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Riel House National Historic Site of Canada management plan

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RIEL HOUSE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

Management Plan

August 2003

Foreword

Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas represent the soul of Canada. They are a central part of who we are and what we are. They are places of magic and wonder and heritage. Each tells its own story. Together, they connect Canadians to our roots, to our future and to each other.

What we cherish as part of our national identity, we also recognise as part of our national responsibility. All Canadians share the obligation to preserve and protect Canada's unique cultural and natural heritage. Together, we hold our national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas in trust for the benefit of this and future generations. To achieve this, practical action grounded in long term thinking is needed.

These principles form the foundation of this new management plan for Riel House National Historic Site of Canada. May I offer my deep appreciation to the vast range of thoughtful Canadians who helped forge this plan. I am especially grateful to our very dedicated team from Parks Canada and to all those local organisations and individuals who have demonstrated such good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

In that same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Riel House National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Copps". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sheila Copps
Minister of Canadian Heritage

Recommendation Statement

Riel House
National Historic Site of Canada
Management Plan

Recommended for approval by:



Alan Latourelle
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada



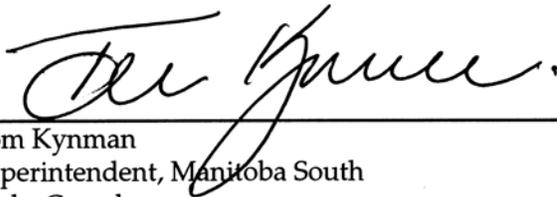
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1. Introduction

Riel House National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC) is near the Red River, in Winnipeg, Manitoba (Figure 1). The Parks Canada property is 0.8 hectares on which is a house -- the family home of Louis Riel -- built in the Red River Frame tradition (Figure 2). This land and house were part of a river lot that once stretched from the Red to the Seine River, more than four kilometres apart (Figure 3). Riel House was acquired by the Government of Canada in 1969 as the place to commemorate Louis Riel, a person of national historic significance. It was designated a national historic site in 1976 and opened to the public in 1980. La Société historique de Saint-Boniface has operated Riel House NHSC under contract with Parks Canada since 1980.

The restoration, management, and interpretation of Riel House NHSC have been based on a 1977 site development proposal, the forerunner to a site management plan. Under the *Parks Canada Agency Act* (1998), a management plan for national historic sites administered by Parks Canada will be prepared

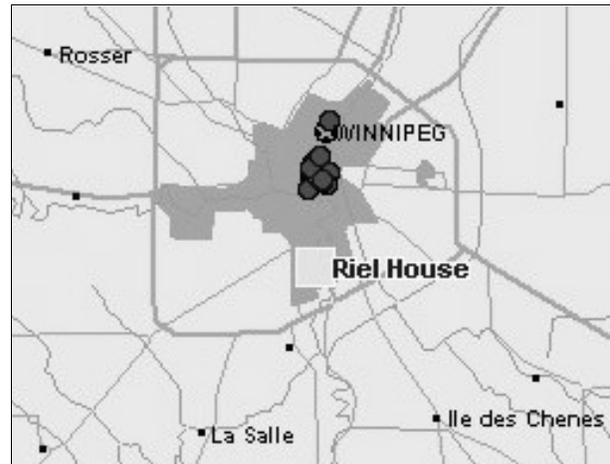


Figure 1. Riel House NHSC, south St. Vital, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Parks Canada)



Figure 2. Riel House restored and furnished to 1886. (A. Cornellier)

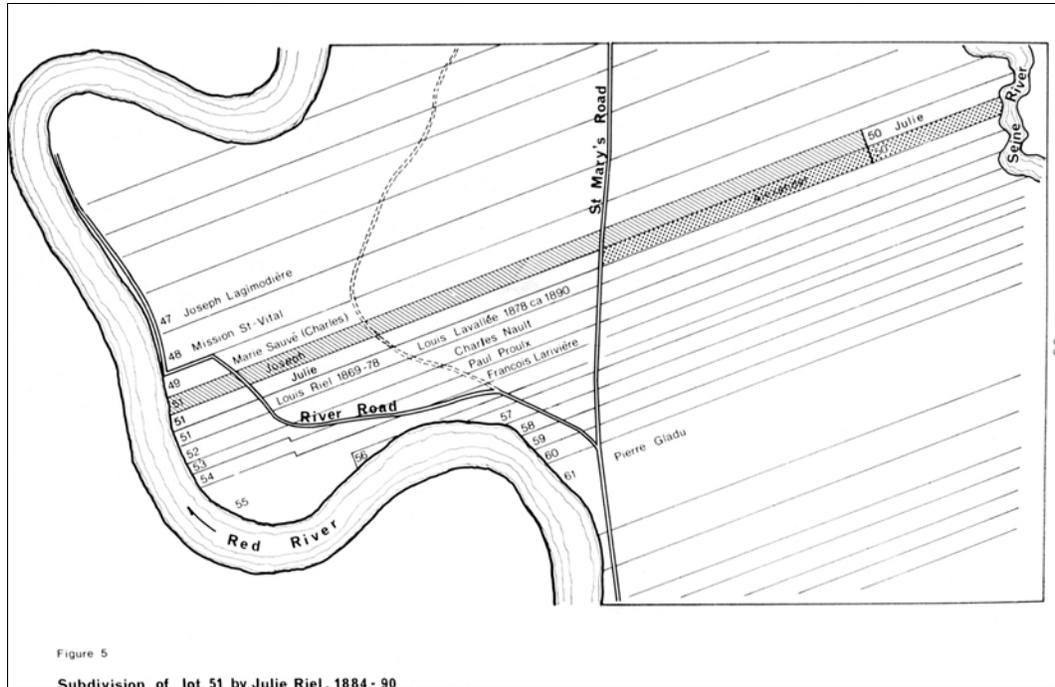


Figure 3. Subdivision of lot 51 by Julie Riel, 1884-90. (From Riel Family: Home and Lifestyle at St-Vital, 1860-1910 by D. Payment, Manuscript Report Series No. 379, Parks Canada)

and tabled by the Minister of Canadian Heritage in Parliament. This is the first such plan for Riel House. The primary goal of the management plan is to ensure the site's commemorative integrity, using Parks Canada's cultural resource management principles and practice.

This management plan also addresses an objective from *Gathering Strength - Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* (1997), specifically:

No attempt at reconciliation with Aboriginal people can be complete without reference to the sad events culminating in the death of Métis leader Louis Riel. These events cannot be undone; however, we can and will continue to look for ways of affirming the contributions of Métis people in Canada and of reflecting Louis Riel's proper place in Canada's history.

As the place where Louis Riel is commemorated as a person of national historic significance, Riel House has an important role to play in conveying Riel's place in this nation's history.

This management plan will guide Parks Canada and its partners as they protect and present Riel House NHSC. While the plan should be effective for ten to fifteen years, it will be reviewed in five years time for effectiveness and continued relevance.

A summary of the planning program process and public consultation are presented in Appendix A.

1.1 Riel House and the Family of National Historic Sites

Riel House NHSC is one of more than 860 national historic sites nationwide¹. National historic sites are places that commemorate significant people, places and events of Canada's history. Riel House is a special place associated with Louis Riel and his importance in Canadian history (Figure 4). His provisional government of 1869-70 negotiated the terms of entry of Manitoba into Confederation as a province rather than as a territory. In 1885, he led the Métis in an armed resistance in defense of Métis rights in the Northwest Territories. Riel gave himself up to the Canadian government forces at Batoche on May 15, 1885. He was subsequently tried for treason, convicted and executed by the Canadian government on November 16, 1885. His body was brought back to the family home (the house today) and was thereafter buried in the cemetery at St. Boniface Cathedral. The contributions of and controversies surrounding the Métis patriot Louis Riel continue to influence the evolving landscape of Canada as a nation. Riel House



Figure 4. Louis Riel, ca. 1880. (Saskatchewan Archives)

¹ The national program of commemoration is made up of several distinct but interlocking parts. In addition to the more than 860 national historic sites of Canada (145 of which are administered by Parks Canada), over 550 persons and 350 other aspects of our history, including historic events, have been commemorated as being of national significance. Designations are made by the Minister of Canadian Heritage, on the advice of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

educates and enriches Canadians' understanding of this story of nationhood.

Riel House NHSC is linked to other national historic sites and provincial and municipal heritage sites related to the 1869 Red River Resistance and the 1885 North West Rebellion / Métis Resistance (for example, Upper Fort Garry NHSC, Batoche NHSC, Fort Battleford NHSC, Battle of Fish Creek NHSC, and Duck Lake NHSC). The Forks NHSC has the plaque commemorating the 'Creation of Manitoba' which is of particular relevance to Louis Riel's commemoration.

Other prairie sites relating to Métis and Manitoba Francophone history include, for example, the Grey Nuns' Convent NHSC, Parc historique Lagimodière-Gaboury, La Chapelle de Notre-Dame-du-Bon-Secours Provincial Heritage Site and St. Norbert Provincial Heritage Park.

Riel House, as well as Batoche NHSC, is also the place where the Métis river lot settlement pattern is commemorated as a form of prairie settlement. Other prairie settlement commemorations include the Neubergthal (Mennonite) Street Village NHSC in Manitoba, the Stirling Mormon Agricultural Village NHSC in Alberta, and Motherwell Homestead NHSC, Saskatchewan.

1.2 Commemorative Integrity

"Commemorative intent" identifies the reasons for a site's designation as a national historic site and provides the reference point on which commemorative integrity is pursued. It is determined from the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), approved by the Minister responsible for Canada's national historic sites. Based on the Board recommendations,

Riel House NHSC is of national historic significance as the location where Louis Riel is commemorated as a person of national historic significance; and as an example of Métis river lots, a form of prairie settlement.

Louis Riel was designated a person of national significance in 1960 because he headed the provisional government for Manitoba in Red River

in 1869 and he directed negotiations for the creation of the Province of Manitoba in 1870 (Figure 5). In 1989, the HSMBC further recommended that Métis river lots are prairie settlement forms of national historic and architectural significance and should be commemorated at Riel House.



Figure 5. Métis Provisional Government, 1870. (Manitoba Archives)

The place designated by the HSMBC is the entire portion of river lots 50 and 51 owned by Parks Canada.

“Commemorative integrity” is the leading goal in the management of national historic sites under Parks Canada’s care. The concept of commemorative integrity is used to describe the health or wholeness of a national historic site. A national historic site has commemorative integrity when the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public, and when the site’s heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected by all whose decisions or actions affect the site.

A Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) identifies the historic values, the cultural resources² and the messages to be considered and accounted for in the decisions and actions that may affect the integrity of a site. The Riel House NHSC *Commemorative Integrity Statement* was approved by the Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada, in July 1999. This management plan is based on the protection and presentation objectives in the CIS.

² A cultural resource is a human work or place that gives evidence of human activity or has spiritual or cultural meaning, and has been determined to have historic value according to municipal, provincial, or federal designation, or by community standards of what has cultural or spiritual meaning.

**Commemorative
Integrity**

The concept of commemorative integrity is used to describe the health or wholeness of a national historic site. A national historic site has commemorative integrity when the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public, and when the site's heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected by all whose decisions or actions affect the site.

Ensuring commemorative integrity is the primary goal in the proper management of a national historic site.

**Cultural Resource
Management**

To ensure that national historic sites and their associated resources and values are protected and presented appropriately, Parks Canada has developed the *Cultural Resource Management Policy*.

Cultural resource management comprises generally accepted practices for the conservation and presentation of cultural resources, founded on principles and carried out in a practice that integrates professional, technical and administrative activities so that the historic value of cultural resources is taken into account in actions that might affect them. In Parks Canada, cultural resource management encompasses the presentation and use, as well as the conservation of cultural resources.

The principles of cultural resource management have been used to prepare this plan and will continue to guide management decisions which affect the development and operation of this national historic site. Any activity that threatens or impairs the site's commemorative integrity will not be permitted.

2. Riel House 2001

The overall approach to the restoration, management and interpretation of Riel House NHSC has been based on the 1977 Riel House Site Development Proposal, the forerunner to a site management plan. Two elements of that proposal were not pursued: a below ground visitor reception centre (the site has an outdoor exhibit) and a means of direct access from the site to the Red River.

The commemorative integrity of Riel House NHSC is in guarded condition. The building and grounds are maintained adequately, but improvements are needed to the heritage presentation. Unfortunately, much of the river lot has been lost to urban development.

2.1 Cultural Resource Protection and Management

The river setting of Riel House has been lost from housing around the property (Figure 6). The possibility of further development next to the property is a concern. Nearly 50 percent of Riel House NHSC has been physically impacted by on-site development (e.g., parking lot, utility lines, exhibit area). Whether the type and placement of vegetation on the site today are representative of Riel House in the 1880s or of Métis river lots is not known and requires further examination.



Figure 6. Riel House seen from River Road with homes in background. (B. Hoskins)

The most prominent cultural resource at Riel House NHSC is the house itself. The house, believed to have been built in 1880-81, is of the “*pièce-sur-pièce de charpente*” (post-on-sill) construction of the Red River Frame tradition. It has been restored by Parks Canada to the period of 1886.

2.2 Heritage Presentation Program

The heritage presentation program is delivered by La Société historique de Saint-Boniface (SHSB), under contract with Parks Canada. The program has been based on three historical themes identified in 1976: Métis in Manitoba from 1870-1900; Louis Riel, Métis leader and founder of Manitoba, and the role of Riel and Lagimodière families in Métis and Francophone society.

The presentation focus is the house, furnished to the Spring 1886 when Louis Riel's family was in a state of mourning after his execution. Costumed staff give visitors a history of the Riel-Lagimodière family. They also interpret the lifestyles of a Métis family of the late 19th century, using historic objects about the house and garden. The layout of the house restricts the number of visitors to no more than 15 at a time. An outdoor exhibit provides an orientation to the site themes (Figure 7).

An inventory of the current presentation program has identified several gaps in the messages of national significance. An evaluation of the delivery mechanisms has been done, and results will be used in implementing the management plan.



Figure 7. Riel House with exhibit area in foreground. (T. Krause)

2.3 Visitor Services and Facilities

Visitor services and facilities at Riel House are unchanged since the site opened in 1980. The main need is improved visitor circulation. There is no single point of entry to the site. There is no formal reception area where every visitor receives an all-in-one orientation to Parks Canada, the site messages, and the service offer.

The outdoor exhibit has no cover and visitors are exposed to heat and rain. For large groups, there is no staging and holding area when there is inclement weather. This problem has been rectified, temporarily, with a large tent located near the parking lot.

2.4 Visitors

The visitation for the 1990s has averaged 7800 per year. The annual numbers, however, have been on the decrease over that decade. May and June are predominantly school tours. Most visits in July and August occur on Sundays, while the weekdays see from 50 to 60 people per day. Saturdays are lightest with 20 to 50 people visiting. Some interesting information from recent visitor surveys includes:

- *In 1998, 10% of visitors surveyed resided in Quebec (one to two percent is the typical Quebec representation at other western Canadian national historic sites). About 40% of survey respondents are from Manitoba, and between 40 and 45% come from elsewhere in Canada.*
- *17% of visitors responded to the 1998 survey in French – 31% in 1997 (fewer than three percent answer similar surveys in French at other western Canadian national historic sites).*
- Riel House visitor parties consist of evenly dispersed age categories. 53% of visitor parties include children under 16.
- 17% of respondents are repeat visitors. Nearly half are from southeast Winnipeg.
- 50% of respondents identify Riel House as one of several planned stops, while up to 34% identified their visit as unplanned.
- Up to one hour is the common length of a stay on the site with most taking in the guided tour.
- Motives for visiting in order of priority are to:
 - learn about Louis Riel
 - learn about Métis culture and history
 - see new things
 - spend time with family and friends
 - be entertained.

2.5 Partnerships

La Société historique de Saint-Boniface has operated Riel House NHSC under contract with Parks Canada since 1980. For Parks Canada, this has been a very satisfactory relationship. The SHSB has made significant contributions to the program at Riel House. It has hired additional guide staff and operated complementary on-site activities, such as heritage gardening, by using funding outside of Parks Canada. The SHSB has expressed their interest in having a continued role in the operation of Riel House.

2.6 Marketing

In 1997, a marketing strategy was produced for national parks and Parks Canada administered national historic sites in Manitoba. The 1997 marketing strategy had a three-year horizon and is now being revisited by Parks Canada in collaboration with stakeholders. Parks Canada has developed high quality poster and brochure templates for program promotion, and improved Riel House's school program promotion through a Parks Canada "Red River Corridor" brochure distributed to schools by Manitoba Education & Training. Other Parks Canada initiatives include a site lure card, inclusion of Riel House in the Manitoba Vacation Planner, 1-800 information service, and current listings in heritage, tourism and travel/trade directories.

2.7 Administration and Operations

Riel House NHSC is administered by Parks Canada under the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and Section 42 of the *Canada National Parks Act*. The site is managed by the Manitoba Field Unit which has responsibilities for most Parks Canada-administered national historic sites in Manitoba as well as Wapusk National Park of Canada. The Manitoba South Superintendent oversees the management and operation of Riel House. One staff member administers the contract with the SHSB, provides support to them, and addresses year round requirements for the site.

3. Vision: Riel House 2015

This vision describes a desired future for Riel House NHSC in 15 years. It is an inspirational view of the future that helps to focus and guide the planning, management and operation while fostering cooperation between those who enjoy, care for and use the site. Here is the vision.

Riel House NHSC will be known to all as a central location in a family of linked heritage places telling the story of Louis Riel, and the Métis and Francophone heritage of western Canada. Riel House will have two roles in this network: 1) commemorating Louis Riel as a person of national historic significance and as a founder of the Province of Manitoba, and 2) commemorating the Métis river lot as a form of prairie settlement.

Riel House will tell the story of Louis Riel from multiple views. It will portray Riel's continuing legacy, as well as the ongoing nature of many of the issues he stood for in the 19th century. His actions were controversial then, and still are to some. His story will be told in a program designed to help Canadians better understand the roots and evolution of our nation.

This program will be offered on what remains of the river lot which belonged to the Riel family for nearly a century. The site's association with Riel himself is symbolic of his posterity after death, as he never lived in the house which stands today. It will remain a simple and intimate place – described by one visitor as a historical oasis – where one can pause and reflect on who Riel was and what he represents today. The site's look and activities will reflect the Métis river lot form of settlement and will be sensitive to its surrounding residential neighbourhood.

The site's cultural resources and the 1880s sense of time and place will be protected through research, by caring for the house and grounds, by limiting development on the site, and not least, with the support of the surrounding community.

Its small size keeps Riel House from being able to accept large numbers of people. Outreach will be then a key means of contact with Canadians who will not make a visit on-site. We will share the messages of Riel House, in part, through our network of partners and the family of national historic sites. Parks Canada will nurture its links with partners to help ensure the commemorative integrity of Riel House NHSC.

4. Site Management Goals, Objectives and Actions

The strategic direction, objectives and actions described here will make it possible for Parks Canada to achieve the vision for Riel House, ensure its commemorative integrity, and provide a quality visitor experience and effective outreach. This will be done through its own efforts and its collaboration and partnership with others.

This chapter is made up of seven interlinked parts. All are needed for the right kind of care, presentation and sustainability of Riel House. They are:

1. heritage protection (4.1);
2. heritage presentation(4.2);
3. visitor services (4.3);
4. partnerships and public involvement (4.4);
5. environmental management (4.5);
6. administration and operation (4.6); and
7. environmental assessment of the management plan (4.7).

Goals, objectives and actions are identified in each part. The goals are based in Parks Canada's *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*. Objectives describe the desired outcomes from managing the site (what will be evident when Parks Canada meets its goals). The actions are needed to achieve the objectives and, ultimately, the goals. In sum, the goals, objectives and actions described here provide not only strategic directions for future planning and decision-making, but also a work plan to meet specific needs.

4.1 Heritage Protection

This section details Parks Canada's commitments to respecting and protecting the cultural resources of Riel House. Staff, partners, visitors and neighbours need to be aware of and respect the historic values of Riel House. Maintenance and monitoring of the site's cultural resources are required to ensure their long-term commemorative integrity.

HERITAGE PROTECTION GOALS

- 1. The resources directly related to the reasons for designation of Riel House as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat.*
- 2. The heritage values of Riel House (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site) are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.*

The four objectives toward meeting this goal include:

1. The historic layout of the remaining river lot is maintained;
2. All known cultural resources of Riel House NHSC are identified, documented, managed and monitored;
3. Neighbours are aware of the potential impacts of their actions on the site's commemorative integrity; and
4. The public understands the irreplaceable qualities and legacy that Riel House represents.

HERITAGE PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 1:

The historic layout of the remaining river lot is maintained.

Actions:

1. The visitors' sense of arrival and orientation to Riel House NHSC must emphasize the orientation of the property and house toward the Red River.
2. The original alignments of river lots 50 and 51, in relation to the current site boundaries, are identified.
3. The site's landscape management practices will be reviewed and, if necessary, modified to reflect landscaping and land-use practices known of a 19th century Red River Settlement river lot.
4. Development on the site will be placed in areas already impacted (see also Visitor Services Objective 3).

HERITAGE PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 2:

All known cultural resources of Riel House NHSC are identified, documented, managed and monitored.

Actions:

1. The maintenance plan for the house will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised to ensure that its heritage characteristics are recognized in its care. The maintenance plan will have a monitoring, evaluation and reporting component, and will serve as a key tool to managing the house as a cultural resource.
2. All resources listed in Appendix B, including the house furnishings, will be treated as cultural resources until they have been evaluated as per the Parks Canada *Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Policy*.
3. A disaster preparedness plan will be developed for the house, historic objects and the grounds.
4. Despite Riel House NHSC being an altered landscape, a rudimentary natural resources inventory will be conducted to identify the presence of natural features of special significance that should be protected as per the *CRM Policy*.

HERITAGE PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 3:

Neighbours are aware of the potential impacts of their actions on the site's commemorative integrity.

Actions:

1. The ideal will be to maintain a visual screen between Riel House NHSC and adjacent properties. Vegetation will continue to be the preferred screen (Figure 8).



Figure 8. View toward west boundary of site in the fall. In the summer, the adjacent properties are not as visible. (B. Hoskins)

2. Parks Canada will meet with adjacent home owners to inform them of the Parks Canada contact in the event of emergencies, and discuss any issues or concerns. These contacts with the neighbourhood will be regularly maintained.
3. Parks Canada will make regular contact with area resident organizations for the purpose of building a neighbourhood awareness and support for Riel House NHSC.
4. Parks Canada will pursue opportunities for the City of Winnipeg to have a public path join River Road to the east bank of the Red River. Such a path would enable public access from the site to the river in support of interpreting the river lot settlement form.

HERITAGE PROTECTION OBJECTIVE 4:

Public and staff understand the irreplaceable qualities and legacy that Riel House represents.

Actions:

1. Historical, architectural and archaeological information and oral tradition concerning the property will be used in the presentation of the site.
2. The symbolic association of the site with Louis Riel will be clearly conveyed in commemorating and promoting the site.
3. Staff will be provided training and information necessary to know and understand the messages and cultural resources essential to commemoration.
4. The presentation on Métis river lots will:
 - recognize the disappearance of this form of land use;
 - identify where larger landscapes of this form are still evident; and
 - encourage public support for preserving some of these landscapes that reflected a practical mixed farming adaptation to a prairie environment.

4.2 Heritage Presentation

Heritage presentation refers to programs that provide opportunities for enjoyment and active learning. The programs help people understand the national significance of the site, and to respect its heritage values. This section details Parks Canada's intent to improve the heritage presentation at Riel House and the opportunities for outreach.

HERITAGE PRESENTATION GOAL

The Canadian public understands the national significance of Riel House NHSC.

To be effective, heritage presentation at a site must have two foundations. First, it must be based on learning objectives of why the place is nationally significant. The learning objectives for Riel House are:

1. The public knows the reasons for Louis Riel's commemoration and the relationship of Riel House to Louis Riel;
2. The public is aware of the principal events in the life and career of Louis Riel and understands their complexity and potential for being viewed from several perspectives;
3. The public knows the significance of the Métis river lot as a form of prairie settlement; and
4. The public is aware that Riel House is part of the family of national historic sites across Canada, and part of a network of heritage places presenting the story of Louis Riel and the Métis people.

Second, heritage presentation must be based on an understanding of who comes to Riel House and why. Identifying the site's main audiences enables Parks Canada to effectively use its resources to reach its on-site visitors, direct outreach, and collaborate with partners.

4.2.1 Messages

The following are the messages of national historic significance that must be effectively communicated to Canadians and site visitors. Contextual information is necessary to visitor understanding and must therefore be part of the heritage presentation program.

MESSAGE	CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION
Louis Riel is a person of national historic significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Red River Resistance and Louis Riel’s role in it. This includes why Louis Riel emerged as the Métis leader; who the Métis are as a people; Riel’s role as founder of Manitoba and the aftermath of Resistance (some Métis left the Red River while some stayed); and the national impact and significance of these events • Riel’s place in the second Métis Resistance of 1885 • current affairs have historical roots that can be found in the reasons why Riel House is commemorated. • in 1992, the Parliament of Canada and the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba formally recognized Riel’s contribution to the development of the Canadian Confederation and his role as a founder of Manitoba
Riel House NHSC is of national historic significance as the location where Louis Riel is commemorated as a person of national historic significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relation of Louis Riel to the site in his absence/exile (e.g., letters concerning the family and the running of the farm; involvement from afar) • the death of Riel and his enduring legacy • Riel House NHSC as part of the family of national historic sites.
Riel House NHSC is an example of Métis river lots, a form of prairie settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the origin of the Métis river lot in Prairie Settlement pattern • the structure and function of Métis river lots • the original Red River frame architecture of the house
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red River and Manitoba Métis and Francophone society and its communities (parishes of St. Boniface, St. Vital, St. Norbert) provide context information to both aspects of the site’s commemoration: Riel and the river lot 	

Additional messages to be conveyed to the public relate to the symbolic place of Riel House in the Métis and Francophone communities of St. Vital and area parishes. Members of the Riel family continued to live in the

house until 1968. The Riels are descendants of Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière and Marie-Anne Gaboury, persons of national historic significance. The Union Nationale Métisse St. Joseph du Manitoba, founded in 1887, met in the Riel home until the 1920s. From 1899 Joseph Riel operated the post office franchise of St. Vital East, officially renamed the Riel Post Office in 1908.

4.2.2 Target Audiences

Based on a knowledge of whom our current visitors are, a need to control visitor numbers at certain times, and the capability to improve and expand opportunities for certain markets, design of heritage presentation and services will consider the following audiences.

<p>Education Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades 6 & 11 a priority • Grade 2 • Adult Education (i.e., adult groups touring Riel House for the express purpose of learning about Riel and Métis history) 	<p>A school program has been offered at the site for more than 15 years. It is offered from mid-May to end of June. Upward of 150 students are received per day at Riel House during this period. Grade 6 and, to a lesser degree Grades 2 and 11, are the main grades attending the site. The history and the heritage presentation at Riel House have a strong connection with the provincial school curricula at these grade levels: the Grade 2 program includes “Families Long Ago”, Grade 6 features “Life in Canada’s Past” with a unit on “Life in late 19th Century Western Canada”, and Grade 11 offers “Canada: A Social and Political History”.</p>
<p>Independent Traveller (IT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • older adults (35 to 55+ in age) • families with children • Francophones • Québécois • Métis 	<p>The independent traveller is someone who, with family and/or friends, has made a point to come to Riel House for the heritage experience it has to offer. The site is the destination, or one of a series of places to visit. A large portion of independent travellers has children under 16 accompanying them.</p>

<p>Local Community (LC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • currently don't distinguish LC from IT; • Métis of LC are a distinct segment • children (8 - 12yrs) 	<p>The local community is an important category to distinguish. The meaning of local community is somewhat fluid. It represents those people who would use Riel House like a neighbourhood park, not necessarily because it is a historic site. They may not take in the programs offered, possibly because they are repeat visitors or are there for a special event only. For the most part, local community are people from southeast Winnipeg, or more specifically south St. Vital, within easy commute. The annual Corn Roast on Labour Day is a major attraction for locals. The summer day camp is another activity offered to the local community.</p> <p>When entry fees are introduced at Riel House, the use of the site by this group could decrease. This is an important category of visitor to retain since they affect community support and recognition for the site (which can benefit site security and marketing the site to visiting family and friends).</p>
<p>Organized Heritage Tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • heritage-based tours • Francophone and Quebec tours 	<p>In general, the commercial tour market will not be targeted because site capacity and facilities will not meet the demand of this market should it increase. The number of organized tours has been limited at Riel House. A few bus tours stop at the site, from three to 10 per year, primarily senior groups and a few from Quebec. With other thematically-linked heritage sites, Riel House can be part of a larger heritage experience for smaller-sized, special interest organized tours.</p>
<p>Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general public, with links for Métis and Francophones • teachers and students • researchers 	

4.2.3 The Visitor Experience

Visitors to Riel House will encounter a 19th century alcove tucked away in a 21st century world (Figure 9). Their first recognition of the site will be the sign on River Road at the entrance to the site identifying Riel House as a National Historic Site of Canada. Near the entrance other media will highlight the national significance of Riel House for people coming to the

site after hours and in the off-season. It will portray the site's association with Louis Riel.

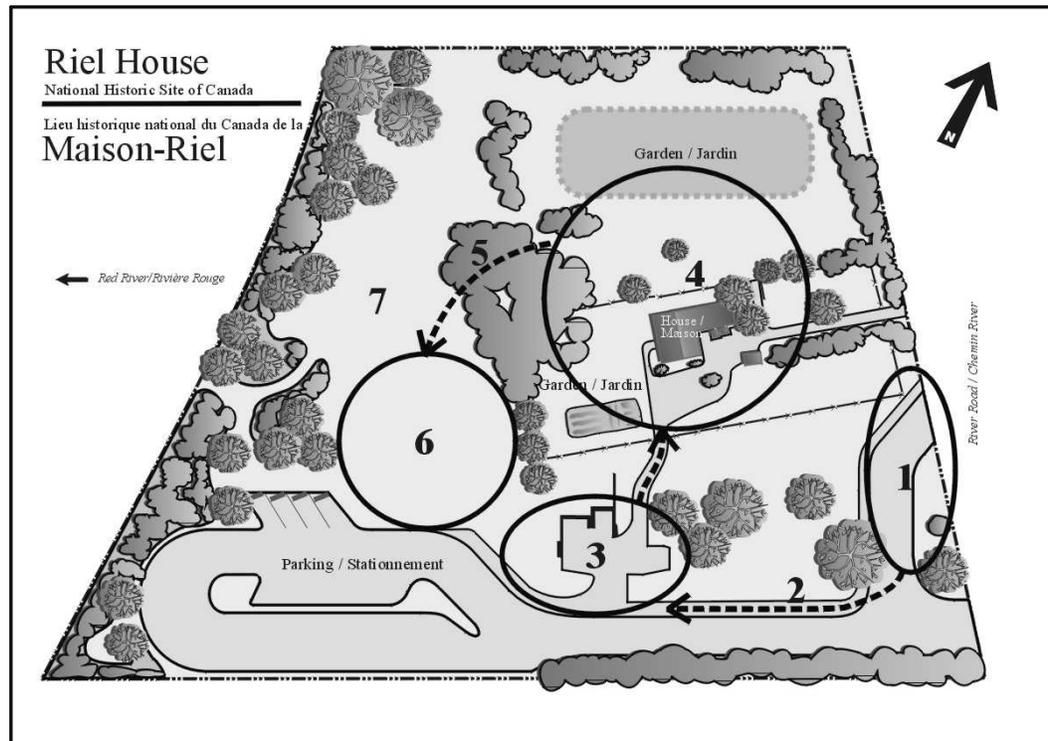


Figure 9. Map of Riel House NHSC illustrating the general concept for the visitor experience. Numbers locate:

1. Redesigned site entrance, new site identity sign and interpretive sign for those passing-by
2. Re-oriented pedestrian access from site entrance to reception and exhibit area
3. Redesigned, sheltered reception and exhibit area with new messages and media
4. Historic setting visit
5. Access to departure area with opportunity for additional site messages
6. Departure area
7. Special events area.

At the reception and exhibit area visitors will be greeted, told of the program offered and site services, and any fees will be collected. They will receive a historical overview of the site and why it is a place of national historic significance. Visitors will spend as much as half an hour here learning about Riel, river lots, and the 19th century Métis and Francophone society in Red River. Because of this, the area will be sheltered from the

sun, heat and rain. It will be designed to consider the site's historic sense of place and its seasonal operation. It is also where basic visitor services (e.g., washrooms) will be provided.

From the reception and exhibit area, visitors will move into the historic setting of Riel House and its grounds. Staff in period costume will tell stories of Riel, his family and his legacy. Within the period furnished house, there will be space for enhanced and varied presentation. Visitors will be able to learn about other aspects of the history of Riel House NHSC as they tour the site grounds. Period gardens and other features on the landscape will create a sense of how this part of the river lot may have functioned and looked.

On leaving the historic setting, visitors will enter a departure area. Here, they may use the picnic area, learn about other heritage places to visit, or return to the reception area to buy a souvenir. There will also be an area here for organized school group and other activities. Rest areas will be provided by the reception and departure areas.

This concept recognizes some existing, revised and new elements to the visitor offer. They are:

- a redesigned entrance to Riel House NHSC with new signs to draw attention and interest to the site;
- pedestrian access redirected to the reception and exhibit area rather than to the house;
- a shelter at the reception and exhibit area;
- new messages and media at the exhibit area;
- washrooms and souvenir sales nearer to the reception and exhibit area;
- keeping the period historic setting, including the furnished house;
- enhanced interpretation at the house;
- keeping site staff in period costume; and
- a formal departure area.

The revised and new elements are discussed further under the Heritage Presentation and Visitor Services objectives.

HERITAGE PRESENTATION OBJECTIVE 1:

The public knows the reasons for Louis Riel's commemoration and the relationship of Riel House to Louis Riel.

Actions:

*For All
Visitors*

1. A message on national significance of Riel House will be located at the site entrance and at the exhibit area, next to the HSMBC plaque. The site entrance message will inform after hours and off-season visitors.
2. The HSMBC plaque will be more prominent at the site reception and exhibit area.
3. Media at the exhibit area will provide information on 19th century Métis and Francophone society, the first and second Métis resistances, and Louis Riel's role in them.
4. The messages will be developed and delivered in keeping with the principles of value, public benefit, understanding, respect and integrity as described in Parks Canada's *CRM Policy*.

*For
Education
Groups
(particularly
grades 6
and 11)*

5. Programs (e.g., tours, activities) will blend site messages with school curriculum.
6. Pre- and post-visit educational materials will be developed in consultation with educators and provided to teachers to support and reinforce message delivery.

*For the
Independent
Traveller*

7. The site tour will be revised to focus attention on Louis Riel's legacy.
8. Within the site tour an element will be developed for entertaining children.

9. Media, such as a saleable booklet will be introduced, intended to add to the learning experience.
10. Supplementary interpretive materials (e.g., a photo album, provisional government's list of rights, etc. pertaining to Riel's significance) will be introduced into the heritage presentation. Some materials may be designed and used as souvenir material.
11. Visitors will be made aware of other places (e.g., archives, museums) to learn about Riel, and Métis and Francophone heritage in Manitoba.

*For the
Local
Community*

12. Parks Canada will provide opportunities for special events and activities related to the commemoration of Riel House and which promote community interest, support and attendance (e.g., Manitoba Day - May 12, Fête des Michifs - July 24).
13. The summer day-camp program will be further developed by Parks Canada to deliver messages of national significance. There is an opportunity here to target French immersion students.

*For
Organized
Heritage
Tours*

14. A program will be developed that considers the scheduling and other needs of organized heritage tours.

*For
Outreach
Audiences*

15. The Parks Canada web site will be revised to address this objective.
16. Educational materials (for teachers and students) will be developed and provided on the Parks Canada web site.

HERITAGE PRESENTATION OBJECTIVE 2:

The public is aware of the principal events in the life and career of Louis Riel and understands their complexity and potential for being viewed from several perspectives.

Multiple Perspectives in Heritage Presentation

Parks Canada's *CRM Policy* outlines important imperatives for heritage presentation programming. It states:

"Parks Canada will present the past in a manner that accurately reflects the range and complexity of the human history commemorated at or represented in a national historic site, historic canal or national park . . . History will be presented with integrity. This will include the presentation of differing contemporary views, perspectives informed by traditional knowledge and later interpretations."

The policy also states that in our commemorations, "we will not play the role of arbiter of Canada's human history."

To fulfill this mandate, Riel House will take a multiple perspectives approach to the renewal of its heritage presentation. The key characteristics of a multiple perspectives approach are as follows:

- it recognizes that different people and groups of people inevitably attribute differing meanings to a person, a place or an event, and have varying expressions of its historical significance;
- it recognizes the validity of divergent perspectives on the past without having to synthesize them, or to judge which are most "true" in order to weed out contradictions;
- it recognizes that there are no homogeneous groups, and thus no single perspective that can be said to represent a group; and
- it requires various individuals or groups to be involved in historical commemoration, to contribute authentic expressions of the multiple meanings of a person, place or event.

Actions:

*For All
Visitors*

1. Media will effectively present these events and perspectives (see Messages) as part of the site orientation. Presenting differing contemporary views of Riel's contribution to Canada and his actions, will be based on the *CRM Policy* principle of integrity.
2. Staff will be trained to inform visitors about Riel and differing historical perspectives of him. Training material will be updated to reflect this need.

*For
Education
Groups*

3. Activities (e.g., role playing of historical events) related to school curriculum will be developed to enable students to explore the issues of the time.

*For
Outreach
Audiences*

4. A component on the Parks Canada web site will be developed for this purpose.
5. Educational materials (for teachers and students) will be developed for the Parks Canada web site to explore this aspect.

HERITAGE PRESENTATION OBJECTIVE 3:

The public knows the significance of the Métis river lot as a form of prairie settlement.

Actions:

*For All
Visitors*

1. Media at the exhibit area will be revised to improve information on Métis river lot settlement. Any visual portrayal of the river lot should be specific to the Riel House property as it would have been in the 1880s.
2. Opportunities will be sought in collaboration with others to use local area public paths to help interpret Métis river lots.

- For Education Groups* (particularly for grades 2 and 6)
3. Programs (e.g., tours, activities) will be developed that relate to the provincial curriculum.
 4. Pre- and post-visit educational materials will be developed by Parks Canada in consultation with educators and provided to teachers.
- For Outreach Audiences*
5. The Riel House web site will provide information in support of this message.
 6. The Riel House web site will be linked with other heritage sites which interpret historical forms of prairie settlement.

HERITAGE PRESENTATION OBJECTIVE 4:

The public is aware that Riel House is part of the family of national historic sites across Canada and part of a network of heritage places presenting the story of Louis Riel and the Métis people.

Actions:

- For All Visitors*
1. Federal Identity Program and Parks Canada Image standards will be in place at the site and on all Riel House NHSC media distributed to the public.
 2. A new site identity sign will be located at the redesigned site entrance to attract attention to the site (Figure 10).
 3. An interpretive element, associating the site with Louis Riel, will be located near to the site entrance. Should there be an identifier associating Riel House with a network of other heritage places pertaining to Riel, Métis, or Francophone heritage, this too will be considered for addition near the site entrance.

- For Organized Heritage Tours* 4. Parks Canada will work with partners to develop a 'package tour' of thematically linked sites.
- For Outreach Audiences* 5. Parks Canada will develop collaborative in-school outreach program with other Parks Canada Agency sites (Red River Corridor) or Riel/Métis heritage sites.

4.3 Visitor Services and Facilities

This section describes the objectives and actions to provide visitor services and facilities that support a learning atmosphere. Some elements have already been discussed under Heritage Presentation.



Figure 10. The current site entrance does not convey the historic sense of place nor its significance. (B. Hoskins)

VISITOR SERVICES GOAL

Visitors appreciate and support Riel House NHSC as a place of national historic significance because of the appealing, high quality learning experience.

The following objectives express how this goal is to be achieved:

1. Site services and facilities consider visitor motives, interests and expectations;
2. Services and facilities meet basic comfort and safety needs of visitors; and
3. Services and facilities are developed with no impairment to site commemorative integrity and no visual or other sensory impairment to the neighbourhood.

The provision of visitor services and facilities will be guided by three factors at Riel House:

- its location in suburban Winnipeg means that many services are available in the immediate area and that what is offered on the site needs to be physically and aesthetically compatible with the site's sense of place and the neighbourhood;
- size of the site and protection objectives limit the location and scale of further development on the site; and
- size of the house and exhibit area places limits on the maximum number of visitors who can enjoy the site at any given time.

Marketing of Riel House will need to convey the level of service offered at Riel House in order to maintain the scale and ambience of the site, its commemorative integrity, and its neighbourhood setting.

Appropriate Visitor Activities

Opportunities will be provided to visitors that enhance public understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and protection of the heritage that is appropriate to the purpose of each national historic site. Essential and basic services are provided while maintaining commemorative integrity and recognizing the effects of incremental and cumulative impacts.

Services, facilities and access for the public must directly complement the opportunities provided, be considered essential, take account of limits to growth, and not compromise commemorative integrity nor the quality of experiences. (From *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*)

VISITORS SERVICES OBJECTIVE 1:

Site services and facilities consider visitor motives, interests and expectations.

Actions:

1. Information and results from school and visitor surveys will be used in the design of the heritage presentation program, visitor services and supporting facilities.
2. Visitor satisfaction and experience will be periodically evaluated and the service offer adjusted accordingly.

VISITORS SERVICES OBJECTIVE 2:

Services and facilities meet basic comfort and safety requirements of visitors.

In implementing this management plan, reference will be made to the Riel House Access Plan for special needs visitors.

Actions:

1. A public safety plan will be developed for the site.
2. The existing washroom will be replaced with one closer to the reception and exhibit area. These washrooms are for staff and visitor alike and will meet special needs requirements.
3. The reception and exhibit area will provide visitors with shelter from heat, sun and rain, enabling the use of this location as a staging area during inclement weather.
4. Circulation through the site will be clearly defined from arrival to departure.
5. Places to rest will be provided at the reception and exhibit area and departure area of the site. The existing picnic area will be relocated to the departure area.
6. Potable water will be provided on the site.

VISITOR SERVICES OBJECTIVE 3:

Services and facilities are developed with no impairment to site commemorative integrity and no visual or other sensory impairment to the neighbourhood.

Actions:

1. Design and placement of facilities, including access and circulation on the site, will be planned using commemorative integrity objectives and the site's cumulative impact map as the main basis for decision-making.
2. Environmental assessments will be done of proposed on-site developments. The Heritage Character Statement for the house and the site CIS will be used for the environmental assessment.

4.4 Partnerships and Public Involvement

This section sets out the approach by which Parks Canada intends to work with the public and its partners to enhance the promotion, commemoration and management of Riel House NHSC. Public awareness and involvement in the planning and management of Riel House will be maintained through regular dialogue between Parks Canada and the local community, visitor surveys, and the 5-year management plan review with its public consultation.

PARTNERSHIPS GOAL

The commemorative integrity of Riel House NHSC is enhanced through partnerships.

Parks Canada has two objectives toward achieving this goal:

1. Partner involvement in the operation and management of Riel House brings knowledge, broadened support, and alternatives to enhancing the protection and presentation of Riel House; and
2. The promotion and commemoration of Riel House are enhanced through shared communications among a network of places and organizations interpreting Riel, and Métis and Manitoba Francophone heritage.

PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVE 1:

Partner involvement in the operation and management of Riel House brings knowledge, broadened support, and alternatives to enhancing the protection and presentation of Riel House.

Riel House is important to many western Canadian Métis and Francophone people as a tangible piece of their cultural identities. Riel House can play a role in helping to sustain and enrich their history, languages and cultures for the benefit of present and future generations of all Canadians. As such, Parks Canada will encourage the participation of organizations dedicated to protection and promotion of Métis and Francophone history and culture in Manitoba, in rejuvenating the heritage presentation programs for Riel House NHSC. A significant objective of this involvement will be to “to look for ways of affirming the contributions of Métis people in Canada and of reflecting Louis Riel’s proper place in Canadian history” (from *Gathering Strength - Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan*).

Actions:

1. Parks Canada will encourage the establishment and maintenance of a council, representing organizations dedicated to promoting and enhancing the Métis and Francophone heritage of Manitoba, to advise the Superintendent on the heritage presentation of Riel House NHSC. Among its purposes will be:
 - to participate in the planning and development of the heritage presentation of Riel House through the application of the principles and practice of the *CRM Policy*;
 - to advise the Superintendent on presenting multiple perspectives;
 - to advise the Superintendent on appropriate uses of Riel House NHSC;
 - to evaluate and report to the Superintendent on the success and effectiveness of heritage presentation, particularly using multiple perspectives.
2. Heritage presentation and visitor services at Riel House will be provided from outside of Parks Canada. This arrangement will carry with it strong organizing and delivery skills, established connections to the Métis and Francophone heritage community, and the ability to bring additional benefits to the site. La Société historique de Saint-Boniface, our partner for more than twenty years, has provided such benefits in the past.

PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVE 2:

The promotion and commemoration of Riel House are enhanced through shared communications in a network of places and organizations interpreting Riel, and Métis and Manitoba Francophone heritage.

Actions:

1. Parks Canada will pursue collaboration on joint promotion and heritage presentation initiatives with Métis, Francophone and Riel-related heritage places / organizations.
2. Parks Canada will pursue opportunities to participate in Francophone tourism initiatives in Manitoba.
3. Parks Canada will pursue opportunities to work with related interests to develop an “education package” of thematically linked heritage places for education groups.
4. Parks Canada will pursue opportunities to work with related interests to develop a “packaged day tour” of thematically linked sites for organized heritage tours.

4.5 Environmental Management

Environmental management reduces the impact of our daily activities on the natural environment. Actions range from individual actions to large scale programs. Environmental management encompasses a broad range of issues and actions from reduced resource consumption and alternative energy use, to restoring disturbed landscapes. In historic sites management, it also means using cultural heritage in a sustainable manner. Although Parks Canada must take responsibility for direct leadership in environmental management at Riel House NHSC, responsibility also extends to partners and visitors.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GOAL

Riel House is exemplary in demonstration and practices of environmental management.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE:

Riel House operations minimally impact the environment and are consistent with Department of Canadian Heritage commitment to the principle of sustainable development.

Actions:

1. The Manitoba Field Unit Environmental Management Action Plan will be carried out at Riel House. Current environmental standards will be met, the site will meet environmental legislation, and environmental stewardship and performance will be improved.
2. The Environmental Management Action Plan will be audited and assessed periodically for effectiveness and to decide if further action is warranted.

4.6 Administration and Operation

Riel House NHSC will continue to operate as a national historic site under the authorities of the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and Section 42 of the *Canada National Parks Act*. Administration and operations of the site will be conducted in keeping with the commemorative integrity objectives for Riel House NHSC and the principles and practice of Parks Canada's *Cultural Resource Management Policy*.

Riel House NHSC will continue to operate on a seasonal basis, but will explore opportunities to expand its shoulder season by attracting school programs in the Fall. The ability of revenue from an expanded season to cover corresponding costs will be prerequisite in deciding on such

expansion. Parks Canada will provide support for year round outreach, public enquiries and educational groups bookings.

The site office in the annex to the house will be relocated to the reception and exhibit area.

4.7 Environmental Assessment Decision Statement³

The Riel House management plan involves six components for which initiatives have been proposed. The initiatives which could result in important positive or negative effects were identified and subjected to an environmental assessment pursuant to the *1999 Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, 2000). Based on a review of the initiatives, the following conclusions can be made:

- The initiatives conform to the *National Historic Sites Policy* and the *Cultural Resource Management Policy* contained in the *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*.
- The *Federal Heritage Buildings Policy* will be followed for interventions to the heritage building at Riel House NHSC.
- The heritage presentation initiatives will improve understanding, enjoyment and use of the site while enhancing the site's commemorative integrity. Some of the initiatives will require project-specific environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)* once project details become available. Environmental effects can be minimized to insignificance through mitigation.
- The heritage protection initiatives will ensure that the integrity of cultural resources is maintained. These initiatives will also require project-specific assessment under *CEAA*. Environmental effects can be minimized to insignificance through mitigation.
- Riel House NHSC is and will continue to be operated in accordance with the departmental sustainable development strategy, *Sustaining Our Heritage*, which addresses compliance with federal and provincial environmental legislation.

³ The complete report, *Environmental Assessment of Riel House National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan (2001)* is on file with Parks Canada and must be referred to in implementing the management plan.

- The Riel House NHSC management plan establishes actions to protect and present the site while enhancing its commemorative integrity. Taking into account the mitigation measures that are proposed in the environmental assessment, these actions will not result in significant adverse environmental effects.



A family picnic on the grounds of Riel House NHSC. (Parks Canada)

5. Implementation

The actions proposed in this management plan for Riel House National Historic Site of Canada are implemented through the site's business plan. While the management plan is envisioned as a strategic guide with a life span of ten to fifteen years (reviewed every five years), the annual business plan offers a picture of three years at a time. The business plan identifies which actions of the management plan will be realized during the next three years, and their timing and cost. Any changes to the three year forecast are captured by the annual review and update of the business plan.

Implementation of this management plan is the responsibility of the Manitoba Field Unit Superintendent. The Field Unit Superintendent's three primary accountabilities are:

- ensuring commemorative integrity;
- improving services to clients; and
- making wise and efficient use of public funds.

Implementation of the actions proposed for Riel House in this management plan depends on the reallocation of resources within the Field Unit. As well, cooperative initiatives with partners will be sought to identify, evaluate and pursue appropriate projects.

Priority actions are identified and presented according to business plan service lines in the chart that follows; however, these may be reconsidered in response to new circumstances or information, or changing national priorities and decisions.

Emphasis has been placed on those activities expected to occur during the first three years following management plan approval (i.e., the next business plan phase), but other activities to be pursued during the span of this management plan have been identified as well. No priority has been assigned to activities beyond identifying in which business planning period they will occur. Further prioritizing will occur during Field Unit Business planning.

Progress on the management plan implementation will be communicated through annual reporting on business plan performance and through State of the Protected Heritage Areas report which is updated every couple of years. The management plan will also be subject to periodic

review, and can be amended to reflect changing circumstances. The public will be consulted about major changes.

Business Plan Service Lines	Action	3-Year Business Plan Periods	
		1 st Period	2 nd Period
Heritage Resource Protection	• Train site staff in cultural resource management	■	
	• Review and improve landscape management plan (subsequent to site development plan)		■
	• Update house maintenance plan	■	
	• Inventory and evaluate house furnishings	■	
	• Inventory and evaluate archaeological artifacts and site features	■	
	• Complete disaster preparedness plan		■
	• Monitor condition of cultural resources		■

Business Plan Service Lines	Action	3-Year Business Plan Periods	
		1 st Period	2 nd Period
Heritage Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research river lot patterns to help characterize Riel House and support site development plan 	■	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the site development plan to direct development of visitor circulation, services and facilities, and to improve management and presentation of the property 	■	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a communication plan to direct the design, development, delivery and evaluation of presentation 	■	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce and evaluate heritage presentation programs for general visitors, school programs, special events & summer day camps (based on communication plan) 		■
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff in presenting multiple perspectives 	■	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign site entrance and provide new sites signs, including interpretive sign (based on site development plan and communication plan) 		■
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recapitalize media at reception and exhibit area (based on communication plan) 		■
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place federal and Parks Canada identifiers on site promotion and commemoration materials 	■	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the Parks Canada website to focus information on commemorative intent, establish links (based on communication plan) 		■
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue joint heritage presentation initiatives (based on communication plan) 		■
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue opportunities to complete public access to Red River and interpret river lots 		■	

Business Plan Service Lines	Action	3-Year Business Plan Periods	
		1 st Period	2 nd Period
Visitor Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve circulation and flow on site from arrival to departure (based on site development plan) • Recapitalize basic visitor comforts (washrooms, rest area, water) • Relocate rest and picnic area and return current pedestrian entrance and picnic area to a historic setting (based on site development plan) • Periodically evaluate visitor satisfaction and adjust the service offer as necessary • Shelter the reception and exhibit area and include site office and gift sales (based on site development plan) • Develop a public safety plan 	<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>	<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>
Management of Parks Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the establishment of an advisory council for the site • Maintain contact with site neighbours • Implement and audit the Field Unit's Environmental Management Action Plan 	<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>	

Appendix A. Management Planning and Public Consultation

The management planning program for Riel House NHSC began in the winter of 1999-2000. A team of Parks Canada staff examined the heritage protection and presentation of Riel House against the site's commemorative integrity objectives, and the *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies*. The site supervisor, employed by La Société historique de Saint-Boniface, participated in this evaluation. From this examination, it was determined what elements of the site could be maintained and what needed change.

In the Spring of 2000, the general public and organizations with particular interest in the site (stakeholders) were informed of Parks Canada's intent to have a site management plan and were invited to give their views and ideas about Riel House, including: what was most liked about the site; what could be improved; how the site contributes to the community and to the nation; and what issues face the site. This helped Parks Canada confirm its identified planning requirements, and identified additional issues and opportunities that could be addressed. This phase involved:

- distributing more than 700 newsletters with a questionnaire (mailed to targeted individuals and organizations, and available on request through several newspaper advertisements). At the invitation of the Manitoba Métis Federation, newsletters were also distributed to many of its regional and area councils. The newsletter with questionnaire was posted on the Riel House NHSC website;
- stakeholder discussions (La Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Manitoba Métis Federation, and Union nationale metisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba);
- two open houses in May; and
- Parks Canada staff in a panel discussion for a Francophone call in radio show.

Response was light in numbers, but the discussions and comments from those who did reply were earnest and thoughtful.

- Most comments related to heritage presentation, with many participants expressing appreciation for the guides, the house furnished in period, the interpretation of Métis culture and the activities offered to school groups and other visitors. Suggestions included more information such as pamphlets, more outreach and more interpretation that might use partners (for example,

historical sketches by a theatre group). Many expressed strong disappointment that the river lot to the Red River had not been retained and that this aspect of commemoration at Riel House has been lost.

- The strongest single issue covered was in the area of regional integration and marketing. Many felt there were opportunities at all three levels of government. Printed information and other media could emphasize the links between similar sites. Cross marketing and ensuring Métis sites were present in tourism brochures were mentioned, as were links between Internet sites on Louis Riel and Métis history and culture.
- Several suggestions were made for improvements in visitor reception and orientation. The small space for visitors and tours in the house was also noted.
- A number of opinions concerned the gardens (keep them) and grounds of the house (more weeding and care).
- Both La Société historique de Saint-Boniface and the Manitoba Métis Federation expressed interest in greater involvement at the site.

In the Summer of 2000 a Vision for the site was drafted by Parks Canada staff and reviewed by stakeholders. Thereafter, research and analysis (including for example, heritage character assessment of the house, evaluations of program delivery to independent travellers and school groups, approaches to third party operation) continued toward recommending actions supporting commemorative integrity and a quality visitor experience. A proposed management plan was drafted by the Winter of 2000-2001.

In the Spring of 2001, the second, and final phase of general consultations was initiated to get public and stakeholder replies to the proposed plan. Contact was made through more than 500 newsletters (containing highlights of the plan) with a questionnaire, stakeholder discussions (La Société historique de Saint-Boniface, and Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba and La Société Franco-manitobaine), a well-advertised open house at the site (on 22 July) and two interviews with the broadcast media. At the invitation of l'Union nationale métisse, newsletters were available at the Métis Pavillion of Folklorama, a major cultural and tourism event in Winnipeg. The second newsletter and

questionnaire were also posted on the Riel House NHSC website. Like the first phase, response was light in numbers, but strong in encouragement for the overall direction of the proposed plan. There were a number of specific suggestions to enhance visitor activities and learning, such as adding a root cellar and a Red River cart, introducing reference materials and crafts related to Métis heritage, and flying the Métis flag at the site (as is done at Batoche NHSC). The only consistent element of criticism concerned the attention to river lot commemoration at Riel House. A number of individuals felt that Riel House does not have the integrity to commemorate this form of prairie settlement and that there are better places to represent this landscape.

The public consultation program formally closed in August 2001. Individuals and organizations on the mailing list were contacted as to the approval and availability of the management plan.

Appendix B. Known Cultural Resources of Riel House National Historic Site of Canada

A cultural resource is 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 according to municipal, provincial, or federal designation, or by community standards of what has cultural or spiritual meaning. Level 1 cultural resources are those resources that directly relate to the site's national significance. Level 2 cultural resources are all remaining cultural resources.

IDENTIFICATION	ASSOCIATED HISTORIC VALUE	CRM LEVEL (TBD-TO BE DETERMINED)
Riel House (the building)	- location & orientation associated with river lot - associated with Louis Riel	1
	Red River frame construction	2
extant summer kitchen	reconstruction - not a cultural resource	not heritage
annex remains	20 th century extension to house	2
porch remains	evidence of front entrance facing river	1
privy	standing in 1970; associated with orientation of house to road. Utility shed now stands over it	tbd
shed	reconstruction	not heritage
verandah	evidence of back of house away from river	1
annex	20 th century and used as post office	2
depressions	not known	tbd
driveway	associated with reorientation of house to road	2
flagpole support	possibly associated with post office period	2
utility pipe	not known	tbd
post hole	not known, possibly evidence of 1886 fencing	tbd
post holes	not known, may be seen in 1928 photograph	tbd
privies	associated with orientation of house to road	2

sidewalk	20 th century; associated with orientation of house to road	2
well	not known	tbd
wood feature	not known	tbd
shed	reconstruction - not a cultural resource	not heritage
house remains	1925-1976 Bonne house	tbd
driveway	not known; 20 th century	tbd
archaeological collection	>10,000 artifacts from site excavations in the 1970s	2
<i>Notre Dame des Sept Douleurs</i>	painting original to the house	1
house furnishings	historic objects and furnishings acquired or produced for furnishing and interpreting the house	tbd