

June 2022

# Grand-Pré

National Historic Site of Canada

(Part of the Landscape of Grand-Pré  
UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Draft Management Plan  
(for public consultation)



## 1.0 Introduction

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

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

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

Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia, stakeholders, partners and the Canadian public will be involved in the preparation of the draft management plan, helping to shape the future direction of the national historic site. The draft plan sets clear, strategic direction for the management and operation of Grand-Pré National Historic Site by articulating a vision, key strategies and objectives.

Map 1: Regional Setting



Map 2 : Grand-Pré National Historic Site



## 2.0 Significance of Grand-Pré National Historic Site

Grand-Pré National Historic Site is located in Nova Scotia, 85 kilometers northwest of the city of Halifax, on the unceded traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq peoples. The site was designated in 1982 by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to commemorate the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755. The site also bears witness to the Acadian way of life between 1682 and 1755, and its importance, still today, to Acadians around the world, for whom it has become a symbol of resilience.

For millennia before the arrival of European settlers in northeastern North America, the Indigenous Mi'kmaq people of Nova Scotia lived, hunted and fished in the area where Grand-Pré National Historic Site is located, known as Mi'kma'ki. The Acadians were the first European pioneers to arrive in the region and settled in the community of Grand-Pré around the 1680s. The Acadians were welcomed by the Mi'kmaq, with whom they formed certain trade alliances. Faced with the highest tides in the world at the Bay of Fundy, the Acadians of Grand-Pré worked hard and resourcefully to settle in the area. By erecting an ingenious system of diking and draining, these French pioneers converted several thousand acres of swamplands into land suitable for agriculture. The agricultural fertility of the land brought prosperity to the local community and allowed them to establish farms, orchards and villages on the surrounding hillsides. The village and the population of Grand-Pré grew rapidly as a result. At the time of the expulsion of the Acadians by the British in 1755, on the eve of the Seven Years War, approximately 2,000 Acadians were living in Grand-Pré. Frustrated with the neutrality of Acadians who refused to swear an unconditional oath of allegiance to the Crown, British forces began what was to become known as the "Grand Dérangement": Over the next eight years, more than 10,000 Acadians were dispersed throughout the American colonies, England and France.

Over this period of upheaval, the Acadian lands were granted to New England settlers (known as "Planters") who continued to use it for agricultural purposes while preserving the structures and infrastructure built by the Acadians. The village of Grand-Pré itself was destroyed by fire.

In 1847, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's epic poem, *Evangeline, A Tale of Acadie*, was published. The poem about the love story of two fictional characters, Evangeline and Gabriel, separated by the expulsion, was a resounding success. This poem helped to raise awareness around the world about the tragic history of the Acadians and promoted the revival of Acadian culture and the village of Grand-Pré. Evangeline thus became a symbol of the perseverance of the Acadian people in the face of adversity. Memorials, buildings and a garden were later erected on the site of the former village as a symbolic way for the descendants who had been expelled in 1755 to reclaim the Grand-Pré area.

Today, Grand-Pré National Historic Site is a place of remembrance where Acadians from around the world come to commemorate their collective experience and celebrate their identity. Covering an area of 26.57 hectares, the site is home to important monuments associated with Acadians, including some valuable cultural resources such as the memorial church, an Acadian cemetery, the statue of Evangeline (inspired by Longfellow's epic poem), an old blacksmith's shop, the Herbin cross, a well, Victorian gardens, as well as a collection of objects and works of art. Important archeological resources testifying to the Acadian settlement, and also to the ancestral occupation by the Mi'kmaq, can also still be found on site.

Parks Canada also administers a plot of land not far from the National Historic Site, along the Gaspereau River, known as "Horton Landing". This 0.81-hectare site represents the location where Acadians embarked in longboats before being transferred to larger ships bound for the British colonies established between Massachusetts and Georgia. The Horton Landing site includes a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque, interpretive panels and a cross commemorating the Acadian Expulsion.

Grand-Pré National Historic Site is part of a unique cultural landscape, recognized by UNESCO for its outstanding universal value since 2012. The reasons for inscribing the *Landscape of Grand-Pré* as a World Heritage Site are as follows <sup>1</sup>:

- the cultural landscape "*bears exceptional witness to a traditional agricultural establishment, created in the 17th century by the Acadians in a coastal area with some of the strongest tides in the world.*"
- And because: "*Grand-Pré is the ideal memorial site of the Acadian diaspora dispersed by the Great Upheaval in the second half of the 18th century. Its polder landscape and archaeological remains bear witness to the values of a culture of pioneers who knew how to create their own territory, while living in harmony with the indigenous Mi'gmaq people.*"

The *Landscape of Grand-Pré* as recognized by UNESCO covers 13 square kilometres and encompasses, in addition to Grand-Pré National Historic Site, lands, marshes and a series of dykes that can be appreciated from the *Landscape of Grand-Pré* View Park, located at the top of Old Post Road. The *Landscape of Grand-Pré World Heritage Site* is managed by a not-for-profit corporation composed of eight member organizations representing the main stakeholders in protecting, presenting and promoting the World Heritage Site. Parks Canada is a member of this corporation, along with Mi'kmaq representatives, local communities, Acadian stakeholders, the Grand Pré Marsh Body inc., the Kings County Municipality and the Nova Scotia government. This involvement is crucial since the Grand-Pré National Historic Site, with its reception infrastructures, has been the main gateway since 2012 to discovering Grand-Pré's larger cultural landscape.

The Grand-Pré National Historic Site is also part of a third designation: *Grand-Pré Rural Historic District*. This designation by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1995 refers to the thousands of acres of cultivated swampland and hilly land, redivided into townships in the British method after the expulsion of the Acadians, in preparation for the arrival of New England Planters. The distinctive rural landscape comprising the neighbouring villages of Grand-Pré, North Grand-Pré and Hortonville is a testament to Acadians' and Planters' evolving agricultural traditions. A plaque related to this designation is located near the Parks Canada visitor reception centre.

Since its opening in 1961 as a historic park and subsequently its designation as a National Historic Site of Canada in 1982, many events and cultural activities, such as Acadian Days, the Congrès mondial acadien (2004), commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the Expulsion (2005) as well as Grand Pré 2017 – A Celebration of Peace and Friendship (between Mi'kmaq and Acadians) have been held at Grand-Pré, cementing its importance for Acadians everywhere. For the benefit of its visitors, in addition to its historical monuments, the site includes a large reception centre with a permanent exhibition, multimedia presentations, a theatre with film projection capabilities, a gift shop and washroom facilities. During the operational season, which runs from mid-May to mid-October, a wide variety of thematic programs and guided tours are offered to visitors. Eight oTENTik tents were also installed on the site in 2020, adding an "accommodation" component to the services offered to visitors who want a unique immersive experience at Grand-Pré National Historic Site. Many visitors come to Grand-Pré National Historic Site simply to stroll or picnic, admiring the meticulously tended, century-old Victorian gardens and French willows and taking in the beauty of the evocative cultural landscape.

### 3.0 Planning Context

Located in Nova Scotia, Grand-Pré National Historic Site is administered by Parks Canada's Northern New Brunswick Field Unit (NNBFU) maximizing the site's thematic connections with several other sites managed by the field unit, such as Fort Beauséjour – Fort Cumberland, Fort Gaspereaux, Monument-Lefebvre, Beaubassin and Boishébert National Historic Sites.

#### Visitor experience

---

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from Decision: 36 COM 8B.27 of the 36th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee

With nearly 40,000 visitors in 2019, Grand-Pré National Historic Site has seen more than a 40% increase in visitors since 2015. The current boom in the agro-tourism industry (vineyards, cider mills, cycling) and in population growth in Annapolis region, where the site is located, is creating a very favourable context for the site. Collaborative and promotional initiatives with tourism partners in the province have also contributed to this increase in visitation.<sup>2</sup> The site attracts primarily Canadian visitors (70%), with 18% of visitors from the United States. The 2019 Visitor Information Program revealed that 14% of visitors were of Acadian descent and were drawn to the site to learn more about its roots and heritage. Visitor satisfaction surveys show that visitors greatly enjoy their visit to the site, largely due to the variety of available thematic programs and guided tours and the high quality service offer.

Under the Federal Infrastructure Investment Program (2015–2020), the site has undergone significant improvements that are also reflected in the visitor experience. The site's former building was replaced by a new purpose structure that is more suitable for operational needs and also better integrated into the site's cultural landscape. Thanks to \$737,000 in federal funding, the iconic Memorial Church has also undergone major restoration work on its frame, front, masonry and fire protection system (sprinklers); restoration work was also carried out on Evangeline statue pedestal, the Herbin cross, and the bust of Henry Longfellow.

Eight oTENTik accommodations were also installed on the site in 2020, adding a new component to the visitor offer. The introduction of an overnight component is intended to extend the visitors' stay on site and further encourage them in creating meaningful connections to the stories of Grand-Pré. The unique offer also aims to attract a growing number of cyclists using the Harvest Moon Trail, a new 110-km linear trail that begins at the site and winds through the scenic Annapolis Valley. The installation of the oTENTik tents was guided by the concern not to alter possible archaeological resources and to reduce the impact on the landscape of the historic site, and was discussed beforehand with the region's tourism partners. Now in place, Parks Canada will maintain an open dialogue and active communications, with Mi'kmaq and local community stakeholders in particular, regarding the operation of the oTENTiks as well as other site development initiatives

### **Partners and neighbouring communities**

The visitor experience benefits greatly from valued partners since many of these activities (including managing the gift shop) are offered by partners who are committed to bringing Acadian culture to life in the Grand-Pré region. Among the main partners who support Parks Canada in its mandate at Grand-Pré National Historic Site are the Landscape of Grand Pré Inc. (UNESCO), the Société Promotion Grand-Pré, the Société Nationale de l'Acadie, the Fédération Acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the Amis de Grand-Pré, the Musée Acadien de l'Université de Moncton and Grand Pre Marsh Body Inc. (representing current farmers some of whom trace their ancestry back to the "Planters", settlers who were granted the Acadian lands after 1755). In the management of the historic site, Parks Canada must consider and properly guide all these different partners in order not only to ensure the continuation of these valuable collaborations but also to support community engagement towards the site. In return this will contribute to raising the site's profile.

The field unit has also been organizing annual "open houses"<sup>3</sup> to encourage increased engagement with local communities and share the site's achievements and upcoming projects with partners and stakeholders. A newsletter produced and distributed by the field unit has added to efforts to keep local communities informed.

Grand-Pré National Historic Site representatives have taken part in a number of promotional activities and regional cultural events in cooperation with Tourism Nova Scotia and the national historic sites under the Parks Canada Mainland Nova Scotia Field Unit. The site is also an active member of the Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique (CTACA), and participates in its promotional activities. The

---

<sup>2</sup>The COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the opening of several Parks Canada sites in 2020 and 2021, resulting in changes to the pattern and levels of visitation to Grand-Pré National Historic Site during those two years.

<sup>3</sup>Open houses were not held in 2020 and 2021 due to health restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic but will resume in 2022.

result of all these efforts is a greater number of contacts made and increased traffic on social media, coinciding with an increase in visitation.

### **Traditional Mi'kmaq territory**

Grand-Pré National Historic Site also has as key contributors various groups and communities representing the Mi'kmaq Nation of Nova Scotia: Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO), Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM) and Glooscap First Nation. The Mi'kmaq's millennia-long presence in the larger region and territory of Grand-Pré, designated as the *Sipekne'katik district* in the Mi'kma'ki territory, has been confirmed by traditional, archaeological and ethnographic sources. Traditionally, the Mi'kmaq fished and harvested a wide range of resources in environments similar to Grand-Pré, in its natural state prior to colonization. Since the area was also a good place to trade, reports indicate that when the first Europeans arrived in the area in the 17th century, they found willing trading partners among the Mi'kmaq. Parks Canada's management of Grand-Pré Historic Site recognizes the *Historic Peace and Friendship Treaties* that were signed in the 18th century. This chain of treaties and agreements was intended to establish friendly relations between the Wabanaki nations (including the Mi'kmaq) and the British. Today, negotiations on the recognition of treaty and Indigenous rights and to self-determination are ongoing in Nova Scotia between the Government of Canada and the Mi'kmaq to find ways to implement these historic treaties in modern times. It is with the spirit and intent of these negotiations that this management plan has been developed.

Since the reasons for Grand-Pré's designation as a National Historic Site of Canada are based primarily on the history and way of life of the Acadians in the region in the 18th century, Mi'kmaq perspectives were not included in the presentation of the site until very recently. There is also a gap in research and information regarding Mi'kmaq occupation of the site, as previous work has mainly focused on the Acadian presence. However, in 2017, Grand-Pré National Historic Site celebrated the cultures of the Mi'kmaq and Acadians, focusing on the long-standing peace and friendship between these peoples. Subsequent editions of the *Landscape of Cultures Festival* in 2018 and 2019 have also helped to strengthen ties between the site and local communities, especially the Glooscap First Nation.

The involvement of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia at the site is therefore relatively recent and consists mainly of collaboration on special events and festivals. Increasingly, representatives of the Mi'kmaq Nation are being invited to participate in the management and stewardship of the site. They are working with Parks Canada to find ways to honour and respect the Mi'kmaq's ongoing, unique and important relationship with these lands since time immemorial. Opportunities exist to hear and celebrate Indigenous voices and to further integrate Mi'kmaq history and culture into visitor programming, archaeological projects and site operations. These opportunities are encouraged by the new *Framework for History and Commemoration*, adopted by Parks Canada in 2019 which encourages an interpretation of history that goes beyond thinking about the origin of a historic place designation. This framework document proposes a more inclusive, accessible and engaging approach to public history that reflects 21st century Canada. This initiative also supports the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action No. 79 through increased inclusion of Indigenous peoples' history, voices and perspectives in sites managed by Parks Canada. Grand-Pré National Historic Site is therefore working with other Parks Canada sites in Nova Scotia to implement this framework and align efforts and approaches in relation to Mi'kmaq Nation engagement.

### **Commemoration and presentation of the site**

Grand-Pré National Historic Site has three distinct designations: it is a National Historic Site of Canada, it is part of a rural historic district and it is at the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The designated national historic site is only a small portion (about 4%) of the larger protected lands and landscapes included in the UNESCO designation at Grand-Pré, but it is currently the primary destination for visitors to experience this internationally renowned landscape. Since the UNESCO recognition in 2012, expectations are understandably high for the future, giving rise to a need to increase, among stakeholders and the public as well, understanding of these multiple overlapping designations and the role of Parks Canada at Grand-Pré.

The very notion of a protected cultural landscape can be difficult to grasp. Protecting this landscape can be complex especially in the absence of resources and tools to clearly define its main components and

their heritage values. A recent initiative to deepen historical knowledge about the site was launched as a major research program led by archaeologist Jonathan Fowler of Saint Mary's University, Halifax. This program has made important advances in mapping the archaeological resources of the site. Among recent discoveries, the pre-Expulsion Acadian cemetery has been accurately mapped and approximately 289 graves have been identified. The original location of the Charles des Mines parish church was also discovered during these excavations. These advances provide a better understanding of the Acadian cultural landscape of 1755 and the lives of the families who lived there.

However, the enhancement and protection of this cultural landscape cannot be done without taking into account climate change and its impacts, such as rising sea levels and the increased recurrence and intensity of storms. These changes are likely to affect the great landscape of Grand-Pré, located very close to sea level, and thus the National Historic Site. This greater landscape contains important natural features; the Minas Basin region is home to a suite of well known and highly significant migration sites for shorebirds, particularly Semi-palmated Plovers, and is recognized as a “Bird Area of Global Importance”. The presence of critical habitat for the Eastern Meadowlark and the Bobolink within the national historic site, two federally protected species of birds under SARA, also points towards the importance of the site for the protection of natural resources.

At the same time, the full potential of the UNESCO inscription of Grand-Pré has yet to be fully explored, offering new opportunities to enhance and promote the site. A project led by Landscape of Grand-Pré Inc. is currently underway to develop a visitor experience concept and feasibility study for the Landscape of Grand-Pré UNESCO World Heritage Site. This study aims to identify the best approaches for communicating the outstanding universal value of the landscape to visitors to the region.

## 4.0 Development of the Management Plan

Parks Canada conducted an extensive engagement and consultation process with a wide range of groups, including community partners, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, residents of surrounding communities, visitors, youth, and the general public, to learn about their interests or concerns regarding Grand-Pré National Historic Site and to provide them with an opportunity to contribute to the directions that will guide its future management. This approach was carried out in two phases:

### **Phase 1: Engagement with key partners and Mi'kmaq (2021)**

Before beginning to write a first draft of the management plan, Grand-Pré National Historic Site wanted to initiate a conversation about the current and future management of the site by inviting the Mi'kmaq, key partners and organizations with an interest in Grand-Pré to a series of discussions and interviews. In order to comply with COVID-19 health measures in place in the spring of 2021, these interviews were conducted virtually and in subgroups. Participants spoke on behalf of the Acadian community<sup>4</sup>, the Mi'kmaq Nation of Nova Scotia (represented by KMKNO), the Landscape of Grand-Pré Inc. and surrounding communities. A total of four meetings were held and the main ideas expressed by participants were the value of the site to Acadians, the historical relationship with the Mi'kmaq, the importance of partnerships, archaeology and historical interpretation, target audiences and the UNESCO designation. The ideas and discussions that came out of these meetings fuelled thought on the future management plan and had a major influence on the directions proposed in it.

### **Phase 2: Mi'kmaq and public consultation (2022)**

(This section will be developed once consultations on the draft management plan are completed.)

---

<sup>4</sup>The Société Promotion Grand-Pré, the Fédération Acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the Société Nationale de l'Acadie, Friends of Grand-Pré.

## 5.0 Vision

The vision described below represents the aspirations for Grand-Pré National Historic Site for the next 15 to 20 years. This vision is based on the shared values and perspectives of Acadians, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, local communities and Canadians. It expresses the desired future for the site and aims to inspire Mi'kmaq and stakeholders in their interventions in relation to the historic site. The vision for Grand-Pré National Historic Site highlights its international recognition as a treasured UNESCO World Heritage Site while reaffirming its role as a place of identity and gathering for local and regional communities:

*A strong Acadian symbol, a place of celebration and remembrance, Grand-Pré NHS celebrates the culture, pride and resilience of the Acadian people. For some, it is also a place of reflection, even of pilgrimage. Acadians from the diaspora visit Grand-Pré NHS to reconnect to their roots or to learn about their heritage.*

*Located on ancestral unceded Mi'kmaq territory, Grand-Pré National Historic Site is also a place of collaboration and reconciliation with Mi'kmaq people. In addition to hosting cultural and Mi'kmaq gatherings, Parks Canada fosters a climate of collaboration and reconciliation with Mi'kmaq people through programming, operations and events. In both management and visitor experiences, there is enhanced importance and visibility of Mi'kmaq stories being told by the Mi'kmaq.*

*A place where research and learning about Acadian history continues with the goal of telling stories of the rich Acadian culture, the historical relationship between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq and the links with past and present local communities. This leaves the visitor wanting to visit more national historic sites linked to the Acadian Odyssey.*

*A gateway to the Landscape of Grand-Pré UNESCO World Heritage Site, Grand-Pré National Historic Site is a flagship site for the discovery of a unique, respected and integrated cultural landscape. In collaboration with the Landscape of Grand-Pré UNESCO World Heritage Site, the historic site invites visitors to contemplate the landscape and the Victorian gardens, while highlighting the region's pioneering agricultural side. As a renewed tourism destination, Grand-Pré National Historic Site is recognized as a must-see in the Annapolis Valley and is part of the region's tourism boom.*

*Grand-Pré national historic site is thus an inclusive place promoting closer ties and gatherings between different cultures: in addition to Acadian history, it tells different "layers of history" and presents different points of view. Welcoming people of all ages, cultures, religions, genders and abilities, it is a place for artistic expression and meeting for nearby communities. The active participation of Mi'kmaq peoples, communities, partners and stakeholders fosters a sense of pride and attachment to this unique place that invites visitors on a poetic journey where myth meets reality.*

## 6.0 Key Strategies

The following three key strategies describe the broad management approaches for managing the national historic site over the next 10 years to ultimately achieve the vision outlined above. They take into consideration the main issues of the site as well as trends and opportunities on the horizon.

Each of these key strategies has more specific objectives and associated targets to measure progress in future years. Unless indicated otherwise, all objectives are intended to be met within the 10-year implementation period of the Management Plan.

An annual review of the implementation of the plan will be conducted to report on results achieved and to engage with Mi'kmaq communities and groups, local communities, partners, stakeholders and the general public.

### **Key Strategy 1: An attractive, world-class historic site**

UNESCO's 2012 recognition of the exceptional heritage value of the landscape of Grand-Pré has further enhanced the pride of Acadians, local and Mi'kmaq communities and all Canadians in Grand-Pré National Historic Site, which is a prominent symbol of this unique landscape. This designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is the result of ongoing engagement with the community and its stakeholders who, with the support of Parks Canada, prepared and supported the UNESCO nomination of the landscape of Grand-Pré. The pride associated with this international recognition is naturally accompanied by high expectations of Grand-Pré National Historic Site in terms of protecting its cultural resources, facilitating memorable visitor experiences and ensuring the quality of site facilities. Parks Canada must implement best practices in these areas if the site is to be a world-class tourism destination and attract visitors from near and far. This first strategy therefore includes objectives and targets to ensure that the heritage value of the site and its components are maintained and to reaffirm its role as a gateway to discovering the Landscape of Grand-Pré World Heritage Site. It also aims to improve and enhance services and activities for visitors and thus increase its profile and allure for the benefit of the entire region.

**Objective 1.1:** Recognition and awareness of Grand-Pré National Historic Site is enhanced and visitor numbers increase.

#### Targets

- The total number of visitors entering the site will reach 50,000 by 2025.
- The percentage of visitors for whom Grand-Pré Historic Site is the primary reason for travel increases to 15% in the next visitor survey (base year 2019).
- The number of visits to the Grand-Pré National Historic Site website increases by 10% by 2027.

**Objective 1.2:** The value of the landscape and Mi'kmaq cultural resources of Grand-Pré National Historic Site is better understood, protected and communicated to the public, contributing to maintaining the outstanding universal value of the UNESCO cultural landscape.

#### Targets

- The condition of landscapes and landscape features remains rated as "good" in the next State of Site Assessment.
- A strategy to ensure the sustainability of the Victorian gardens and Acadian cemetery is established by 2028 and their significance is highlighted more prominently.
- The accurate boundary of the former Acadian church is identified and marked on the site by 2025.
- New collaborations in research, inventory and conservation of cultural resources is established by 2024 most notably with the Mi'kmaq.
- The effects of climate change on the site and on the protection of its cultural and natural resources are studied at the landscape level with relevant partners, and by 2030, mitigation strategies are identified.

**Objective 1.3:** Visitors are increasingly encouraged to extend their stay at Grand-Pré Historic Site through a well-established and diverse accommodation experience.

#### Targets

- By 2024, over 1,000 visitors will have stayed in the *oTENTik* accommodation units.
- By 2030, visitors will have access to enhanced services, activities and facilities to make their *oTENTik* stay more enjoyable.
- A Mi'kmaq accommodation experience is developed in collaboration with the Mi'kmaq and implemented by 2032.

**Objective 1.4:** Facilities at Grand-Pré National Historic Site are in good condition, more inclusive, more accessible, and greener so that visitors feel comfortable and welcome regardless of age, background, gender, beliefs or ability.

Targets

- The condition of built assets remains rated as "good" in the next State of the Site Assessment, including the condition of the Memorial Church, a classified Federal Heritage Building.
- By 2027, concrete actions are being taken at the site that result in a reduction of its ecological footprint and greenhouse gas emissions from its operations.
- The percentage of visitors expressing satisfaction with the condition of the site's facilities (including accessibility and inclusiveness) remains above 95% in the next State of the Site Assessment.
- Beginning in 2023, future infrastructure projects are designed, and existing infrastructures are assessed, to improve wherever possible barrier-free accessibility to meet the objectives of the *Accessible Canada Act*.

**Objective 1.5:** Renewed, enriched and inclusive activities and experiences that attract new types of visitors are offered at the national historic site by Parks Canada and through sustainable collaborations with tourism partners.

Targets

- The percentage of visitors saying they "enjoyed their visit" remains above 90% in the next State of the Site Assessment (baseline year 2019).
- New partnerships are formed with local, Acadian and Mi'kmaq communities to develop value-added programs and services by 2024.
- By 2026, the site receives more visitors from the "young adults", "families with young children" and "active people" (cyclists) market segments.

**Key Strategy 2: A place of remembrance for the Acadian community and a place of learning for all**

Located in traditional and unceded Mi'kmaq territory, Grand-Pré National Historic Site has become a prime location steeped in identity for the Acadian community. It celebrates the deep attachment that Acadians around the world still feel today towards this region, which is the heart of their ancestral homeland and the symbol of the ties that unite them. The significance of the site also engages other communities, all Canadians and visitors from around the world to reflect on and learn from the tragedy of an entire community as well as the lessons learned at that time. Key Strategy 2 therefore focuses on commemorating and presenting the history of the Acadian people and honouring their resilience. This presentation of history must also address and highlight the multiple historical perspectives of Grand-Pré, whether Mi'kmaq, Acadian or of the Planters, as well as the lesser-known facets of history so that visitors have access to a fair and complete interpretation, developed according to the principles set out in the Parks Canada *"Framework for Commemoration and History"*. The site thus lends itself to stimulating collaborations and discussions around telling the region's history with the goal of enriching this narrative and fostering the reconciliation of different perspectives. All of this solidifies the fundamental role played by Grand-Pré National Historic Site in reflecting on and learning about the expulsion of the Acadians, but also more broadly about the forced migration and immigration of peoples, which continue to represent current themes that remain relevant in today's world.

**Objective 2.1:** Through renewed and enriched activities and experiences, Acadians and visitors with a personal connection to Grand-Pré will rediscover Grand-Pré National Historic Site as an iconic place of remembrance.

Targets

- In the next visitor survey, the proportion of visitors reporting Acadian descent increases by 5% (base year 2019).

- The percentage of repeat visitors (not first-time visitors to the site) increases to 25% in the next visitor survey (base year 2019).
- By 2024, major events are held at Grand-Pré Historic Site (e.g., Congrès mondial acadien in 2024) and attract visitors of Acadian descent.
- Parks Canada continues to support (through resources and capacity) events organized by partners and those targeting the Acadian community.
- By 2026, experiences at the National Historic Site presents the multiple historical perspectives of Grand-Pré (Indigenous, Acadian, Planters) and visitors' understanding of these perspectives increases.

**Objective 2.2:** The significance of Grand-Pré National Historic Site is better understood and becomes more meaningful to visitors.

#### Targets

- The proportion of visitors who consider the site to be meaningful to them rises to 85% in the next visitor survey.
- The percentage of visitors who say they have a better understanding of the site's contribution to Canadian history as a result of their visit remains above 90% in the next visitor survey.

**Objective 2.3:** Grand-Pré National Historic Site participates in the promotion of an integrated network of Acadian historic sites.

#### Targets

- By 2024, the promotional and awareness tools for Parks Canada's Acadian-themed sites are renewed, and a new tourist itinerary linking these sites is developed.
- A cross-promotional campaign is conducted by 2025 in collaboration with other Parks Canada-managed sites in Nova-Scotia and tourism partners in the region.

### **Key Strategy 3: Mi'kmaq, partners and collaborators working in synergy towards a shared vision**

For many years, Grand-Pré National Historic Site has been fortunate to have valuable partners, such as the Société Promotion Grand-Pré and Les Amis de Grand-Pré, who support it in the various aspects of its mandate, including facilitating visitor experience, presenting interpretative activities, accessing genealogical resources and managing the gift shop. In addition, the Parks Canada Agency is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and to respecting any future agreements signed during the Management Plan implementation period. Agreements with the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia will be implemented in a timely manner and will continue to build on the Indigenous-Crown relationship. Grand-Pré National Historic Site is a place where the Mi'kmaq can tell their stories and share their culture, heritage and traditions in their own voice.

Collaboration with Landscape of Grand-Pré Inc. in presenting the UNESCO World Heritage Site is an example of a partnership that is essential to the presentation of the historic site and the greater landscape surrounding it. The engagement of these different partners at the national historic site enriches the services offer and activities for visitors, which is reflected in the high level of visitor satisfaction with the variety of activities available and the friendliness of staff.

Coordinating with Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and all these partners is therefore a management priority for the historic site in a context where many have a role to play in presenting the history of Grand-Pré. Greater cohesion will not only optimize visitor experience but will also foster lasting relationships based on mutual trust.

Through this third key strategy, Grand-Pré National Historic Site also seeks to foster greater engagement with adjacent communities. This notably includes increasing their awareness of and attachment to the

site, as well as strengthening the position of the site in the region's communities and tourism industry. Opportunities exist to diversify the use of the site by neighbouring communities.

**Objective 3.1:** Closer relations with Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia continue to be fostered, strengthened and reflected in mutually beneficial initiatives in the spirit of new agreements.

Targets

- By 2027, visitors' experiences offered at the historic site will include increased participation of Mi'kmaq communities in sharing their stories, history and culture.
- Beginning in 2023, Mi'kmaq partners will be consulted before any archaeological research projects at the national historic site and will be invited to collaborate so that their expertise and knowledge can be incorporated.
- Other opportunities for economic benefits to the Mi'kmaq at Grand-Pré are being explored throughout the implementation of this plan.

**Objective 3.2:** Strategic partnerships are well defined and nurtured in a way that supports the Grand-Pré National Historic Site vision and offer of services.

Targets

- Annual strategic meetings with partners with an interest in the site are held, beginning in 2023.
- Memoranda of Understanding with the Société Promotion Grand-Pré and Landscape of Grand-Pré Inc. are reviewed and renewed by 2025 and better reflect the reality of operations at the site.
- The various regional communities are involved in developing programs and tools to present their historical perspectives (Indigenous, Acadian, Planters).
- Parks Canada supports initiatives related to the Mi'kmaq Cultural Tourism Network and Strategy by offering Mi'kmaq cultural experiences at Grand-Pré National Historic Site.

**Objective 3.3:** Better understanding and cohesion among groups with interests in Grand-Pré National Historic Site leads to greater consistency in its management and in the protection of the site's values.

Targets

- Communication strategies are developed by 2025 to effectively communicate the various designations at Grand-Pré National Historic Site to the public and various stakeholders.
- The national historic site continues to participate on the Landscape of Grand-Pré inc. board of directors.

**Objective 3.4:** The various local and regional communities and organizations are engaged with the Grand-Pré Historic Site and make it a popular venue for community and cultural events and gatherings.

Targets

- Annually, at least one open house is held by Parks Canada to share the latest accomplishments at the site and future projects with stakeholders.
- A minimum of one gathering or event organized by residents or groups from the surrounding communities takes place annually at Grand-Pré National Historic Site.

## 7.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

The purpose of strategic environmental assessment is to integrate environmental considerations into the development of public policies, plans and program proposals to support environmentally responsible decision-making. In accordance with the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals (2010), a strategic environmental assessment was performed on the draft management plan for Grand-Pré National Historic Site of Canada.

The strategies in the management plan will allow the site to become better known and appreciated by Canadians, to strengthen its links with local communities, Acadians and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, and to maintain its heritage resources in good condition. To do this, the effects of climate change on the protection of cultural and natural resources will be identified and studied and the value of landscape cultural resources will be better understood, protected and communicated to the public. The implementation of measures to achieve the objectives set out in the management plan should contribute to increasing the level of cultural resource protection and commemorative integrity at Grand-Pré National Historic Site. The management plan will help bring Canadians closer to nature by contributing to the implementation of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Certain strategies, objectives or targets identified in the management plan could eventually lead to negative environmental effects, in particular the increase in the number of visitors and accommodation stays. However, these effects can be mitigated by following existing guidelines and conducting impact assessments for projects, including any new facility, activity or event, as well as for infrastructure maintenance and cultural resource conservation projects. These assessments will specify the effects on the valued components and will help to mitigate the potential negative effects on cultural and natural resources, the visitor experience and various partner relationships. Site operations will help mitigate climate impacts in accordance with government greening requirements in support of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Consultations with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, stakeholders and the public will be conducted on the draft management plan including the draft strategic environmental assessment. Comments will be considered when finalizing the strategic environmental assessment and management plan.