectives that Support Parks Canada Agency Performance Targets

Program Activity	Parks Canada Agency Targets	Key Strategies	Objectives
Heritage Resources Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26 national parks to improve one ecological integrity indicator from March 2008 to March 2013.</li> </ul>	3	3.1, 3.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80 percent of active management targets to improve ecological integrity are met by March 2014</li> </ul>	1, 3	1.2, 3.1, 3.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the condition of cultural resources by March 2014.</li> </ul>	4	4.1, 4.2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete 100 percent of the Species at Risk recovery strategies (for which Parks Canada has lead responsibility) by 2014.</li> </ul>	3	3.3
Visitor Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On average, 85 percent of visitors at surveyed locations consider the place meaningful to them.</li> </ul>	2, 3	2.1, 3.4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On average, 90 percent of visitors at surveyed locations are satisfied with their visit and 50 percent of visitors at surveyed locations are very satisfied with their visit.</li> </ul>	2, 3	2.1, 3.4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visitation to increase by 16 percent between 2008 and 2012.</li> </ul>	2, 5	2.2, 5.3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On average, 60 percent of visitors consider they have learned about the natural and cultural heritage of the place.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1.2, 2.1, 3.4, 4.2, 5.1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On average, 90 percent of visitors at surveyed locations enjoyed their visit.</li> </ul>	2, 3	2.1, 3.4
Public Outreach Education and External Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the percentage of Canadians that consider that they learned about the heritage of Parks Canada's administered places by 2014.</li> </ul>	3, 5	3.5, 5.1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the percentage of Canadians who understand that nationally significant places that are administered by Parks Canada are protected and presented on their behalf by March 2014.</li> </ul>	3, 5	3.5, 5.1
Stakeholder and Partner Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the percentage of stakeholders and partners that support the protection and presentation of Parks Canada administered places by March 2014.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 5	1.2, 2.3, 3.3, 3.5, 5.1, 5.4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the percentage of stakeholders and partners that feel they have opportunities to influence and contribute to Parks Canada activities by March 2014.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 5	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.3, 3.5, 5.1, 5.4