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# Riel House

National Historic Site of Canada

## Management Statement

2021



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RIEL HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA MANAGEMENT STATEMENT, 2021.

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*Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.*

#### Note to readers

The health and safety of visitors, employees and all Canadians are of the utmost importance. Parks Canada is following the advice and guidance of public health experts to limit the spread of COVID-19 while allowing Canadians to experience Canada's natural and cultural heritage.

Parks Canada acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic may have unforeseeable impacts on the Riel House National Historic Site of Canada Management Statement.

For more information about the management statement or about  
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## Foreword



From coast to coast to coast, national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas are a source of shared pride for Canadians. They reflect Canada's natural and cultural heritage and tell stories of who we are, including the historic and contemporary contributions of Indigenous peoples.

These cherished places are a priority for the Government of Canada. We are committed to protecting natural and cultural heritage, expanding the system of protected places, and contributing to the recovery of species at risk.

At the same time, we continue to offer new and innovative visitor and outreach programs and activities to ensure that more Canadians can experience these iconic destinations and learn about history, culture and the environment.

In collaboration with Indigenous communities and key partners, Parks Canada conserves and protects national historic sites and national parks; enables people to discover and connect with history and nature; and helps sustain the economic value of these places for local and regional communities.

This new management plan for Riel House National Historic Site of Canada supports this vision.

Management plans are developed by a dedicated team at Parks Canada through extensive consultation and input from Indigenous partners, other partners and stakeholders, local communities, as well as visitors past and present. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this plan for their commitment and spirit of cooperation.

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

**Steven Guilbeault**

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



## Recommendations

*Recommended by:*

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Ron Hallman  
*President & Chief Executive Officer*  
*Parks Canada*

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Andrew Campbell  
*Senior Vice-President*  
*Operations Directorate*

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Terrie Dionne  
*Superintendent*  
*Manitoba Field Unit*



Parks Canada manages one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and historic areas in the world. The Agency's mandate is to protect and present these places for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. This management statement outlines Parks Canada's management approach and objectives for Riel House National Historic Site of Canada in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Riel House National Historic Site of Canada represents a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Métis farm and home. The grounds and the house, the only heritage structure remaining on the site, were transferred into the care of the Government of Canada in 1969 and designated of national historic significance in 1976. Although Louis Riel never lived here, the site and home are intimately connected to the Riel family and Louis Riel himself, a pivotal figure in Canadian and Métis culture and history. Louis Riel was designated a person of national historic significance in 1956. His legacy continues to influence the evolving landscape of Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba, and Canada as a nation.

The house's architectural significance lies in its representation of typical Red River frame construction traditions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its association with traditional Red River lots, an early form of prairie settlement. This system allowed multitudes of families to own land along the river, which they used for access to water and transportation. The house sits upon one of two remaining adjoining traditional Red River lots, purchased by Julie Lagimodière-Riel and her son Louis. Members of the Riel family continued to live in the house until 1967. The site opened to the public in 1980 after the home was restored and furnished to represent the spring of 1886. The house is a Recognized Federal Heritage Building.

Riel House National Historic Site has the distinction of being the only heritage place in Canada where Louis Riel is commemorated as a person of national historic significance and of being a key site in Manitoba that represents the river lot system of the early settlers and that explores 19<sup>th</sup>-century Métis culture and daily life. Parks Canada uses a multiple-perspective approach to reflect the range and complexity of history present at the site.

## Management Approach

Riel House National Historic Site is administered by Parks Canada's Manitoba Field Unit from its offices in downtown Winnipeg. The site's regular operational season is in July and August, but the site is open for school programming in May and June. The Louis Riel Institute, through funding from the Manitoba Metis Federation, works collaboratively with Parks Canada to offer on-site interpretive programming and demonstration activities related to Métis Nation culture from May to August.

## Management Objectives

**Building and Maintaining Relationships with the Métis Nation:** Parks Canada respects Aboriginal rights and Treaty rights, and building mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous communities is a priority for the Agency. Riel House National Historic Site holds special meaning for the Métis Nation as both a physical and intangible part of their cultural identity. The site and the memory of Louis Riel play a role in helping to sustain and enrich the history and culture of Métis Nation citizens. In managing Riel House National Historic Site, Parks Canada works with the Manitoba Metis Federation to ensure that the perspectives and knowledge of the Métis Nation remain a pivotal part of site management, decision making, and programming.

**Cultural Resource Conservation:** Preservation of the site is achieved through active cultural resource conservation and sustainable asset investment. Projects involving cultural resources are assessed through cultural resource impact analysis and are evaluated against the *Parks Canada Cultural Resource Management Policy* and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* to mitigate or eliminate potential impacts to the cultural resources at the site.

**Public Understanding and Appreciation:** The site and its association with Louis Riel, Métis Nation culture, traditional river lot farms, and local Red River construction traditions is significant to the Métis Nation, the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, and all Canadians. The members of the public who visit the site, those who explore Parks Canada's website and social media streams, and those who benefit from Parks Canada's public outreach program, learn about the significance of Riel House and

of the significant role the Red River Métis and Louis Riel played as a negotiating partner in Confederation, in the creation of the Province of Manitoba, the development of the city of Winnipeg, the negotiation of the treaties, and the advancement of human rights in Canada.

Relationships with neighbouring property owners are cultivated and maintained to enhance awareness and support for Riel House and Parks Canada, and to ensure understanding of potential impacts they may have on the site and its commemorative integrity.

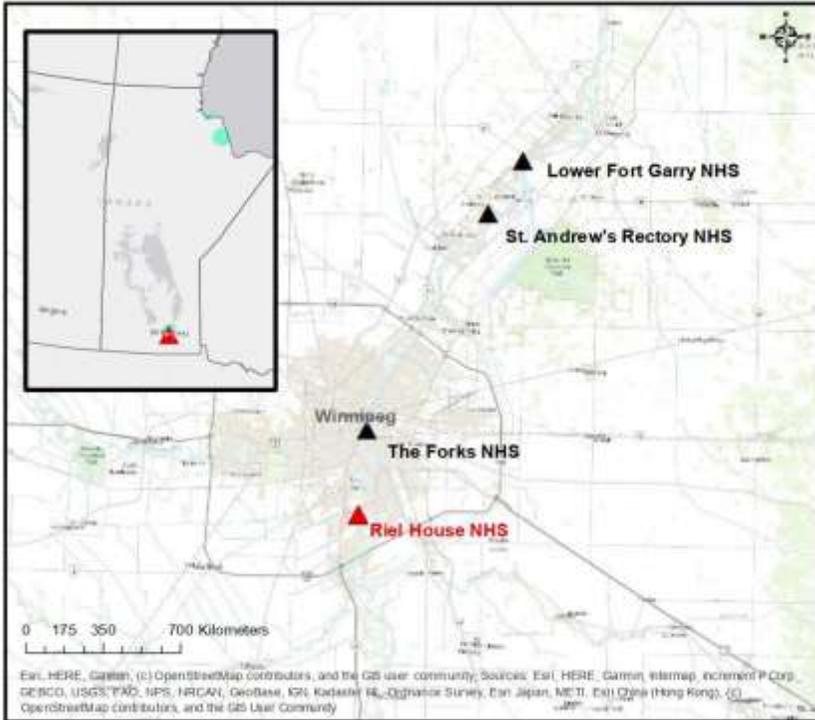
### **Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment**

The purpose of a strategic environmental assessment is to incorporate environmental considerations into the development of public policies, plans, and program proposals to support environmentally sound decision making. In accordance with the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* (2010), a strategic environmental assessment was conducted on the Riel House National Historic Site Management Statement.

The objectives in the management statement are expected to have positive effects on the level of cultural resource protection and commemorative integrity at Riel House National Historic Site. The management statement will help connect Canadians with nature, thus contributing to the implementation of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Operations at the site are required to mitigate impacts on climate according to Greening Government requirements in support of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. There are no significant negative environmental effects anticipated from the management statement implementation. Individual projects at the site will be evaluated separately under the *Impact Assessment Act*, or successor legislation, as necessary.

**Link:** [www.parkscanada.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/mb/riel](http://www.parkscanada.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/mb/riel)



Map 1. Regional setting of Riel House National Historic Site



Map 2. Site plan of Riel House National Historic Site