



YORK FACTORY

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

Management Plan



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Management Plan

October 2007

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 fun 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 unique opportunities to experience Canada. 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 each of these special places is conserved.

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 York Factory National Historic Site 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 York Factory National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "John Baird". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Baird" clearly distinguishable.

John Baird
Minister of the Environment

Recommendation Statement

York Factory National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan

Recommended for approval by:



Alan Latourelle
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada



Dawn Bronson
Field Unit Superintendent, Manitoba
Parks Canada

Summary

This document presents the management plan for York Factory National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC). Its purpose is to provide a framework for management of this nationally significant heritage place, including measures to ensure its commemorative integrity and provide memorable and meaningful visitor experiences.

York Factory (1684 – 1957) was one of the oldest and most important fur trade establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company and a large, vibrant community, known as *Kihci-wâskâhikan* in the Cree language. Today York Factory is a national historic site administered by Parks Canada. Situated on the Hayes River, a Canadian Heritage River, and near Hudson Bay, York Factory is an adventure travel destination for canoeists and fly-in visitors. It is a destination of another kind, a homeland to many First Nations people of western Hudson Bay.

The development of this management plan involved the exchange of information and ideas among Parks Canada staff from a number of research and management functions, First Nations communities associated with York Factory, tour operators and outfitters, professional engineers and scientists outside of Parks Canada, and interested public.

The management plan is founded on a site vision statement for York Factory NHSC. Objectives, directions and actions describe how the vision will be achieved. Heritage conservation in the face of considerable riverbank erosion, permafrost degradation and other environmental threats at the site is a central component of this management plan.

The vision sees York Factory NHSC promoted and managed as an adventure travel destination where people arrive knowing it is a place of national significance and leave with a lasting memory of their personal journey, the importance of York Factory, and support for its protection. The history of the fur trade industry and its impacts on the peoples and land will be told as it relates to York Factory. First Nations' stories of York Factory will be an integral part of the site's presentation. Because of its remoteness, few Canadians will have an opportunity to visit this place. Thus outreach will be a critical part of telling the story of York Factory. The Depot and other buildings and archaeological remains of York Factory, the cemetery, and the spirit of place will be protected for the long-term. Research, traditional knowledge and monitoring will be integral to the management of York Factory NHSC, improving our understanding of its history, its cultural resources and its environmental threats. Partnering and public involvement, particularly with the First Nations communities associated with York Factory, tour operators and outfitters, and related research interests, will be vital to ensuring commemorative integrity and creating meaningful visitor experiences.

The implementation of this management plan over the coming years will lead to the achievement of the site's vision. It will be reviewed every five years, including public consultation, to assess its continued effectiveness and relevance in the management of York Factory NHSC.

Table of Contents

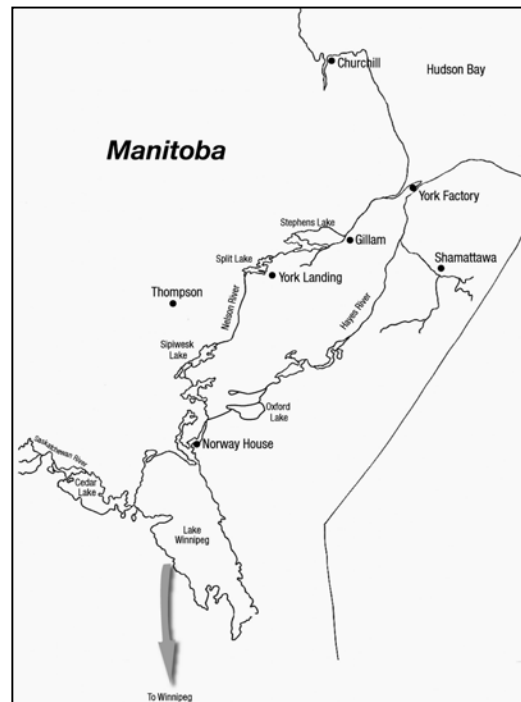
Foreword.....	i
Recommendation Statement	iii
Summary.....	iv
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. National Historic Sites of Canada	2
1.2. York Factory: A Place of National Historic Significance.....	3
1.3. York Factory Under Threat	5
1.4. Management Planning	6
2. Planning Context: York Factory at the Turn of the 21 st Century	8
2.1. Cultural Resource Management	8
2.1.1. Structures	9
2.1.2. Archaeological Remains.....	11
2.1.3. Cemetery	12
2.1.4. Artifacts	13
2.1.5. Spirit of Place	14
2.2. Heritage Presentation.....	15
2.3. Visitors, and Visitor Services and Facilities	17
2.4. Natural Resource Management	18
2.5. Relations.....	19
2.6. Administration and Operations.....	19
3. Vision for York Factory NHSC	21

4. The Management Plan	22
4.1. Heritage Conservation	22
4.1.1. Response to Riverbank Erosion	23
4.1.2. Response to Poor Drainage.....	25
4.1.3. Response to Climate Warming.....	27
4.1.4. Response to Vegetation Encroachment.....	29
4.1.5. Response to Natural Deterioration of Certain Cultural Resources.....	31
4.1.6. Ongoing Inventory and Evaluation of Cultural Resources.....	32
4.2. Meaningful Visitor Experiences.....	33
4.3. Public Appreciation and Understanding	38
4.3.1. On-Site Heritage Presentation.....	39
4.3.2. Off-Site Heritage Presentation (Outreach)	40
4.4. Partnerships and Stakeholders' Involvement.....	41
4.5. Environmental Stewardship.....	43
4.6. Strategic Environmental Assessment Summary	43
5. Management Plan Implementation and Evaluation.....	45
Appendix	
A. Summary of the Planning and Consultation Process	46

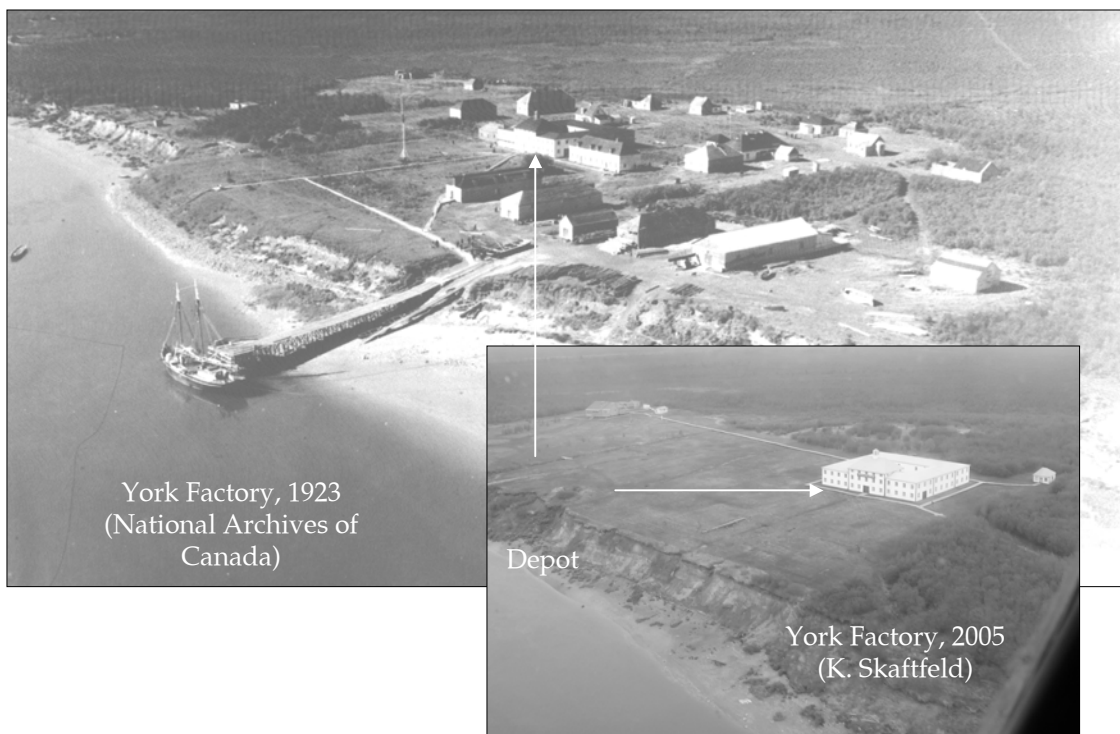
1. Introduction

Operated continuously between 1684 and 1957, York Factory was one of the oldest and most important fur trade establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and a large, vibrant community, known as *Kihci-wâskâhikan* in the Cree language. Today, York Factory is a National Historic Site of Canada (NHSC), a heritage place managed by Parks Canada.

This management plan describes the long-term vision for the protection, presentation and appropriate use of this fascinating, but endangered historic place, and the objectives, strategies and key actions to achieving that vision. Thus, this plan serves to focus Parks Canada's attention, decision-making, partnering, and financial and human resources on York Factory's commemorative integrity and providing a quality visitor experience. This management plan replaces the York Factory NHSC management plan that dates to 1988.



York Factory NHSC is near the mouth of the Hayes River on Hudson Bay, about 220 kilometres south of Churchill, Manitoba. (L. Vasarevic Brunet)



1.1 National Historic Sites of Canada

The nation-wide network of Parks Canada heritage places includes national parks, national marine conservation areas and some national historic sites.¹ National parks and national marine conservation areas are established to represent clearly identified land and marine environments (refer to the Parks Canada *National Parks System Plan* and the *National Marine Conservation Areas System Plan*). National historic sites are designated to commemorate various facets of Canada's history (refer to the Parks Canada *National Historic Sites of Canada System Plan*). The objectives of national historic sites are:

- to foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historical commemoration;
- to ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada by protecting and presenting them for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of this and future generations, in a manner that respects the significant and irreplaceable legacy represented by these places and their associated resources; and
- to encourage and support the protection and presentation by others of places of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada (Parks Canada *National Historic Sites Policy*).

York Factory in the System of National Historic Sites

Among Canada's more than 900 places, 580 persons and 350 events of national historic significance, York Factory NHSC symbolizes the theme of Canada's Developing Economies, and in particular the fur trade. There are no less than thirty nationally significant places, persons, and events associated with the history of the Hudson's Bay Company.

"Commemorative Intent" is the specific reason a place is designated nationally significant. Commemorative intent comes from the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC), which are approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.

"Commemorative Integrity" is a concept created by Parks Canada to manage, evaluate and report on national historic sites. It is used to report to Parliament and the Canadian public on their condition and caretaking. 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;
- the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public; and

¹ Only 149 of the more than 900 national historic sites are administered by Parks Canada. York Factory NHSC is one of them. The remainder are administered by other federal departments, provinces or territories, or are privately owned.

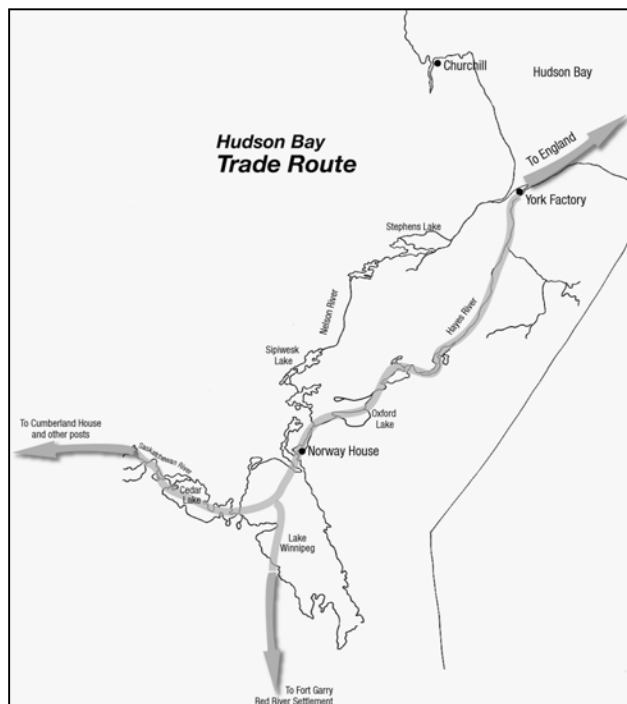
- the site's heritage values are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

1.2 York Factory: A Place of National Historic Significance

York Factory was designated a national historic site in 1936. According to the HSMBC recommendation at that time, **York Factory is commemorated for its critical role in the French-English struggle on Hudson Bay for the control of the fur trade, as an important HBC trading post and entrepôt for more than two and a half centuries, and as the principal base for expansion of the fur trade into the interior of western Canada.**

York Factory's historical importance is summarized here. It is for the following reasons that York Factory is protected and presented for the benefit of this and future generations of Canadians.

The fur trade has a prominent place in Canada's history and heritage. As one of the oldest, continuously operated HBC posts in North America, York Factory played a pivotal role in this history. It served variously as a trading post, a distribution centre to other trading posts in the western interior, and was the headquarters of the HBC's vast Northern Department. The long history of the post included York Factory I (known as York Fort, 1684-1715), York Factory II (1715-1788) and York Factory III (1788-1957). York Factory I and II have been lost to riverbank erosion of the Hayes River. York Factory NHSC is the site of York Factory III.

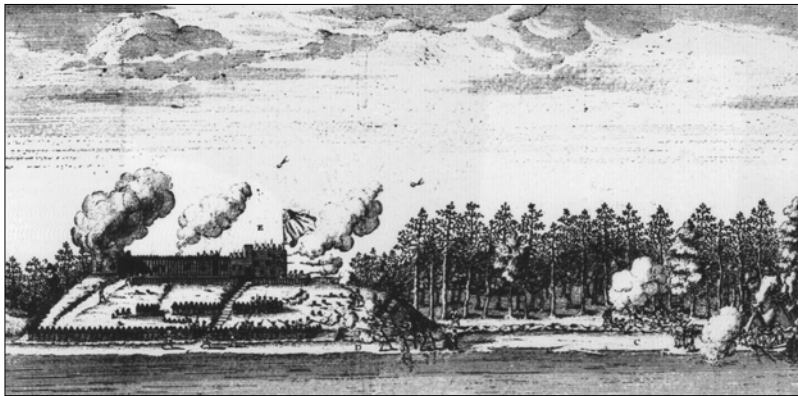


York Factory was strategically located to secure access to, and thereby control trade in, a vast northern territory of North America that was rich in fur-bearing animals. Hudson Bay was the HBC's transportation route for furs to, and trading goods from, Europe. From 1714 to the mid-18th century, York Factory emerged as a leading centre of the fur trade for the western interior. The Hayes River, a Canadian Heritage River, provided access for First Nations from as far as the western prairies to trade at the "bayside". After 1774, when the HBC began to build a network of trading posts

York Factory on the Hayes River transport route (L. Vasarevic Brunet)

in the interior, the Hayes connected these posts to York Factory, which served as their supply centre. Because of this strategic location, York Factory served as starting point for famous explorations by David Thompson, Peter Fidler and others.

York Factory was the repeated scene of armed conflict between England and France for colonial domination of North America in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Between 1684 and 1713 control of York Factory changed between the English and French six times through a series of raids. One of the most stirring naval battles in Canadian history occurred only a few miles off the coast from York Factory. The terms of the Treaty of Utrecht returned York Factory, then Fort Bourbon under the French, back to the HBC.



The French bombardment of York Fort in 1697 from La Potherie's "Histoire de l'Amérique Septentrionale", 1753. (Hudson's Bay Company Archives)

For much of the 19th century York Factory was the political, economic and social hub of western Canadian fur trade society. From 1810 to 1873, York Factory was the administrative headquarters, transshipment centre, and supply source of provisions and trade goods for the HBC's Northern Department. Letitia Hargrave, the wife of Chief Factor James Hargrave, proclaimed York Factory "The most respectable place in the territory".² The extensive archaeological resources (more than seventy buildings identified and a collection of more than 300,000 artifacts) provide important information about this, and earlier periods of York Factory's history. Today, the three-



York Factory in the 1870s. The Depot is in the centre. (Hudson's Bay Company Archives)

² A different opinion was offered by fur trader Robert Ballantyne in 1843. He described York Factory as "a monstrous blot on a swampy spot, with a partial view of the frozen sea.... The country unbearable".

storey Depot is a landmark on the flat Hudson Bay Lowlands. Its function as a warehouse, its design and construction, and sheer size symbolize the significance of York Factory.

Throughout its transformation from trading post to entrepôt, distribution centre to district headquarters, York Factory remained an important place in the lives of the Aboriginal peoples of northern Manitoba. A number of Cree from the York Factory region became known to the HBC as the “Home Guard”. The Home Guard traded regularly at the factory and provided the company with country provisions and furs. Later, the post itself became home to a community of Cree employees, traders and their families. The nearby remains of camps, cabins and the cemetery are reminders of the community that surrounded the post proper during the 19th and 20th centuries. It was the main community in the coastal area until 1957 when the post closed and the community was dispersed. *Kihci-wâskâhikan*, the Cree name for York Factory, means “the great house”. Many members of the York



York Factory, 1880 (National Archives of Canada)

Factory First Nation, Shamattawa First Nation, Tataskwayak

First Nation and Fox Lake Cree Nation consider York Factory a vital part of their history and a part of their traditional homeland.

Further information on the history of York Factory can be found in two books, [The Most Respectable Place in the Territory](#), by Michael Payne, and [Voices from Hudson Bay: Cree Stories from York Factory](#), edited and compiled by Flora Beardy and Robert Coutts.

1.3 York Factory Under Threat

York Factory is in trouble. As people who have lived and worked there know, erosion along the north bank of the Hayes River has been happening for a long time. York Factories I and II were lost to riverbank erosion, probably as long ago as 1900. It is estimated that much of the archaeological remains of York Factory III, the cemetery and the Depot, will be lost within 100 to 150 years at the current rate of bank loss. The rate of erosion has been about three metres / five years as averaged over a one hundred year period. However, in any given year or location along the bank, erosion can be minimal to extreme, with large slump blocks being common.

Permafrost decay and poor drainage also threaten York Factory’s historical remains. York Factory is near the southern edge of permafrost in Canada. The site faces permafrost degradation from combined effects of climate warming, increased water drainage and the softening and sloughing of soils, which will also contribute to riverbank loss. Invasive willow growth impacts archaeological features and grave

markers and fences, affects site drainage, and conceals the vast area once occupied by York Factory.

The Hayes River gave life to York Factory, helped shape its history, and will have a major impact on its future. Planning in the face of riverbank erosion and other environmental threats is essential to York Factory's future and the focus of this management plan. When preparing this management plan, we knew very little about these threats, or the best available and affordable means to mitigate them.



Eroding bank on the Hayes River in front of the Depot, 2005. A historic drain box is falling out of the bank. (K. Skaftfeld)

1.4 Management Planning

A management plan, with provisions for commemorative integrity, resource protection and visitor use, must be tabled in Parliament for each and every national historic site administered by Parks Canada (from the *Parks Canada Agency Act*). This plan meets that requirement.

The heritage values, resources, and messages defining the commemorative integrity for York Factory NHSC are described in the *York Factory National Historic Site Commemorative Integrity Statement (1988)*. This document serves as a reference point for management planning. As well as giving direction to maintain or improve a site's commemorative integrity, the management plan must also give direction for enhancing meaningful visitor experiences, and promoting public awareness and understanding about York Factory and the Parks Canada mandate. The principles and practice of Parks Canada's *Cultural Resource Management Policy* were applied in developing these directions and an environmental assessment of the plan was done as per *The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals, 2004*.

The development of this plan involved the exchange of information and ideas among Parks Canada staff from a number of research and management functions, First Nations communities associated with York Factory, tour operators and outfitters, professional engineers and scientists outside of Parks Canada, and interested public. Parks Canada is committed to continuing consultation and dialogue with First Nations, stakeholders and interested public on York Factory NHSC for the life of the management plan, its implementation and review, and beyond. A summary of the planning and consultation process is in Appendix A.

This plan will guide Parks Canada and its partners as we protect and present York Factory NHSC for the benefit of all Canadians. While the plan should be effective for fifteen years, Parks Canada will initiate a review at least every five years to assess its relevance and effectiveness for site management.

In the following chapters the current state of York Factory NHSC is reviewed (Chapter 2), the vision for York Factory's future is described (Chapter 3), the objectives, strategies and actions to achieving the vision are given (Chapter 4), and a framework for implementing the plan is offered (Chapter 5).



York Factory Depot. (M. Cobus)

2. Planning Context: York Factory at the Turn of the 21st Century

This chapter describes York Factory NHSC when management planning began. It provides information to understand the conditions, issues and needs that have affected the direction taken in planning, and includes views about the site expressed by members of First Nations communities, stakeholders and the interested public.

Of particular importance to the planning of York Factory NHSC is the fact that its commemorative integrity is significantly impaired (refer to *York Factory National Historic Site of Canada Commemorative Integrity Evaluation 2002/03*). A number of threats, as already mentioned, are highly likely to have an effect on the site and could destroy valuable cultural resources.

2.1 Cultural Resource Management

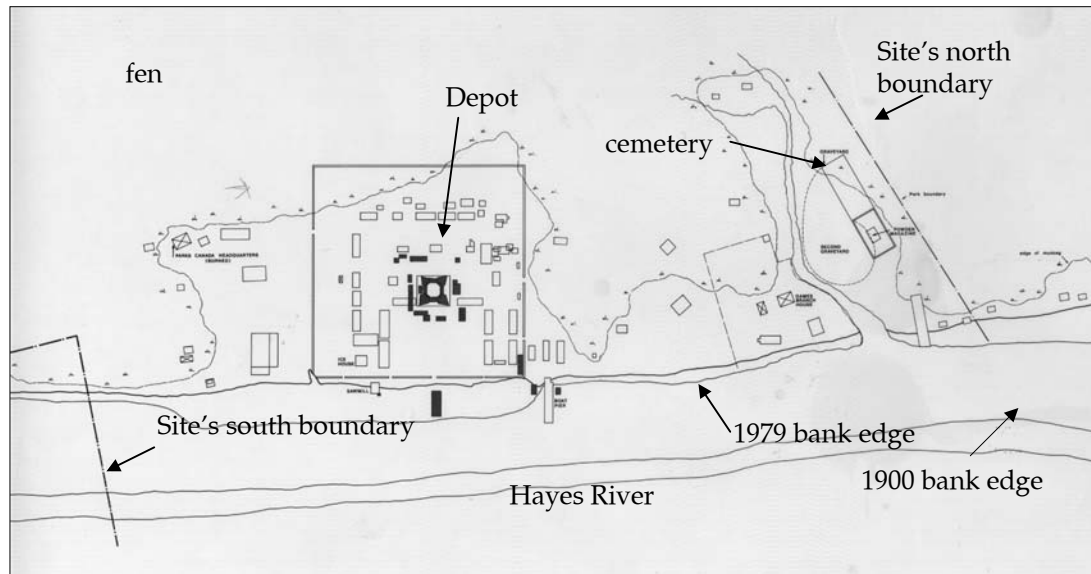
Cultural resource management involves generally accepted practices for protecting and presenting cultural resources found in national historic sites, national parks, and national marine conservation areas. A cultural resource is a human work or place that gives evidence of human activity, or a place that has spiritual or cultural meaning, and has been determined to have heritage value by way of a recognized designation, or by an associated community's shared belief of what has important historical, cultural or spiritual meaning. Described in the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*, cultural resource management is practised by:

- inventorying resources on the property;
- evaluating which resources are cultural resources by identifying their heritage values;
- considering the heritage values in decisions and actions that may affect the protection and presentation of the individual cultural resources and the site as a whole; and
- monitoring cultural resources and our actions to ensure their conservation and protection.

Cultural resource management, from inventory to monitoring, has been and continues to be a major effort, as well as a challenge, at York Factory NHSC.

York Factory NHSC is 48 hectares (118 acres) in area. This is the property that the HBC transferred to the federal government in 1968, including some private holdings and the former Provincial Game Branch property that were later acquired by Parks Canada. Less than half the property, about a 250 metre wide strip by the Hayes River, bears most of the cultural resources. The land further back from the river is (and was) low, wet fen, not suited for habitation. Next to the river, there are the remains of the core of York Factory III, dating from 1788 to 1957, and the remains of a number of buildings, camps and the cemetery associated with the surrounding community.

More cabin remains and other features, including the Anglican Mission, are beyond the boundary of York Factory NHSC, but are not a part of this management plan.



The known and potential location of building remains and other cultural resources at York Factory NHSC. Buildings shown in black are from the early period of York Factory III, 1780s – 1820s.

The cultural resources of York Factory NHSC include:

- a few standing or partly standing structures, specifically the Depot, Library, Powder Magazine, and Ice House;
- archaeological and landscape features of more than 150 buildings, structures and other features (e.g., palisades, boardwalks and drains);
- the fences and markers of more than 160 graves in the cemetery; and
- more than 300,000 artifacts that have been collected from archaeological investigations or recovered eroding from the riverbank.

2.1.1 Structures

By the mid-20th century all but a few of the buildings of York Factory were demolished because they were no longer needed, and their wood and hardware were salvaged and used elsewhere. Among the standing or partly standing buildings that remain today are the Depot, Library, Powder Magazine and Ice House.

The Depot building is the symbol of York Factory. Constructed between 1831 and 1838, it housed many of the warehouse and packing functions essential to York Factory's role as the HBC transshipment and supply centre for the Northern Department.



Depot facing the Hayes River. The courtyard is visible. The Library is in the foreground. (Parks Canada)

Its function as a warehouse, its design and construction adapted to a harsh climate and the permafrost, and its sheer size and presence on the northern landscape, are characteristic of what makes York Factory significant. The Depot is a Classified Federal Heritage Building. It is in good condition and, for the foreseeable future, should require no more than ongoing monitoring and maintenance (e.g., painting, shingling) although this is a considerable investment given its size and remote location.

Work was done on the foundation in the 1990s, including replacement of rotten sills and the original main floor, and insulating the ground to stabilize the permafrost.

The Library behind the Depot dates from 1918 and its value rests with it being the only other standing building left on site. It is not associated with York Factory's period of importance in the fur trade. The Library is in poor condition. Its structural integrity is at risk because of ice heaving that is pushing and twisting the building off its foundation.

The ruin of the Powder Magazine, which was built of brick, stone and mortar on a wooden foundation, is located by the cemetery at Sloop Creek. It was built in 1838. The ruin is in poor condition and is subject to continued collapse from freeze/thaw break-up of the mortar and stone.

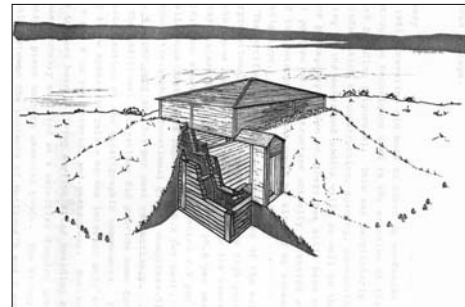


The Library off its foundation. (K. Skaftfeld)



The deteriorating masonry of the Powder Magazine. (B. Lucki)

The semi-subterranean Ice House was used from 1839 to 1911. It has been partly excavated and recorded by archaeologists. It is under immediate threat of loss from riverbank erosion.



The semi-subterranean Ice House near the riverbank seen from the Depot cupola at top right (K. Skaftfeld), being excavated at middle left (Parks Canada), and artist's impression at bottom right. (K. Graham-Stevenson)

All the buildings have been recorded in some detail and are being monitored by various means for their condition and threats to them.

2.1.2 *Archaeological Remains*

York Factory NHSC is an archaeological site waiting to be discovered. The more than 150 buildings and other features at York Factory are known or expected to have below-ground archaeological remains because of the excellent preservation conditions of the site. Most of the buildings are known about because of extensive historical documentation (e.g., photographs, maps and written accounts), but few have been confirmed by archaeology.

From 1978 to 1982 archaeological inventory and salvage excavations were done along the riverbank to identify and document cultural resources threatened with loss from bank erosion. Of the eight buildings partially or fully investigated in this period, two (the 1842 Sawpit and a cribbed feature) are now lost to erosion and two (the East Fur Store and Inland Cargo House) are threatened. Since 1982 the riverbank has been monitored for the exposure of more cultural resources. Eleven major features, including the Church of St. John, are eroding out of the riverbank and require continued monitoring, recording and salvage. Further in from the riverbank, little archaeology has been done. Remains of the old Octagon were extensively recorded in the early 1990s during foundation work on the Depot. The Octagon was a star-shaped fort, built between 1788 and 1795, and is the oldest part of York Factory III.



Archaeology in the late 1970s identified and salvaged some cultural resources being lost to riverbank erosion. An unknown cribbed feature seen in the excavation units was lost in 2005. The raised feature in the top right is the Ice House. (Parks Canada)

Archaeology, whether monitoring, recording or salvaging of cultural resources, will continue to be needed at York Factory NHSC so long as they are threatened and being impacted. The need may be great. The challenge will be prioritizing what resources get attention and how much can be done (i.e., excavated and documented), given the large costs, limitations (e.g., crew accommodations) and impacts (e.g., digging in permafrost) of working at York Factory.

2.1.3 *Cemetery*

The cemetery is located just north of Sloop Creek. The earliest known internment at the cemetery is 1790 and its use ceased in the 1950s with the abandonment of York Factory. The known area of the cemetery contains at least 160 graves identifiable by marker, fence or both. More unmarked graves are within and just beyond this area, including for example, graves exposed by the eroding bank of the Hayes River, which was noted by Isaac Cowie in 1867 and documented more recently.

The cemetery in the 1970s before routine clearing and care of the markers and fences was done. (Parks Canada)



A map and inventory of graves in the cemetery was done by Parks Canada in 1982. The inventory mapped all observable graves and described the grave markers and fences. There was no below ground examination. In 1985 two York Factory First Nation elders identified more individual graves. In consultation with York Factory First Nation elders, Parks Canada has maintained and repaired the markers and fences. Since the 1990s willows have been routinely cleared and water drainage has been improved. Routine vegetation clearing of the cemetery and care of the markers and fences are needed. Further discussion with communities on matters of care and maintenance of the cemetery needs to occur.

2.1.4 *Artifacts*

The York Factory artifact collection includes artifacts from archaeological excavations, shoreline finds from riverbank erosion, and some items left by the HBC in the Depot. Archaeology has unearthed some 300,000 artifacts that represent many aspects of the fur trade between 1788 and 1957. The richness and quantity of artifacts make this an important fur trade collection and a valuable part of telling the story of York Factory. The bulk of these artifacts are properly cared for at a Parks Canada facility in Winnipeg, while some 8000 artifacts (mainly shore finds), are on public display in the Depot Building. The York Factory Reference Collection (>5000 artifacts) is a special collection housed in Winnipeg for research use and display.



Artifacts scattered along the shore of the Hayes River. (Parks Canada)

Unauthorized collecting of artifacts eroding from the riverbank is a problem as will be the management of the abovementioned collections as they likely continue to grow from archaeological and incidental recovery.



This painting was found on the underside of a shelf in the Depot. The clothing and items on the table are late 18th century style. These scenes may be caricatures of persons and events familiar to some artistically inclined individual at York Factory. (Parks Canada)

2.1.5 Spirit of Place

Spirit of place (*genius loci*) is a sense of authenticity and continuity found in a particular location. The spirit of place helps make the historic site meaningful and memorable to all visitors, most importantly by connecting people across time, space and cultural differences. Aspects of the spirit of place can be found in the landscape setting, among the physical remains, but also in non-tangible aspects that evoke a strong emotion and personal rapport between the person and the place.

The Stories

"The stories [of our people] all go back to York Factory – we need to have these told orally in Cree, and in writing." (First Nations' discussion group concerning York Factory, August 2005)

Aspects that contribute to York Factory's spirit of place, which should be considered in protection and presentation, include (but are not limited to):

- the sense of arrival (whether by boat or plane), having reached one's destination, that has not changed in more than 175 years;
- the sense of a once grand place as depicted by the large area of the site, the size of the cemetery and the massiveness of the Depot;
- the sense of a place abandoned but not forgotten, because it remains a traditional homeland with deep-rooted connections in stories, song and return visits by First Nations people;
- the enormity of the Hayes River and its bearing on York Factory;
- the poignant reminders of the people who once lived and worked at York Factory, and their challenges and hardships as recorded at the cemetery, in the Depot, and in the oral histories and written accounts.



The Depot looking over the expanse of the Hayes River. The west end of Hay Island is visible. (M. Cobus)

We Had Arrived!

"We had a bit of wind to contend with, but fortunately the tide was on its way out, and at approximately 11:00 a.m. we saw the Hudson's Bay Company flag flying from its mast on the left bank of the Hayes River, and just beyond it, the cupola of the main depot building at York Factory. We had arrived!" This quote is not from a 19th century boat brigade, but from a 1998 trip made by Maria Lodge and told in "Canoeing Down The Historic Hayes River: An Inter-Generational Experience" (from the Canadian Heritage Rivers System website).

In discussion with First Nation community members and consultations with the interested public, several themes were raised concerning heritage protection of York Factory. They were:

- reasonable efforts should be taken to at least slow down erosion of the bank without impairing the historical nature of York Factory and the environment of the river;
- historic practices used by the HBC and the people of York Factory to retard erosion and drain the site should be considered by Parks Canada;
- the Depot is the icon of York Factory and must be looked after;
- York Factory will remain important and significant to the First Nation communities, even if the physical buildings and historical evidence are eventually lost. Their connection is to the land, the rivers, the animals and the place where their ancestors are buried. It is hoped that measures can be taken to slow down erosion and permafrost changes that threaten the site and the Depot, but regardless York Factory will remain alive through memories, stories and photos;
- protect the artifacts being found on the site and on the riverbank; and
- further document the cemetery, keep it clear of vegetation, and explore further with the First Nation communities a program for its ongoing care and maintenance.

2.2 Heritage Presentation

Heritage presentation is how Parks Canada provides opportunities to enjoy and learn about its parks and sites. Such opportunities may be on-site for visitors or off-site, known as outreach, for interested Canadians. Heritage presentation forms a large part of the visitor experience for national historic sites.

Heritage presentation is based on the site's commemorative intent, that is, its reason for designation. The principal messages for York Factory's heritage presentation are:

- York Factory's critical role in the 18th century French – English struggle on Hudson Bay for control of the fur trade;
- York Factory's continuous operation by the HBC from 1684 to 1957;
- the function of York Factory as an important HBC trading post and later as an entrepôt for the interior trade;
- the role of York Factory in establishing viable routes to the interior of western Canada; and
- the role of Aboriginal peoples in the fur trade associated with York Factory.

Heritage presentation has been done as a tour of the Depot and the cemetery guided by Parks Canada staff. Within the Depot, staff tell stories about living and working at York Factory while referring to the building's architecture, layout, the graffiti, artifacts and photographs. Besides the Depot, there is a Parks Canada welcoming sign at the north and south entry points to the site and a sign about the cemetery and Powder magazine, but nothing else for signage. The intent has been to use as few signs and displays as possible so not to intrude on the spirit of place of York Factory.



Visitors in the Depot, 2004. Artifacts on display.
(P. Carroll)

From public consultation a number of ideas were suggested to enhance the stories told at York Factory and make more use of the wealth of historical documents, photographs and artifacts that can be creatively displayed in the Depot. Even so, most visitors rate the program and services as very satisfactory. Keeping the guided tours was seen as fundamental. Some see the changing environment in Canada's North, the environmental threats facing York Factory, and the challenge to protect this historic place as very topical stories waiting to be told to visitors and the Canadian public. Also important to completing the story of York Factory is the telling of the community's history, including what happened to the people and where did they go after the trading post closed.

Nothing Short of Awesome

"The strength of this site lies in the stories and experiences of the people who lived and worked there. The wealth of information and resources – from personal letters and memoirs and business records is nothing short of awesome. Tapping into that is the key to making York Factory a stellar visitor destination". Comment during public consultation, 2005)

Outreach is done via the Parks Canada website and an exhibit at the Parks Canada Visitor Centre in Churchill. An education kit is available on the Hayes River. Because York Factory is inaccessible to most Canadians due to its remoteness, comprehensive outreach will be necessary to meet Parks Canada objectives.

2.3 Visitors, and Visitor Services and Facilities

The Hudson Bay coast, the hugeness of the Depot and the historic graffiti within, the unpredictable weather, polar bears, and old markers in the cemetery, are among the unique qualities that make York Factory an unforgettable experience of history and nature. For some people, it is personal memories or the meaning of York Factory as part of their family's traditional homeland that bonds them to this place. For others it is the accomplishment of getting there and literally touching history. But few Canadians will get to experience York Factory firsthand. Less than two to three hundred people each year visit this special place because York Factory is remote (accessible by chartered aircraft or boat in the summer or over-snow machine in the winter).

When I Visit

"When I visit with the youth, I speak to them about the hard work of my parents when they lived at York Factory." (First Nations' discussion group concerning York Factory, August 2005)

Among those who come to York Factory are people from York Factory First Nation, Shamattawa First Nation, Tataskwayak First Nation and Fox Lake Cree Nation who consider York Factory traditional homeland. In 2005 and 2006, York Factory Heritage Gatherings were held that brought members of these communities back to York Factory for several days to reconnect with a vital part of their history.

A Memory We Cherish

"My wife and I had the delight of paddling the Hayes, finishing the journey at York Factory. The feeling of seeing the Depot, in the distance, after an arduous/joyous journey is a memory we cherish. The history is what drew us to paddle the Hayes. The artery to the heart of our country. The fact that the Factory is so remote means it is very delicate, like a flower at the bitter end of a long branch. I feel this makes the site even more valuable, more worth cherishing, the last of a species, a prodigious, singular beacon." (Visitor remark, 2005)

Many recreational canoeists who paddle the Hayes River (an arduous 18-day trip) consider York Factory their end of trip where they can be flown out to Gillam. On arrival, most are drawn to the site's history having just experienced the water routes and portages once used by the York Boat crews that once went to and from York Factory.

Over the long run visitation should increase, but not in great numbers. In the short run, a noticeable increase in the number of visitors is expected from: First Nations gathering like that in 2005 and 2006; promotion of the Hayes as a Canadian Heritage River; group travel packages to northern attractions that include York Factory; and, resource management and development projects in the vicinity of the site. York Factory NHSC receives some visitation outside of its June to September operating season.

The visitor offer is rudimentary. Other than washrooms, visitor safety and emergency services, and heritage presentation, there are no visitor amenities. Nonetheless, recent visitor interviews identified a high degree of satisfaction with their visit.

Parks Canada advises the public that the Silver Goose Lodge, located next to York Factory NHSC, is the only accommodation available. Camping has not been permitted on site. Parks Canada does not provide nor maintain the airstrip on Hay Island nor does it usually provide boat transportation between the site and Hay Island. The Silver Goose Lodge maintains this facility and service now and for the foreseeable future.

In the course of discussion with First Nation community members, tour operators and outfitters and past visitors, a number of ideas and concerns were raised about visitor opportunities at York Factory, including:

- the need for a defined camping area in the area of York Factory NHSC, but not necessarily on the site itself. The concern for accommodation was raised especially when the Silver Goose Lodge was not open during the York Factory NHSC operating season;
- activity-based programming for youth of the First Nations communities, centred on learning respect for the site, the land, and its history; and
- improving communications with tour operators about the site, its history and Parks Canada program offer to better inform visitors in pre-visit planning.

2.4 Natural Resource Management

York Factory NHSC is a product of its natural environment. The site is situated in the transition zone between boreal and arctic along the coast of Hudson Bay.³ It is in a fragile coastal ecosystem. The site is on the southern edge of continuous permafrost in Canada. This region is predicted to experience significant changes to permafrost with climate warming. The geomorphological processes found at York Factory include active isostatic rebound, river erosion, tidal scouring and estuarine sedimentation. In the transitional zone between continuous and discontinuous permafrost these processes produce a particularly varied and unstable terrain. This terrain supports a diverse array of plant communities within complex successional sequences, ranging from coastal marshes through willow scrub to treed fen in the low-lying areas. Raised ancient beach ridges support white and black spruce forest. A large variety of animal life is associated with this transitional area of vegetation including, for example, polar bear, caribou and geese. Shorebirds are an important part of the fauna. Plant life is a mix of arctic, sub-arctic, and boreal species.

³ A number of protected and managed lands are in the region including the Cape Tatnum Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the Churchill WMA, and Wapusk National Park. The area around York Factory is part of the resource management area co-managed by the York Factory First Nation and the Province of Manitoba through the York Factory Resource Management Board. York Factory NHSC is not a part of this resource management area.

Natural resource management is a significant consideration at York Factory for two reasons. First, the functions and dynamic processes of the river, permafrost, surface and ground water drainage, and vegetation encroachment affect the condition of the site's cultural resources. We know little of these processes and how they are affecting the commemorative integrity of York Factory. Second, the recorded history of York Factory could make it a particularly valuable place for the study of geological and ecological processes in relation to climate over an extended period.

2.5 Relations

Parks Canada and the Silver Goose Lodge, owned by the York Factory First Nation, have cooperated in their efforts to maintain an area suitable for landing aircraft on Hay Island and to provide boat access from the island to the north shore where the site and lodge are located. Parks Canada refers visitors enquiring about overnight accommodation to the lodge, since the site offers no visitor accommodations. The site and lodge cooperate in waste management practices as part of the polar bear management and visitor safety program.

Parks Canada has worked with elders of York Factory First Nation in the care and maintenance of the cemetery.

Notable opportunities to build relationships important to the commemorative integrity and visitor experience, include:

- partnering with First Nations communities to maintain the cemetery (there is a need to further discuss in the communities);
- improving coordination between Parks Canada, the Silver Goose Lodge and tour operators and outfitters, in the visitor service offer;
- cooperating with First Nations communities to hold events such as gatherings that build support and stewardship for the site;
- promoting York Factory as a base for multi-disciplinary research involving the uniqueness of York Factory's history and environment; and
- harmonizing the management plan for York Factory NHSC with the Canadian Heritage River management plan goals and intent for the Hayes River.

2.6 Administration and Operations

Parks Canada administers York Factory under authority of the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* (1985). The Manitoba Field Unit manages the site from its administrative office in Churchill, which also has responsibilities for Prince of Wales Fort NHSC and Wapusk National Park of Canada. York Factory NHSC is a seasonal operation; open seven days a week from June to mid-September. Two seasonal employees provide visitor services, guided tours, maintenance and security during the operational season.

While Parks Canada's efforts in northern Manitoba have focussed on the establishment of Wapusk National Park and the conservation of the walls of Prince of Wales Fort NHSC, management of York Factory has seen a modest program of monitoring, maintenance and salvage of the cultural resources being threatened, impaired or lost. With this management plan, the program will see a science and knowledge-based program of heritage management revitalized to meet a vision to protect York Factory NHSC for the long-term and improve heritage presentation and visitor experience.



York Factory NHSC as seen by arriving paddlers. The site's dock is at left. (Parks Canada)

3. Vision for York Factory NHSC

This vision describes the desired and achievable future for York Factory National Historic Site of Canada. It is an inspirational view to focus and guide the planning, management and operation while fostering cooperation among those who will use, enjoy and care for the site.

- York Factory -- *Kihci-wâskâhikan* -- is an adventure travel destination on the Hayes, a Canadian Heritage River. It is a destination of another kind, a homeland to many First Nations people of western Hudson Bay.
- Visitors arrive knowing that York Factory NHSC is a place of national historic significance. They leave with a lasting memory of why it is significant to themselves, First Nations people and others, and support its protection.
- Three centuries of fur trade industry in Canada and its impact on the peoples and the land are viewed through the lens of the history of York Factory, a place that was pivotal in the Hudson's Bay Company empire.
- First Nations' stories of York Factory and the region are an integral part of the site's presentation.
- The Depot building, the symbol of York Factory NHSC, is protected and serves as the centrepiece for telling the site's stories.
- Other cultural resources, the cemetery and the spirit of place, are respected and protected for the long-term. Along with the Depot, they deserve conservation and make York Factory a compelling place to visit.
- Through innovative outreach, York Factory NHSC is taken to the world.
- Protection and presentation are based on research, traditional knowledge and monitoring that improves our understanding of York Factory's history, its cultural resources, and environmental threats.
- Partnerships help ensure commemorative integrity and create meaningful visitor experiences at the site. The privileged partnership between York Factory NHSC and First Nations people is strong.

4. The Management Plan

This plan consists of goals, objectives, directions and key actions of how Parks Canada and its partners will achieve the vision for York Factory NHSC. Goals express what is most important in the management of any national historic site administered by Parks Canada (refer to *Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* and *Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005- 2010*). Objectives are specific, measurable outcomes toward achieving the Agency's goals and the site's vision. The directions express how the objectives will be achieved. The key actions are important to plan implementation, and are a means to assess progress in the coming years towards achieving the site vision.

4.1 Heritage Conservation

This section outlines Parks Canada's commitment to respect, maintain and conserve the cultural resources and heritage values of York Factory NHSC. It is a set of responses to the significant, interrelated risks and vulnerabilities threatening York Factory's commemorative integrity. This plan sets out as its first priority the protection of cultural resources from environmental threats, beginning with research and monitoring of the threats, and feasibility studies of riverbank stabilization and other mitigation measures. Letting the site erode, and to record and salvage cultural resources as they disappear, is the last possible alternative being considered for the management of York Factory NHSC.

Goal for Heritage Conservation

Commemorative integrity is maintained or improved, i.e.:

- York Factory NHSC and the cultural resources of national historic importance (i.e., Level 1 cultural resources)⁴ are not impaired or under threat; and
- the heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site – i.e., Level 2 cultural resources)⁵ are respected in all decisions and actions affecting the site.

Conserving Heritage Resources – Benefit to Canadians

"Parks Canada protects nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage so that citizens of today and tomorrow can experience and be inspired by the special places and rich stories of our nation's past. Ecological and commemorative integrity are guiding management principles for national parks and national historic sites, and environmental sustainability is key to national marine conservation areas. These when achieved, ensure that Canada's national treasures are conserved for present and future generations." (Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005 – 2010)

4 A Level 1 cultural resource is any resource directly related to the reason(s) for site designation.

5 A level 2 cultural resource is any resource not related to the reason(s) for site designation, but has heritage value by virtue of other historical, aesthetic, scientific or environmental qualities. Parks Canada values most highly those cultural resources of national historic significance, i.e., Level 1, but Level 2 cultural resources must also be respected and managed for their heritage values.

4.1.1 Response to Riverbank Erosion

Riverbank erosion is an immediate threat to archaeological remains lined along the bank of the Hayes River. The remains of more than twenty-two Level 1 and Level 2 buildings and features were considered in poor condition in 2000 because of their highly threatened state. If unchecked, the Hayes River will consume the entire site, including the Depot building, within 100 to 150 years. While it is not likely possible to remove the erosion threat from York Factory, it may be possible to control and minimize the magnitude of loss for a period of time.

Objectives

- The cultural resources of York Factory NHSC are protected from riverbank erosion and are managed according to the principles and practice of the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*.
- Where and when protection from riverbank erosion is not possible, cultural resources will be recorded, documented and, if possible, salvaged to preserve a public record (as per 1.3.3 of the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*).

Direction

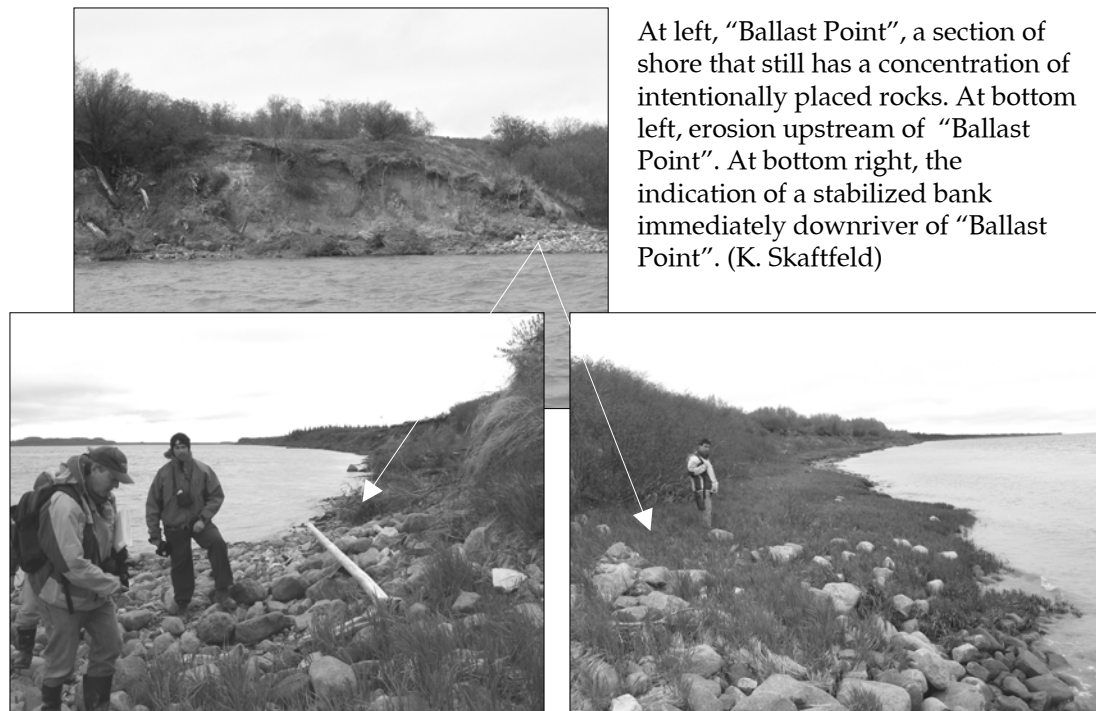
Historically, York Factory had some success stabilizing the riverbank by cutting willows, and bundling and packing them among rocks placed along the riverbank. Photographs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries show rocks evidently armouring the toe of the slope to break the erosion forces of wave and tide. However, this once protected stretch of riverbank in front of the Depot has disappeared with the exception of “Ballast Point”.

At right, York Factory, 1923. Shown is section of riverbank protruding out, which had rocks at the toe of the slope. (National Archives of Canada)



At left, York Factory, 1880. Shown are rock piles along the shore and possibly peat on gentle-sloping bank. (National Archives of Canada)

Presumably, erosion in front of the Depot advanced again once the stabilization works were not maintained in the declining years of York Factory.



Considering these past practices, Parks Canada will investigate the feasibility of reducing the risk to resources by stopping or slowing down erosion along the bank of the Hayes River in front of York Factory NHSC for at least 25 years. Stopping or slowing down erosion must achieve the objective of protecting cultural resources near to the riverbank, provide a net benefit to site commemorative integrity, and be environmentally acceptable. A risk-based design approach to riverbank stabilization is suggested, where the bank would be protected:

- entirely from typical ("sunny day") erosion processes of wind, wave, tide or current;
- partially from annual spring thaw and ice jam event; and
- minimally from significant damage that may occur from sporadic extreme spring thaw and ice jam events.

With bank stabilization, "sunny day" and typical spring thaw erosion should be negligible. Annual spring thaw events would probably damage the stabilization works and necessitate annual monitoring and maintenance. Periodic extreme spring events (reportedly 1-in-15 to 1-in-25 years) would likely cause significant damage that would necessitate major maintenance or replacement of the stabilization works.

Preferably, stabilization, if feasible, would involve locally available material and labour rather than massive toe-to-top of slope armouring requiring heavy equipment and imported materials.

The feasibility of doing bank stabilization at York Factory would be decided in the course of a three-phase study. The first phase, to be undertaken in the first five years of plan implementation, would examine whether stabilization design is doable. This assessment will be based on factors such as: practicality of construction and maintenance (financially and logistically); addressing the array of erosion processes and dynamics, available local infrastructure and resources to support construction and maintenance (including partnering opportunities); environmental impact assessment; and, related costs of archaeology and other mitigation needs. If the design is feasible, the second phase would be testing and evaluating a stabilized section of riverbank. If the test achieves desired results, the third phase involves expansion of the stabilization works and ongoing monitoring of its condition and maintenance requirements, bank stability, and changes in erosion characteristics.

If within five years of plan implementation feasible options are not found for riverbank stabilization, then Parks Canada will proceed with development and implementation of an enhanced salvage and research-oriented archaeology program. The archaeology program would be designed and carried out to document and study the overall site that would be ultimately lost. Combined with the historical record the archaeology would provide a comprehensive record of the site and would be used to better understand and communicate the national significance of York Factory.

Key Actions

- The first two phases of the riverbank stabilization feasibility study will be carried out within the first five years of management plan implementation with a decision to either proceed with stabilization or to proceed with development and implementation of an enhanced salvage and research-oriented archaeology program for the site.
- The established program for monitoring and reporting of cultural resources threatened by riverbank erosion will continue during the course of the feasibility study.

4.1.2 Response to Poor Drainage

".... altho the land is nearly twenty feet above the level of the River, the land round the Fort is in general covered water, drains have been tried to take away the water, but have proved ineffectual, on account of the ground being froze within three feet of the surface."
(Colin Robertson's Diary, 9 September 1817, Hudson's Bay Company Archives).

A system of open drainage ditches, as well as buried drains from cellars, leading to the Hayes River, were constructed beginning in the 1790s, and improved upon during the early 19th century, to drain the wet soil conditions of York Factory.



Thermokarst forming where surface water has pooled in an abandoned drainage ditch.
(K. Skaftfeld)

Nonetheless, drainage remained a problem throughout the site's history and to this very day. The open drains have long ago filled in and the buried ones have collapsed, creating gullies across the site. Water in these gullies and collapsed drains is affecting permafrost and contributing to sporadic erosion on the site. In very cold regions the upset in the thermal balance in the ground may be self-corrected once measures are undertaken to eliminate the contributing factors. However, in a borderline permafrost area, such as at York Factory, it may be very difficult to reverse damage to the thermal regime. Drainage and its impact on permafrost, therefore, is a significant risk to address.

Objectives

- The cultural resources of York Factory NHSC are protected from poor site drainage that causes erosion and permafrost instability on the site.
- Where and when protection from poor drainage is not possible, cultural resources will be recorded, documented and, if possible, salvaged to preserve a public record (as per 1.3.3 of the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*).

Direction

The direction for protecting cultural resources threatened from drainage is to reduce the risk by managing the threat. The drainage of surface and ground water at York Factory NHSC will be improved, managed and monitored to ensure the protection (structural integrity) of the Depot, the preservation of buried cultural resources, and the respectful treatment of the cemetery. Also, changes to the general site drainage are needed to better manage overland drainage that contributes to permafrost decay. The drainage from the Depot will be managed to avoid detrimental effect on other resources of the site or the natural hydrology regime. The routing of drainage must also consider the nature and placement of discharge so not to contribute to river or Sloop Creek bank erosion. In other words, planning and making decisions for drainage must look at the site as a whole and in terms of cumulative impacts. Managing the hydrology of the site is key to the objective, although the characteristics of the site's hydrology are little understood.



Thermokarst sinkhole in courtyard of the Depot, likely a result of drainage problems.
(L. Dueck)

In the 1990s drains and pumps were installed beneath and around the Depot to help stabilize its foundation and the ground around it (an insulated layer of permanent frozen ground was also created beneath the foundation). The performance of these pumps and drains will continue to be monitored and maintained to ensure they are working to keep a stable layer of permafrost under the foundation. This is critical

given recent circumstances where a thermokarst sinkhole appeared in the courtyard, likely the result of a problem with this drainage system.

In 1994, a drain was installed in the north and east ends of the cemetery to redirect groundwater away from the cemetery and to decrease bank slumping along Sloop Creek. The purpose, objective and effectiveness of drainage in the cemetery will be reviewed as part of guidelines for the cemetery's protection, presentation, and appropriate use.

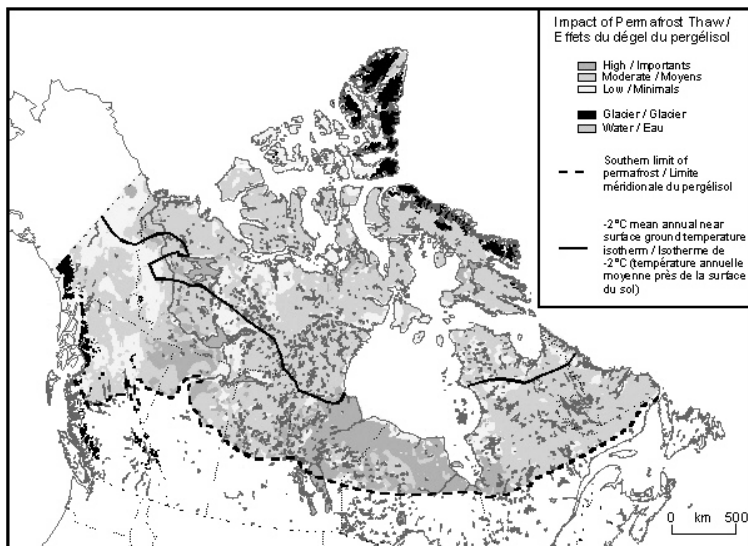
Key Actions

- The natural hydrology of the site will be studied with regard to stability of cultural resources and permafrost. Plans for site drainage will be based on the study.
- The drainage system for the Depot will be maintained and monitored for its effective performance.

4.1.3 Response to Climate Warming

York Factory lies in the zone of continuous permafrost, where permafrost is found almost everywhere. Permafrost, or frozen ground, is soil, rock, sediment or other earth material that remains below 0°C for two or more consecutive years. The active layer is a seasonally thawed layer overlying the permafrost. Climate change,

including warmer air temperatures, will lead to the thawing of permafrost, reduce the area of permafrost terrain in the circumpolar north, and shift boundaries of permafrost zones. In terms of vulnerability, the Geological Survey of Canada has identified the area around York Factory as 'high' for the impact of permafrost thaw.



Sensitivity of permafrost to warming.
(Geological Survey of Canada)

Objectives

- The cultural resources of York Factory NHSC are protected and appropriately cared for to the degree possible from impacts of climate warming on the site that includes permafrost instability and erosion.
- Where and when protection from climate warming is not possible, cultural resources will be recorded, documented and, if possible, salvaged to preserve a public record (as per 1.3.3 of the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*).

Direction

Managing York Factory NHSC will include a program of monitoring to detect changes to the landscape, notably permafrost, but also vegetation, resulting from climate change. Where and when possible, adaptive measures will be taken to minimize the vulnerability of key resources against these threats. Already the permafrost beneath the Depot has been stabilized through insulation, drainage and ongoing monitoring of ground and air temperature.

Because of its history and historical record, its status as a managed heritage place, with the presence of staff and facilities, York Factory NHSC presents an interesting opportunity to study permafrost changes and impact on the landscape. It presents various possibilities for scientific research from several perspectives with several collaborations. Such research could contribute directly to the management of York Factory NHSC and to scientific research on climate change.

At a minimum, without partner support, several locations on site, besides the Depot, should be chosen for long-term monitoring of soil conditions to provide further information on the impacts of climate change to the active layer and permafrost. Ground penetrating radar (GPR) used in archaeological surveying of the site, can also be a useful tool for studying permafrost. Monitoring stations should be installed along ground surface frost cracks as they relate to permafrost instability. Site maintenance activities that enhance winter heat loss and retard summer heat absorption should be considered for cultural resource and contemporary assets management.



Use of ground penetrating radar at York Factory. (R. Heitzmann)

Optimally, York Factory NHSC could be made part of a regional or national network of permafrost monitoring sites, in which case monitoring strategies could follow those network protocols. Parks Canada will explore opportunities to partner in such monitoring and research networks.

Key Actions

- A monitoring system will be developed, implemented and maintained to detect changes in permafrost across the site. Results of monitoring will be used to evaluate threats and responses to cultural resources. Partnering opportunities for permafrost research and monitoring will be explored.
- The site's fire management plan will be updated with respect to evident changes in the region's fire regime.



Setting up of monitoring point for frost cracks near the riverbank, involving a metal pin on each side of the crack and measurement.
(K. Skaftfeld)

4.1.4 Response to Vegetation Encroachment

Willow growth has an impact on commemorative integrity. Root systems can damage and destroy archaeological features, and encroachment of willows obscures the cultural landscape of York Factory.

Historically the entire York Factory was kept free of trees and bush, probably in part due to the constant demand for firewood, as a safety precaution against fire, as an environmental control (keeping the surface water drained and the mosquitoes at bay), and to keep an orderly appearance and operation. Reduced business at York Factory by the 1940s meant less manpower and little need to clear brush from the larger factory site since activities were limited largely to the Depot. Willows grew in. By 1957 only a small area of the original site remained clear of overgrowth. Since then Parks Canada staff have cut and mowed clearings to the front and south of the Depot, in the cemetery and along the boardwalks.



Areas about York Factory cleared of vegetation over the years. (Parks Canada)

Objectives

- The spirit of place and the cultural resources of York Factory NHSC are appropriately cared for and protected from vegetation encroachment.
- Where and when protection from vegetation encroachment is not possible, cultural resources will be recorded, documented and if possible, salvaged to preserve a public record (as per 1.3.3 of the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy*).

Direction

The intended direction is to enhance a spirit of place by re-establishing the once larger cleared area around the Depot and along the riverfront, so long as vegetation removal is not detrimental to riverbank stabilization, permafrost, drainage and cultural resources. The willows would be cut back to a manageable state requiring only routine clearing of the open areas with a mower. Areas to be considered for clearing include the stockade-enclosed factory, the historic place immediately along the riverbank, boardwalk corridors and the cemetery (to be determined in consultation with First Nations communities). Vegetation removal may also be needed for site research, monitoring or operational requirements.

Historic and contemporary vegetation management at York Factory provides an opportunity to research the relationship between vegetation cover and permafrost. The interactions between vegetation, snow cover and permafrost are not well known and large gaps remain in the scientific understanding of these interactions. The historical record on willow growth and the location of York Factory at the southern edge of continuous permafrost provide an excellent opportunity for further scientific investigation into the complex interactions. Parks Canada will explore opportunities to combine its site management practices with these broader research interests.

Key Action

- A vegetation maintenance plan for the site will be developed and implemented. Appropriate places and methods of vegetation clearing and management will be evaluated for their effectiveness and environmental acceptance. The management plan direction for heritage protection and visitor experiences will be used to develop the guidelines. The impact of vegetation clearing and management on riverbank stabilization, permafrost and drainage are critical in developing the guidelines.

4.1.5 Response to Natural Deterioration of Certain Cultural Resources

The previous sections looked at responding to threats to cultural resources. This section looks at a number of cultural resources that are vulnerable to natural deterioration of their fabric.

Objective

- The longevity of cultural resources is increased by treatments that conserve their physical integrity and respect their historic values.

Direction

Depot

Since York Factory was acquired by Parks Canada in 1968, the Depot has been stabilized twice. The Depot will be kept in a good condition such that the building is fully accessible to the public, and its historic values and contribution to the spirit of place are retained. A structural assessment from 2005 has identified a number of maintenance and monitoring requirements to ensure the continuing and long-term performance of the Depot.

Library

The deterioration of the Library building has continued and now the foundation has completely rotted. The flooring system continues to heave from frost. Compounding the problem of repairing the Library is the presence of earlier cultural resources beneath the foundation. The Library will be stabilized on a foundation designed to maintain the structural integrity of the building and protect the archaeological remains beneath it. The Library does not need to be accessible to the public.

Powder Magazine

The Powder Magazine has been a ruin since the early 20th century. The standing walls have been documented, but no information about its foundation has been recorded, which apparently is a unique construction in response to permafrost. The Powder Magazine will remain a ruin, which may entail efforts to stabilize the standing walls, but recognizes that continued disintegration of the rock and mortar is likely. It is and will continue to be off-limits to visitors because of safety concerns with the risk of wall collapse.

Cemetery

The markers and fences in the cemetery have been repaired and stabilized by Parks Canada staff with advice and participation of the York Factory First Nation. Vegetation clearing and improved drainage have contributed to their care and that of the cemetery overall. However, the markers and fences will be routinely monitored and maintained to ensure their longevity and respectful care.



Cemetery cleared of vegetation, 2005.
(K. Skaftfeld)

Artifacts

Artifacts will be managed in collections in the Depot or in the Parks Canada facility in Winnipeg. Each collection will be cared for in accordance with collections management guidelines. The collections will be routinely assessed for artifacts requiring conservation treatment. The York Factory NHSC reference collection is a particularly significant resource to be protected and should be routinely assessed for conservation requirements and its use for research and presentation.

Key Actions

- Repair, maintenance and monitoring of the Depot will continue using recommendations from the 2005 structural assessment.
- A new foundation for the Library will be built to protect the building above and the archaeological remains of an earlier building below.
- An engineering assessment will be done of the Powder Magazine to determine if and what stabilization of the standing walls is possible (i.e., the desired state of this feature as a ruin). If possible, documentation will be done of the foundation.
- An agreement between Parks Canada and First Nations communities will be developed and implemented for the care and maintenance of the cemetery, including the markers and fences.
- The York Factory NHSC artifact reference collection will be maintained for long-term care and preservation, and will be added to as necessary when new artifacts are recovered from the site.

4.1.6 Ongoing Inventory and Evaluation of Cultural Resources

York Factory NHSC is a complex historic place. There is still much to be discovered and learned. Already the Commemorative Integrity Statement needs to be revisited in terms of what cultural resources are present and wherein lies their historic values.

Objective

- All resources are inventoried and evaluated to determine if they are cultural resources and what constitutes their historic value(s).

Direction

The inventory of resources found at York Factory NHSC will be maintained as research and protection initiatives occur. Evaluation will then determine which resources are cultural resources and what constitutes their value, i.e., what particular qualities and features make up its historic character. An understanding of the historic character of a resource focuses our efforts on its protection, presentation and appropriate use.

Key Actions

- The Commemorative Integrity Statement will be updated to reflect growing knowledge of the site.
- The Game Branch House will be evaluated for historic value and managed accordingly.
- In situ large artifacts (e.g., boilers, anchors, winches) will be inventoried, evaluated and managed, like other cultural resources on site.
- Guidelines for the collection, inventory and care of artifacts found eroding out of the riverbank will be developed and implemented. Artifact collecting by visitors will not be permitted. This will be part of the conservation messages presented at York Factory.



Winches at dry dock location near the cemetery that require inventory and documentation. (K. Skaftfeld)

4.2 Meaningful Visitor Experiences

This section describes the intentions toward providing a safe, enjoyable and meaningful learning atmosphere for visitors of York Factory NHSC, whether they are on-site or experiencing it through means of outreach.

Goal for Meaningful Visitor Experiences

All visitors* at York Factory NHSC are welcome, have safe visits and are satisfied with service quality.

* *For many First Nations people of western Hudson Bay, their coming to York Factory is not necessarily thought of as a visit to a national historic site, but rather of "coming home".*

Quality Visitor Experience – Benefit to Canadians

"Parks Canada aims to offer memorable experiences that help foster a shared sense of responsibility for environmentally and culturally sound actions that will extend beyond park and site boundaries, and influence the values of Canadians as a whole. Experiences gained through visits to national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas provide visitors with a clear and strong sense of Canada, adding to the well-being and health of all Canadians." (Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005 –2010)

Objectives

- York Factory is made a satisfying adventure travel destination by:
 - o providing quality pre-trip planning information, made easily available to prospective visitors;
 - o providing a welcome for each and every visitor;
 - o giving visitors an opportunity to extend their length of stay;
 - o providing safe conditions such that visitor risk is managed;
 - o making the stay for all enjoyable and worthwhile (even if weather-bound!), with things to do that are appropriate for the site, and relevant and meaningful to the visitor; and
 - o providing visitors with mementos and the means to be informed about York Factory NHSC long after their visit.

Direction

On-Site Visitor

Whether a recreational canoeist, a fly-in tourist, or a local First Nations person, the visitor's experience will be founded on an authentic and intimate relationship with the spirit of the place, and the feeling of personal accomplishment or growth that comes with reaching the destination in one's journey.

Visitor experience is the outcome of a person's visit and contacts with pre-trip planning information, arrival and welcome services, facilities and programs at the core of the visit, public safety programs, and post-visit information, whether these services are provided by Parks Canada or other service providers. Visitors, however,



Fly-in group tour of York Factory NHSC, 2004. Guided sightseeing tours have occurred at York Factory for several years in a row. (P. Carroll)

Deep Connection

"All participants had deep connections to the site through family – either their grandparents or parents were born there, or in the immediate vicinity; some have relatives buried there; some had relatives who worked there in various capacities; some were born there themselves. Most of the participants had visited the site at least once; others many times. Reasons to visit included hunting and trapping, trips with youth and elders to learn about the site and their cultural heritage, respectful visits to the cemetery, and general visitation for the sense of peace, memories and history the site inspires. Some elders visit and wish they could stay at their traditional homeland. Several participants' grandfathers were Chiefs in the immediate area; and most families had traplines in the surrounding area. Some reflect back on the site's use and wonder, if nobody had been forced to relocate in the 1950s, how large the place would be now." (from Report on the Structured Discussion Group Regarding York Factory National Historic Site, September 2005, a workshop involving First Nations' participants)

may not leave with positive memories should their expectations and basic needs not be met. Therefore, York Factory NHSC will meet visitor expectations, but with the understanding that limitations must be placed on services, programs and facilities because of the site's remoteness, its fragile environment, high costs of construction, operation and maintenance, and small numbers of visitors. As importantly, facilities and services will not impair the commemorative integrity or the spirit of place.

Visitors' expectations will be managed and met by understanding their motives for coming to York Factory, ensuring that they are aware of what the service offer is, providing them with basic needs of comfort and safety while on site, and offering memorable moments by designing their experiences so that they come into contact with history, nature, and engaging staff.

Visitor use at York Factory NHSC will be limited to activities and areas that will not impair commemorative integrity, threaten the fragile environment, nor pose a visitor safety risk beyond what can be managed. To prevent impacts to peat and permafrost, visitors should keep to boardwalks and areas permitted by site staff. While staff take considerable effort to make visits comfortable and safe, wildlife (notably polar and black bear), weather, and terrain conditions can create risks. Visitors need to follow all posted signs, be sure to talk with site staff about safety, and be aware of their surroundings.

First Nations heritage gatherings at York Factory provide an important connection between the site and the local communities. They are also an opportunity for staff and visitors to learn and understand more of the history and importance of York Factory, and contribute to the spirit of place. For these reasons, heritage gatherings are an integral part of the York Factory experience that Parks Canada will help facilitate.

Other service providers, including the Silver Goose Lodge, tour operators and outfitters, and air charter services, are important players in defining visitor experiences for York Factory. Parks Canada recognizes the importance of these partners and stakeholders and will work with them as valuable contributors to the experiences of York Factory's visitors before, during and after their time at the site (see Section 4.4, Public Involvement and Partnerships). Furthermore, the area

Journey Complete

"... the pilot who would fly us out had just brought a plane full of elderly folks out for a tour. Though it seemed incongruous to us that they should even [be here], we knew that their experience wasn't nearly as rich as ours as we'd worked so hard for it, and come through the same wild and incredible land as the Voyageurs. And also, we were the only ones who would be leaving with the instruments that had brought us that far, our paddles, branded with the distinctive York Factory logo, the initials YF combined into one symbol. Floyd fired up the blowtorch, heated up the brand and weighted down each of our five wooden beauties between his feet as he sunk the glowing metal deep into each blade. Now we knew it, our journey was complete."
(from Hudson Bay Expedition Journal [May – August 2005] of Scott Miller and Todd Foster, posted on the Internet). Regardless of whether one arrives by canoe or by plane, all visitors to York Factory have an adventurous and rich experience.

around York Factory, the mouth of the Hayes River and the Hudson Bay coastline has other attractions and interests for the visiting public. In time, a visit to York Factory NHSC could involve an extended and varied visit that would require a coordinated service offer among partners.

Virtual Visitor

Canadians will be able to discover the history, people, environment and perils of York Factory by informative, interesting and innovative means. With its physical remoteness, but importance to Canadian history, a dedicated website for York Factory would be an excellent means for providing curriculum links, virtual tours of the site, downloadable photographs and other possible features such as fact sheets for school projects and genealogical-related information.

With a meaningful and memorable experience of York Factory, it is hoped that each visitor (whether on-site or virtual) leaves with a better appreciation, understanding, and sense of responsibility and advocacy for the environment and cultural heritage of Canada. At York Factory, we hope, visitors will remember their visit for (among other things):

- being a rewarding adventurous journey to a unique destination, worth the cost;
- the fragility of the cultural and natural heritage of York Factory and the exceptional opportunity to have seen and learned from it first-hand;
- how physically remote yet so integral York Factory and the North were to Canada's growth as a nation, and remains important today in the lives of many First Nations people.

Key Actions

- Pre-trip information and marketing will be designed and delivered to ensure that all visitors to York Factory are aware of what to expect and experience in getting to and being at York Factory NHSC. Most important is pre-trip information for tour operators and individuals that explain, for example, location, operating season, access, weather, tides, hazards, fees, contact information, on-site facilities, services and programs, clothing to wear, and accommodation. Pre-trip planning information will be made available on the Parks Canada website and by tour operators and outfitters marketing York Factory, the area, and the Hayes River.
- Arrival at the site will continue to be highlighted by the sighting of the Depot and the HBC flag. Welcoming signs, also designed to convey site and safety messages when site staff are not available, will be located at the north and south entrances to the site. The signs will identify York Factory as a national historic site, its reasons for commemoration, important information about the resources and their protection, and safety considerations while on-site. The sign will be in both official languages and in Cree.
- Staff, exhibits, reading material and other media, and the spirit of place, will all be key to making a stay enjoyable, worthwhile and relevant to the experience.

- o The personal services provided by Parks Canada staff are exemplary, an important part of the visitor experience, and will be continued.
- o Self-guiding media will be developed and introduced to inform visitors about the breadth of history and place that was York Factory, as well as measures to protect the site.
- o A “self-discovery” room in the Depot will be open to visitors during operating hours. It will have media informing the visitor on the history and protection of York Factory, and the people who lived there, and will have a library and place for the visitor to record their own thoughts of York Factory and their journey, as well as to read about others’ experiences.
- Parks Canada will help facilitate First Nations’ heritage gatherings at York Factory (such as those in 2005 and 2006).
- A range of accommodation opportunities (including possibly camping on or near the national historic site) will be explored with potential partners. Parks Canada will continue to direct visitors wanting overnight accommodation to the Silver Goose Lodge. In time, camping will be provided at or near York Factory NHSC.
- Graffiti will not be permitted in the Depot. An alternative, suitable means for recording one’s name and presence at York Factory will be made available.
- Visitor surveys will be done periodically to evaluate visitor satisfaction with services, facilities and heritage programming.
- Branding “YF” on canoeists’ paddles is a treasured memento and this service will continue. Parks Canada will provide a means of keeping interested visitors informed of York Factory conservation efforts after their visit.
- The public safety and polar bear management plans will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.
- Parks Canada will provide and/or support others in offering an exemplary website on York Factory NHSC (see Section 4.3.2, Off-Site Heritage Presentation).



Graffiti in the cupola of the Depot. (K. Skafffeld)

4.3 Public Appreciation and Understanding

This section describes Parks Canada's plans to improve heritage presentation both on- and off-site, so to facilitate public appreciation and understanding of York Factory's national historic significance. A powerful aspect of York Factory's spirit of place is its stories, including historical and contemporary views of the HBC empire's influence on the people, the land and the country. These views can provide insight into Canada's national identity, and why York Factory NHSC is such a meaningful and compelling place in Canada's history. The stories of York Factory need to be shared and passed on to our children.



Group from York Landing beside the York Boat used in the filming of "Quest for the Bay" located at the Silver Goose Lodge. (L. Dueck)

Goal for Public Appreciation and Understanding

Canadians, visitors, partners and stakeholders appreciate and understand the significance of York Factory NHSC and support its protection.

Promoting Public Appreciation and Understanding – Benefit to Canadians

"Through the building of awareness and understanding, Parks Canada's goal is to ensure that Canadians are comfortable in the knowledge that their special heritage places are protected for present and future generations. [As well,] Visitors to Canada will have the opportunity to experience and appreciate Canada's national treasures. Canadians benefit from a greater sense of shared identity and from the economic benefits of visitation to Canada." (Parks Canada Agency Corporate Plan 2005 - 2010)

4.3.1 On-Site Heritage Presentation

Objective

- Visitors to York Factory NHSC encounter heritage presentation programming that is founded on the main storylines of York Factory, based on research and knowledge, meets their expectations, and creates lasting impressions of the spirit of place.

Direction

The main storylines for York Factory NHSC, which incorporate the site's principal messages (see 2.2, Heritage Presentation), will include:

- York Factory in the 18th century French-English global struggle and the control for much of North America;
- the importance of York Factory in the fur trade, as gateway to the western Canadian interior, and as its political, economic and social hub for much of the 19th century;
- the importance of York Factory to First Nations people, then and now; and
- the environmental threats and conservation efforts to save this significant heritage.

A considerable amount of historical and other research has been done on York Factory in the past thirty years by Parks Canada and others including, for example, oral history research that led to Voices from Hudson Bay: Cree Stories from York Factory. These works will be used to develop these storylines. Gaps in messaging identified in a 2002 Commemorative Integrity evaluation will be addressed. While Parks Canada staff will continue to offer guided tours and personal services in support of heritage presentation, there will be improvements to other media that enable visitors to learn about York Factory on their own (as discussed in Section 4.2, Meaningful Visitor Experiences). The history and demise of York Factory as a First Nations community is part of the story of York Factory fur trade post and will be part of the story told at York Factory, with support from the First Nations communities.

Key Actions

- A heritage presentation program, based on the above storylines, will be developed and delivered on-site, using media and approaches discussed in Meaningful Visitor Experiences (Section 4.2).
- First Nations communities will be invited to participate in the development of heritage presentation.
- Communications with the public will be made a vital component of research and conservation programs.

4.3.2 Off-Site Heritage Presentation (Outreach)

Objective

- Canadians encounter outreach programs founded on the main storylines of York Factory that are based on research and knowledge about the site, meets their needs, and creates a lasting impression of the spirit of the place.

Direction

Outreach will be the principal means of heritage presentation for York Factory because while it is important in Canadian history, it is physically remote and inaccessible to most people. The Internet will serve as a key means to communicating York Factory's stories and importance to Canadians. Information would enable virtual visitors to, among other possibilities, visit the place and its people, find out genealogical information, post questions and comments, download images, learn about heritage conservation, access documents and photos for school projects, and explore related links.



The York Factory
"YF" brand. (K. Lunn)

Since the development of the Parks Canada Visitor Centre in Churchill in 2002, it has been envisioned that its exhibits could include more about York Factory, possibly including rotating displays. The information kiosks that play short vignettes would be an excellent venue for very focussed topics about York Factory. Exhibits and media used in Churchill could be rotated through Lower Fort Garry NHSC, a site thematically related to York Factory and located in a southern urban setting with high visitation.

Local school outreach programs geared to schools in the North will be developed. Some of these students will be the future stewards of York Factory. These programs, such as workbooks, edukits, and interactive CDs would be different from general school outreach programs in that they would emphasize the local ties to York Factory. We will aim to reach students through the formal education system by focussing on curriculum integration. School outreach programs would be developed within the Parks Canada in Schools Program.

Key Actions

- An outreach program, based on the goals and objectives for public appreciation and understanding will be developed and delivered, including an exemplary website on the Internet.
- Off-site presentation of York Factory's main storylines will be done at the Parks Canada Visitor Centre in Churchill and at Lower Fort Garry NHSC.
- A local schools outreach program will be developed and regularly offered to northern Manitoba communities associated with York Factory.

4.4 Partnerships and Stakeholders' Involvement

Parks Canada will work with partners and stakeholders to improve the promotion of York Factory and area as a travel destination, and to enhance the heritage conservation and presentation of York Factory NHSC.

Goal for Partnerships and Stakeholder Involvement

Commemorative integrity, public appreciation and understanding, and meaningful visitor experiences of York Factory NHSC are enhanced through partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders. The long relationship between Parks Canada and York Factory First Nation in the care and service offer at York Factory is a foundation to be built upon.

Objectives

- Site policy, resource management and planning decisions that may affect partners and stakeholders are arrived at through consultation and collaboration.
- Managing and meeting visitor expectations at York Factory is a collaborative undertaking of Parks Canada, partners and stakeholders.
- Promoting York Factory and area as a travel destination is a coordinated effort among Parks Canada, partners and stakeholders.
- Partnerships in the research and conservation of York Factory are encouraged.

Direction

Elsewhere in this plan, consultation with and involvement of First Nations has been identified for heritage presentation, cemetery management, riverbank stabilization, and other activities. Additionally, specific actions are identified below to coordinate visitor opportunities among service providers. Parks Canada will work in partnership with York Factory First Nation, owner of the Silver Goose Lodge, and all interested tourism operators to develop and provide appropriate and coordinated transportation, accommodation and communication services that meet the expectations and needs of adventure travellers.

The vision, goals, objectives and strategic direction for York Factory NHSC conform with and support the management goal of the Hayes River as a Canadian Heritage River, that is, to ... *recognize, promote and sustain the natural heritage, cultural heritage and recreational values for which the Hayes River was nominated to the Canadian Heritage River System*. Parks Canada will work with the Hayes River Canadian Heritage River Committee, as needed, to ensure that the heritage and recreational values of the Hayes are respected.

Continued research and monitoring to understand the environmental dynamics at York Factory NHSC and to conserve its heritage, are a primary focus of this management plan. The participation of other government agencies, academic institutions and area resource management boards, in the conduct and assessment of site research and monitoring is desired and will not only contribute to our understanding of the site itself but to the western Hudson Bay region. Volunteerism, particularly in aspects of heritage protection, is a real possibility at York Factory.

Key Actions

- Parks Canada will invite local First Nations, Travel Manitoba, outfitters and tour operators to participate in a working group with the objective of enhancing the marketing and visitor opportunities of the area in and around York Factory NHSC.
- Parks Canada will make available its expertise and information gained from operating facilities and services at York Factory NHSC to assist a feasibility study for the Silver Goose Lodge.
- Parks Canada will endeavour to accommodate researchers who are doing research that supports the management of York Factory NHSC or Wapusk National Park of Canada. On-site facilities and infrastructure (water and waste management), however, will limit the number of staff and researchers who may be on site at any given time.
- Volunteering opportunities at York Factory NHSC will be explored.

Parks Canada site operations facility, shops and staff housing are at the right of photograph. Additional accommodation, in need of repair or replacement, is in the white building in centre. The main dock and freight ramp up the riverbank are at left. (K. Skaftfeld)



4.5 Environmental Stewardship

This section outlines our approach to managing York Factory NHSC for its natural heritage values in harmony with its commemorative integrity objectives.

Goal for Environmental Stewardship

York Factory NHSC demonstrates exemplary awareness and practice of environmental management and shows leadership in demonstrating sound environmental practices.

Objective

- York Factory NHSC is managed to minimize impacts on the environment from site operations.

Key Actions

- The Manitoba Field Unit Environmental Management Action Plan has been implemented at York Factory NHSC. Implementation of the plan will be audited periodically for its effectiveness and to determine if further remedial action is necessary.
- Proposed projects and activities at York Factory NHSC will be assessed as required by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and as directed by the strategic environmental assessment of this management plan.

4.6 Strategic Environmental Assessment Summary

The "York Factory National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan" was subjected to a strategic environmental assessment pursuant to *The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals, 2004*. The evaluation of environmental effects included a consideration of natural, cultural and socio-economic effects.

The management plan will have many positive effects as a result of preserving and enhancing knowledge of cultural resources at the site, enhancing public appreciation and understanding, increasing knowledge of permafrost, and protecting natural resources.

Mitigations to reduce negative effects will include consultation with archaeologists prior to any digging or probing in the ground to ensure that cultural resources are not damaged. As well riverbank stabilization, camping activities, vegetation clearing and proposed modifications to any of the buildings on site could be subject to project-specific assessments conducted under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* or Parks Canada policy as the project develops from conceptual stage to design and implementation. Environmental assessments should begin early in the planning process, particularly for the riverbank stabilization. It is important that the feasibility study on riverbank stabilization include elements of an environmental assessment to accurately predict the cost of mitigations.

The preparation of the York Factory NHSC management plan offered the opportunity for public input from key stakeholders and interested public. Public consultations with local communities and other stakeholders about the management plan occurred from the summer of 2005 until the fall of 2006. In general, the public are supportive of Parks Canada's management plan for York Factory NHSC. Stakeholders and the public understand and respect the cultural and historic significance of the site and are interested in protecting it. The planning team reviewed the draft management plan in light of all public input received and used the input to refine the actions set out in the management plan.

This strategic environmental assessment has determined the actions in the management plan, if they include the option to stabilize the riverbank, and surrounding cumulative activities, are not expected to be significant. However, if the riverbank stabilization does not go ahead there will eventually be a significant effect, as the entire site and many cultural resources will eventually be lost. Loss of the site would have negative impacts on cultural resources and socio-economics in the region. Commemorative integrity would be completely lost as the site and many cultural resources would, within 100-150 years, be totally destroyed by the eroding riverbank. Loss of the site would mean a loss of a piece of Canadian history, First Nations homeland, jobs and a sector of the tourism industry that York Factory NHSC provides the area.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the York Factory National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan (Parks Canada 2006) must be referred to in implementing this management plan.

5. Management Plan Implementation and Evaluation

The management plan provides long-term strategic direction for Parks Canada managers of York Factory NHSC. It is a framework for more detailed planning and decision-making, and a strategic reference for capital expenditure forecasts and future management and operations.

Implementation of the management plan is the responsibility of the Manitoba Field Unit Superintendent. Implementation will be done through the Manitoba Field Unit business plan. The business plan identifies which actions of the management plan will be realized within a five-year period. Any changes to the five-year forecast are captured by the annual review and updating of the business plan. Implementation of the strategies and actions may be reconsidered in response to new circumstances or information, or changing national priorities and decisions.

Progress on management plan implementation will be communicated through annual reporting and the Parks Canada State of the Protected Heritage Areas report. The management plan will also be subject to periodic review (at least every 5 years), and can be amended to reflect changing circumstances. The public will be consulted about major changes.

Of the key actions cited in the management plan, the following are the priority activities to be achieved in the coming years.

- Heritage Conservation
 - o Riverbank stabilization feasibility study, testing and decision together with site hydrology study, and permafrost and vegetation research;
 - o Continued cultural resource monitoring of the riverbank and salvage archaeology as needed;
 - o Repair, maintenance and monitoring of the Depot for structural integrity; and
 - o An agreement for the care and maintenance of the cemetery.
- Visitor Experiences, Public Appreciation and Understanding
 - o Discovery room in the Depot;
 - o Welcome and orientation signage;
 - o Development of site storylines; and
 - o Website improvement.
- Partnerships and Stakeholder Involvement
 - o Working group to improve marketing, visitor opportunities and visitor service offer for York Factory NHSC and area.

Appendix A. Summary of the Planning and Consultation Process

Management planning for York Factory NHSC began in the spring of 2005. Parks Canada staff identified objectives, needs and opportunities to be addressed by planning, including needs for public consultation. Over the course of the summer and fall of 2005, a number of approaches were used to inform and involve stakeholders and interested public about the planning program and to obtain input for consideration in planning (see Chapter 2 which includes a summary of public comments). Several site studies and reviews were also done that summer and fall to assist planning. Over the winter of 2005-06, Parks Canada staff drafted a proposed management plan using results from the consultations and reviews. From July to September 2006 the proposed plan was made available for public review and a number of consultation meetings were held. From this consultation, comments were considered in completing the management plan. Parks Canada is committed to continuing consultation and dialogue with First Nations, stakeholders and interested public on York Factory NHSC for the life of the management plan, its implementation and review, and beyond. A summary of main planning and consultation activities during the development of the plan follows:

First Stage

- First Nations discussion group in Thompson, Manitoba, hosted by Parks Canada, in July 2005. Participants came from York Landing, Fox Lake, Shamattawa, Churchill and Thompson, at the suggestion of Chiefs of the York Factory, Shamattawa and Fox Lake First Nations. The meeting focused on participants' connections to the site, the site's importance to them, and specific issues of importance to them with respect to current and future care and use of the site. The discussion group results were used in developing the proposed vision and directions for site management.
- Telephone interviews with site visitors from 2004 concerning their experience.
- Notifying the interested public by way of information provided in *Manitoba History* and *The Beaver* magazines, at the Honekw Regional Gathering in Thompson, at the site and Churchill Visitor Centre, on the Parks Canada and International Polar Heritage Committee websites, and at International Committee on Monuments and Sites meetings in Toronto and Xi'an, China.
- A newsletter introducing the planning program and the opportunity to be involved mailed out to more than 140 individuals and government and non-government organizations. Another 200 newsletters were made available at band offices and/or stores in Gillam, Bird, York Landing, Shamattawa and at the town office and Visitor Centre in Churchill.
- Telephone interviews of tour operators and outfitters offering a service to York Factory, and meetings with Silver Goose Lodge (owned by York Factory First Nation).

- Reviews and recommendations concerning riverbank erosion, permafrost management, condition of cultural resources, and structural integrity of the Depot.
- Participation of several geotechnical engineers and scientists who volunteered their services and contributed their ideas to planning.

Second Stage

- Notice of consultation opportunity on York Factory NHSC website, notice in *Manitoba History* newsletter, Parks Canada staff newsletter.
- Mail-out of proposed management plan and questionnaire to more than 150 individuals and organizations on York Factory NHSC mailing list in July 2006. Nearly 15% replied with written comments.
- Meetings with more than 40 people at presentations at York Factory, York Landing, Gillam, Churchill and Winnipeg during late August and September.

Parks Canada Planning Team:

Gary Adams, Michael Cobus, Bob Coutts, Cam Elliott, Dahlton Grosbrink, Stacey Jack, Mireille Lamontagne, Kevin Lunn, Donna MacKinnon, Linda Seyers, Nancy Spence

Public Works and Government Services Canada contributors:

Lyne Fontaine, Bolek Lucki, Gerard van Rijn

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Flora Beardy, Edwin Beardy, Abraham Beardy, Kerry Beardy, Verna Flett, Jack Massan, Paddy Massan, Donald Saunders, Adelia Spence, Morris Spence, Obediah Wastesicoot, Judy Wastesicoot

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