



S.S. Klondike

National Historic Site of Canada

Management Plan

2010



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October 2010

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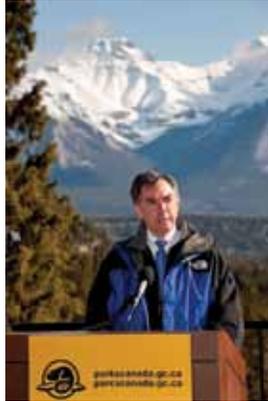
S.S. *Klondike* National Historic Site of
Canada Management Plan

Catalogue No: R64-105/92-2010E
ISBN: 978-1-100-15458-9

Front Cover Image Credits

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Foreword



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

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

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

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

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

These values form the foundation of the new management plan for S.S. Klondike 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 S.S. Klondike National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan.



Jim Prentice
Minister of the Environment

Recommendations

Recommended by:



Alan Latourelle
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada



Anne Morin
Field Unit Superintendent
Yukon Field Unit, Parks Canada



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Superintendent
S.S. Klondike National Historic Site of Canada, Parks Canada

Executive Summary

S.S. *Klondike* National Historic Site of Canada (NHS) protects one of Canada's last remaining historic sternwheelers, commemorating a system of inland water transportation that profoundly shaped the nation's history. Beautifully restored and furnished with hundreds of artifacts and reproductions, S.S. *Klondike* NHS invites us to experience a taste of Yukon's legendary riverboat days. It allows visitors to Whitehorse to enjoy a personal experience of a northern icon, it offers Yukoners a powerful symbol and community gathering place, and it invites all Canadians to discover a fascinating era in Canadian history. This management plan strives to build on the Site's strong physical resources and current programs to create more diverse opportunities for Canadians to experience and appreciate this national treasure, to attract new audiences to engage in memorable and authentic visitor experiences, and to build stronger connections with Canadians at the local, regional and national levels.

The commemorative integrity of S.S. *Klondike* NHS depends on both the continued excellent physical condition of its historic resources and its ability to inspire and engage Canadians. It is clear that these Site qualities are deeply connected to each other. The excellent physical condition of the S.S. *Klondike* and the authenticity of its furnishings and exhibits are fundamental to the sense of time and place that visitors experience at the S.S. *Klondike*. Relevant, memorable and enriching interpretive programs and products are equally important to the understanding and enjoyment that Canadians gain through both on and off-site learning about the S.S. *Klondike*. S.S. *Klondike* NHS achieved a high rating of commemorative integrity in a recent Parks Canada evaluation, but there are specific areas where future site management has the responsibility and opportunity to maintain and enhance both its cultural resources and its place in the hearts of Canadians.

This management plan recognizes several key challenges to the continued and enriched success of S.S. *Klondike* NHS. The outstanding condition of the vessel and the associated cultural resources requires ongoing physical care and maintenance to protect. And although the visitor experience for current audiences is consistently positive, the range of interpretive programs and products is limited, and local community members do not make frequent repeat visits to the Site. S.S. *Klondike* NHS is located at a prominent and central site in Whitehorse, but it does not currently play a large role in local community events. The Site has strong potential to act as a natural gateway to other Parks Canada and heritage sites in the

regions, but the current visitor facilities are outdated and inadequate for this function. Changing national and international visitor patterns will affect the nature of future tourism activity in the region, and S.S. *Klondike* NHS needs to be able to respond to new tourism trends. At the local, regional and national levels the Site needs to build stronger connections to Canadian audiences, to ensure that the history of Yukon's riverboat system of transportation is cherished as an integral part of Canada's national story.

Three key strategies outlined in this management plan address these challenges in an integrated approach to Site management. The first key strategy, "A Premiere Sternwheeler Experience Based on the Real Thing" focuses on maintaining and enhancing the Site's cultural resources and visitor services and facilities to support an expanded visitor experience offer that can satisfy current markets and attract new markets. S.S. *Klondike* NHS will respond to new tourism trends and craft new activities and interpretive products targeted at distinct visitor interests, while linking to the broader historic backdrop of the S.S. *Klondike* and the era of riverboat transportation. The second key strategy, "A City Icon Integrated Within the Whitehorse Waterfront and Community" aims to ensure that S.S. *Klondike* stories are increasingly included in the larger Whitehorse waterfront story and activities, facilitating stronger connections to the local community and attracting increased visitation. This strategy will encourage the community to feel a sense of pride and ownership in the S.S. *Klondike* and to use the Site in a greater diversity of ways, enhancing its relevance to both the community and visitors. The third key strategy, "Experience Beyond Boundaries", addresses the need to foster greater relevance to Canadians off-site, through outreach education programs and enhanced multi-media learning opportunities.

As a whole, this management plan intends to build a stronger connection to place between S.S. *Klondike* NHS and a wider Canadian audience. It will result in a greater variety of interpretive programs and materials, more meaningful visitor experiences, greater integration of the Site into local community life, an increased public sense of personal connection to the S.S. *Klondike*, stronger connections to other Yukon heritage and tourism sites, and a stronger overall presence in Canada's historic landscape.

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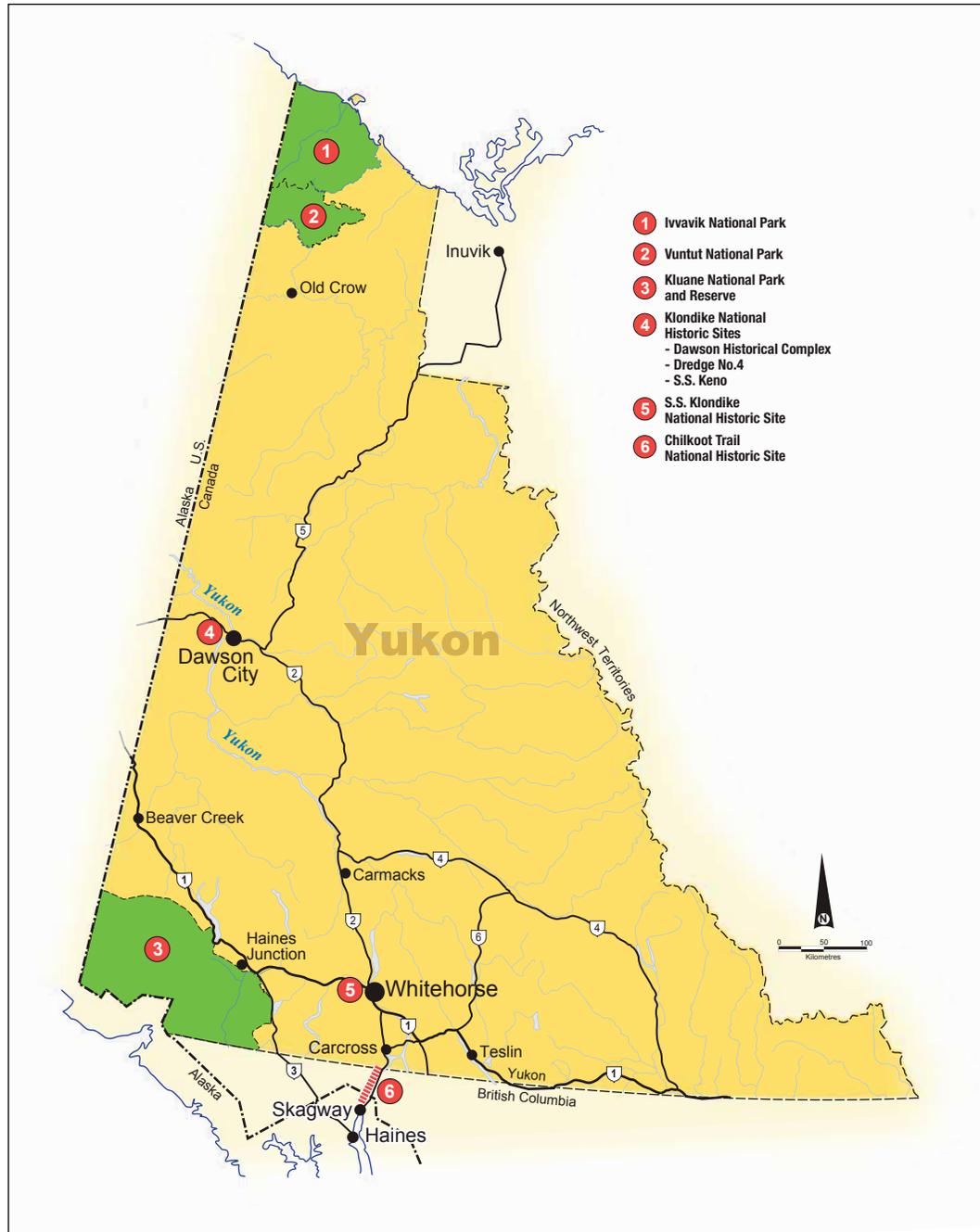
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Parks Canada Heritage Areas in Yukon and Northern British Columbia



Map 1 – S.S. Klondike National Historic Site regional setting

1.0 Introduction

1.1 AN UPDATED MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR S.S. KLONDIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA

Parks Canada is responsible for administering a national system of protected heritage places, including national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas; special places that help define Canada and Canadians. The Parks Canada mandate has remained essentially unchanged for three quarters of a century:

On behalf of the people of Canada, we protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

The *Historic Sites and Monuments Act*, Parks Canada Agency Act, and the Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies set the context for this responsibility. An important part of Parks Canada's mandate involves protecting the health and wholeness, or commemorative integrity, of a national historic site. This means preserving the site's cultural resources, communicating its heritage values and national significance, and ensuring that the site's heritage values are respected in all decisions and actions that affect the site.

S.S. *Klondike* NHS commemorates the history of inland water transportation in the Yukon. Hundreds of steam-powered sternwheelers once worked the waterways of the Yukon. Today, the S.S. *Klondike* is one of Canada's few remaining steam-powered paddlewheelers, chosen to represent the many riverboats that played such a critical



Parks Canada/F. Mueller

role in the events that shaped modern Yukon and Canadian society. Fully restored and sitting prominently on the banks of the Yukon River in downtown Whitehorse (Map 2., p. 2), the S.S. *Klondike* invites visitors and locals to enjoy a personal riverboat experience and to discover the amazing stories of a very different era in Canadian history.

1.2 MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

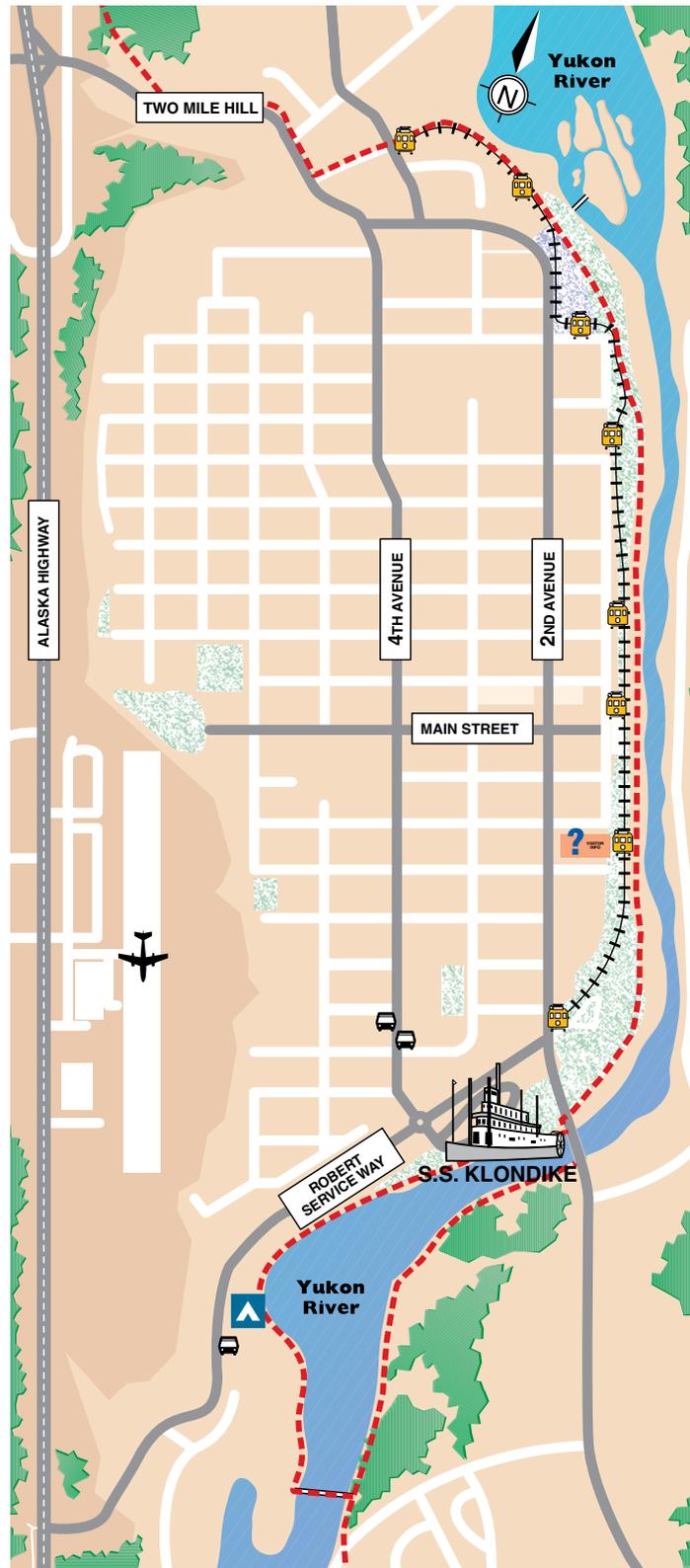
A management plan is the key document that guides decisions and actions in protecting, managing and operating a national historic site. Management plans are a legal requirement for all national historic sites administered by Parks Canada, they are developed with the involvement of the

Canadian public, and are formally reviewed every five years.

This is the second management plan for S.S. Klondike NHS and it updates and replaces the 2004 management plan. This second plan builds on the direction set in 2004, but looks different, as it follows new national management planning guidelines adopted by Parks Canada in 2008. These guidelines facilitate the integration of the three elements of Parks Canada's mandate – heritage resource protection, facilitating opportunities for visitor experience, and promoting public appreciation and enjoyment – in all aspects of site management.

This integration is apparent in the revised Site vision and the use of key strategies that will guide Site management for the coming years. This plan will be reviewed in five years, to ensure it remains relevant and effective for Site management.

The management plan review process was conducted in three stages with opportunities for public input at each stage. An internal review of the 2004 management plan was conducted which helped gauge plan implementation and identify key issues. This review also included input from the 2007 Commemorative Integrity Evaluation, the 2007 Visitor Experience Assessment and recent visitor surveys. An initial public newsletter in October 2008 provided draft vision elements, current issues and draft key strategies, and called for public input. Meetings followed with key interested parties, to help draft objectives and actions to realize the key strategies. These were included in a second public newsletter in March 2009 and an open house was held in Whitehorse in early April 2009. Consideration of public input and further meetings with interested parties led to the drafting of the management plan, which underwent public review in January 2010 before the final plan was recommended for the Minister's approval.



Map 2 – S.S. Klondike NHS location in downtown Whitehorse

2.0 Importance of the Site

COMMEMORATIVE INTENT:

S.S. Klondike National Historic Site of Canada commemorates inland water transportation in the Yukon. It is representative of Yukon steamers and other vessels.

From the first struggling passage of the New Racket in 1869 to the last sailing of the S.S. *Klondike* in 1955 steam powered riverboats were a common sight on the Yukon River. These puffing vessels provided the connection between the fur and mineral riches of the upper Yukon River basin and the markets and manufactured products of the western world. The proven technology, largely drawn from the riverboat industry of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, with its low-cost boats burning freely available and plentiful local wood allowed traders, entrepreneurs and miners seasonal access to the Yukon interior where they exploited economic resources and built new communities. Until the completion of the modern road network in the mid 1950s, these boats and the related system of docks, warehouses and shipyards in Whitehorse, Mayo and Dawson and the wood camps, weirs and navigation services spaced along the length of the river, shaped where people lived, changed the way they worked and were an integral part of their lives. S.S. *Klondike* NHS represents all of these vessels and tells the stories of the boats and the river-based society that contemporary Yukoners still live in today.

Whitehorse, at the foot of the Whitehorse Rapids, developed as the transshipment point for all of the freight traffic early in the twentieth century. Its shipyard was also the source of many of the vessels, including the S.S. *Klondike*, that sailed the river. Not



S.S. *Klondike* moored at Whitehorse, 1937. Parks Canada/F. Coghlan Col.

surprisingly, the city was at the forefront of efforts to preserve this heritage when the boats were laid up for the last time. The boats were integrated into the city's logo in 1950 and the community sought federal support for the preservation of the boats. In 1958 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada recommended the preservation of a "Yukon River steamer as a tourist attraction" in Whitehorse. In 1960 the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway donated the S.S. *Klondike* to Canada. Work on moving and

restoring the vessel was completed in 1981, when Parks Canada opened S.S. *Klondike* NHS to the public at its present location alongside the river. The vessel remains an important icon symbolizing not only the importance of transportation in Yukon history, but also the important part this river-based industry played in the history of Whitehorse.



S.S. *Keno* loading freight, circa 1930. Parks Canada/G.A. McIntyre Col.

There are a number of other heritage places with themes related to the S.S. *Klondike*. Other preserved river and lake boats include the S.S. *Keno* NHS in Dawson City, the S.S. *Tarahne* in Atlin and the remains of the S.S. *Tutshi* in Carcross. In addition to the boats, a number of the Yukon River heritage sites, Fort Selkirk and Canyon City, and wood camps along the Thirty Mile Canadian Heritage River are also commemorated by the Yukon government. The recent and ongoing development of the Whitehorse waterfront as a cultural forum is also an important regeneration of the historic links between Whitehorse and the Yukon River. Within their land claims agreements several First Nations selected areas that include sections of the Yukon River, similarly reflecting the cultural significance of the river in the present.

The S.S. *Klondike* was selected to represent all of the vessels that sailed the upper Yukon River. The design of the S.S. *Klondike* reflects the meeting of the Yukon's riparian geography and the technology of shallow draft steam-powered sternwheelers. Further, the location of the boat adjacent to the Yukon River immediately upstream of the shipyard in which it was built, reinforces

the connections to both the Yukon River and the Whitehorse Waterfront. The S.S. *Klondike* retains its original form and design, the boilers, engine, and is authentically furnished, thus allowing visitors to experience the "real thing" and better hear the stories the site has to tell.

S.S. *Klondike* NHS has a responsibility to communicate the character and effects of the inland water transportation system that connected the Yukon to the world. These stories include how the river transportation system evolved to meet the needs of the developing mining industry while addressing the specific hydrological, geographic and climate constraints of the upper Yukon River. The resulting river-based transport system both drew upon and shaped Yukon society, determining the location of many river communities and employing both newcomers and First Nations in a variety of ways. The ongoing protection of the S.S. *Klondike* at its present riverside location in Whitehorse and the communication of the stories of river transportation on the site, in cooperation with other related heritage sites and through education extension and new media will ensure the continuing commemorative integrity of the national historic site.

3.0 Planning Context



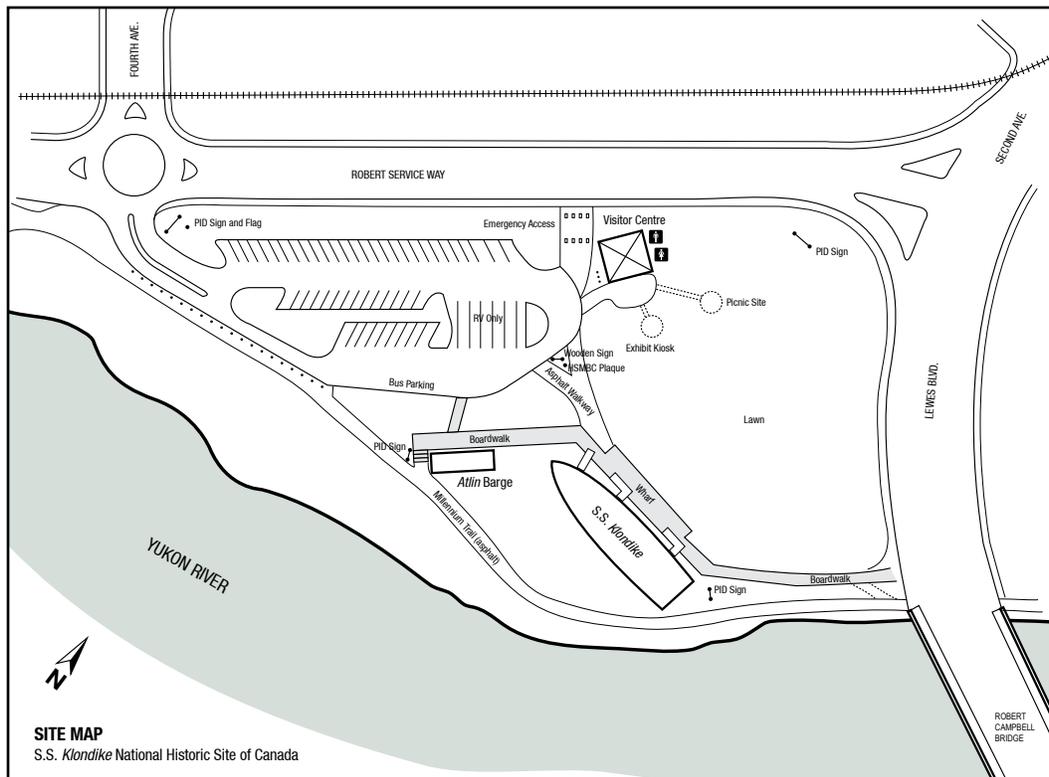
Parks Canada/F. Mueller

3.1 RENEWAL WITHIN PARKS CANADA

Parks Canada is beginning to renew its work to better serve the needs of Canadians today and in the future. There are many factors influencing Parks Canada - shifts in the cultural make up of our cities, an aging population, Canadians' changing connection to their history and environment, increasing threats to natural and cultural heritage, and changes in how Canadians spend their leisure time. For Parks Canada programs to continue to be relevant, the agency must take a fresh look at the needs and desires of Canadians. In the next few years Parks Canada will be increasing its efforts in seeking and maintaining support from existing and new partners, attracting more visitors, making meaningful connections to communities, and increasing its support base from all Canadians while continuing to protect heritage resources. The agency is actively

seeking new ways to strengthen Canadians' connection to their natural and historic treasures.

At S.S. *Klondike* NHS Parks Canada is seeking innovative ways for visitors to experience the S.S. *Klondike*, pursuing opportunities to increase the Site's presence and role in local community life, and reaching out to Canadians who may never experience the site in person. For example, Site managers are exploring a greater range of visitor opportunities including self-guided tours and experiences aimed at attracting more local and returning visitors. Parks Canada is working with the City of Whitehorse and other heritage agencies to integrate S.S. *Klondike* NHS into the development of the larger Whitehorse Waterfront area, and is making the S.S. *Klondike* available for more public and private events and activities. There



Map 3 – Site map of S.S. Klondike NHS

is also interest in building stronger outreach resources, including internet and classroom-based materials.

As Parks Canada seeks opportunities to build new, more relevant connections with Canadians, it does so within the context of its three core mandate elements, all of which are essential to its success:

- Protecting natural and heritage resources to ensure their continued health and authenticity;
- Facilitating opportunities for visitors to enjoy engaging and inspiring personal experiences of Canada's heritage; and
- Providing public education, outreach education programs, and interpretive products and resources, to reach diverse Canadian audiences across the country.

This section offers a summary of the current situation at S.S. Klondike NHS at it relates to each of these areas.

3.2 SITE HISTORY

The S.S. *Klondike* II is one of Canada's last remaining historic sternwheelers, a treasured icon of the era of riverboat transportation in the Yukon. The original S.S. *Klondike* was built in the Whitehorse shipyards in 1929 by the British Yukon Navigation Company. She was the largest steamboat to ever service the Canadian portion of the Yukon River, able to carry 272 tonnes (300 t) onboard while maintaining a necessary shallow draft of less than four feet. The British Yukon Navigation Company took pride in her brilliant design, tremendous freight capacity, and stately elegance, and when the S.S. *Klondike* I ran aground in 1936 the company immediately built an identical vessel, also named the S.S. *Klondike*. The S.S. *Klondike* II worked on the Yukon River from 1937 until 1955, transporting silver-lead ore, freight, and passengers between Whitehorse and Dawson. In 1954-55, the vessel was placed in cruise service after an extensive refurbishment. The S.S. *Klondike* was the last of the sternwheelers to operate in the Yukon. She

was retired in 1955, when the river system of transportation was ultimately superseded by a new road system.

S.S. *Klondike* NHS commemorates the historic period beginning in 1937 and ending in 1953. Designated as a national historic site in 1967, the S.S. *Klondike* has since been fully restored and furnished to her 1937-1940 historic appearance and character. Opened to the public for tours in 1981, she continues to be one of Whitehorse's most popular tourist attractions and most recognized features. The symbol of the city of Whitehorse is a sternwheeler and the S.S. *Klondike* is highlighted in city and territorial tourism literature, reflecting the historic significance and public appeal of Yukon's sternwheelers. Between 1999 and 2004, 2.2 million dollars were invested to restore the S.S. *Klondike*, after serious rot was discovered from the bow to stern. Extensive renovations included rot repairs, re-canvassing, upgrading the fire protection system and re-painting. The vessel is now in excellent condition and requires on-going maintenance to keep it in this condition.

In 2005 Parks Canada, after a twenty year period of service delivery by a third party, again began delivering on-site interpretive programming and visitor services. This has heightened Parks Canada's presence in Whitehorse and helped to position S.S. *Klondike* NHS as a gateway to other national historic sites and national parks in the Yukon. It has also ensured Parks Canada's ability to offer high quality visitor opportunities that fully support the commemorative integrity of the Site.

3.3 CURRENT SITUATION

The heart of S.S. *Klondike* NHS is the S.S. *Klondike* herself, one of the last and most admired sternwheelers of Yukon's riverboat days. This 240 foot long steamboat has been fully restored and furnished with exhibits that bring each aspect of the vessel's daily operations to life. Where the S.S. *Klondike* sits dry-docked on the banks of the Yukon

River today, it seems almost as if it is sitting in the water, allowing visitors to imagine a time when steamboats filled the docks all along the city waterfront. Visitors enjoy the authentic and complete restoration of the vessel, and it makes a strong visual impression on all who enter the city or stroll the popular Millenium Trail along Robert Service Way.

The Atlin Barge (see Map 3, p. 6) is another important feature of the Site, helping to document and communicate the history of water transportation in the Yukon. It sits close beside the S.S. *Klondike* and serves as a gathering area where visitors usually begin their tour with a viewing of the video "In the Days of the Riverboats." Many of the paddlewheelers increased their freight capacity by pushing barges ahead of them, and as visitors watch old home movies of riverboats pushing barges stacked with ore bags, their experience is enhanced as they realize they are sitting on a an authentic barge from the period.

Across the grounds from the S.S. *Klondike*, the Visitor Services Building provides interpretive information, ticket and merchandise sales, restroom facilities, and the staff office. The Visitor Services Building is small and out-dated, causing difficulties for both staff operations and visitor services. Limited exhibit space, dated messages, and inadequate washrooms all affect the quality of the visitor experience. The limited restrooms present a particular problem for bus groups, who complain they find it difficult to move their tour groups through the Site on schedule when their passengers have to wait in line to use the two restrooms. Additionally, limited space for staff and administrative functions poses challenges for the provision of efficient services.

Interpretive panels on the exterior of the Visitor Services Building offer information to all site visitors, and interpretive signage by the Atlin Barge provides additional information.

The grounds are park-like – open, green, attractive, and centrally located just a few minutes walk from bustling Main Street and other visitor attractions. But the community does not use this space as much as they could. There may be a perception that the grounds are exclusively for the use of visitors to S.S. *Klondike* NHS. A major city park used for recreation, picnics, and other community events is just across the street and it may be seen as more of a public park.

Moved from the Shipyards area in 1966, the S.S. *Klondike* now greets visitors at its prominent location along the developing Whitehorse Waterfront. While a familiar sight to Whitehorse residents, S.S. *Klondike* NHS is often viewed as a step removed from the local community, rather than integrated into the community.

Like many cities, efforts are underway to turn the waterfront into a more pedestrian-friendly, community-oriented space. The Whitehorse Waterfront Development is a multi-year project with involvement from the governments of Canada, Yukon, Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the City of Whitehorse. The Kwanlin Dun First Nation started construction of a major cultural centre on the waterfront in the fall of 2009. The Millennium Trail, a pedestrian/bike path that passes directly by the S.S. *Klondike* was completed in 1997, and a refurbished trolley for tourists has operated along the waterfront since 2004. S.S. *Klondike* NHS is strategically placed to play a more active role along the waterfront, both because of its physical location, and because of its clear historic and thematic association with the city waterfront area. The coordinated development of the waterfront for recreation and tourism use is a great opportunity for the Site to be more fully integrated into the broader community and visitor consciousness.

In the context of regional tourism S.S. *Klondike* NHS is a central attraction with links to almost every heritage site in the Yukon. The city of Whitehorse itself developed as a direct result of the inland water transportation system, where

shipyards, docks, and warehouses once lined the riverbanks and laid the foundations for Whitehorse to become the regional centre of transportation and communications. Today, considerable work is underway to honour and showcase this history, through the expansion and renewal of the MacBride Museum, the development of the new Shipyards Park, the presence of the Transportation Museum and ongoing planning for the new city Waterfront. The riverboats were also essential to the history of the Klondike Gold Rush and to the development of mines in the Mayo and Keno district. The story of the sternwheelers is integral to the history of the Yukon, and no museum exhibit, archival photograph, or vivid written description can tell this story like S.S. *Klondike* NHS. It has strong potential to act as a gateway to these other heritage places.

Due to its prominence in Whitehorse, S.S. *Klondike* NHS also offers an excellent opportunity to introduce visitors and locals to other Parks Canada sites in the Yukon. Whitehorse is the main entry point for many visitors as they begin their Yukon/Alaska experience, and for tourists it is an important centre of services and information. Some information about Parks Canada sites in the Yukon is available at the Yukon government Visitor Information Centre, but S.S. *Klondike* NHS provides an excellent venue for Parks Canada to actively promote Yukon's other national historic sites and national parks. Site staff do provide information and distribute brochures about Kluane National Park and Reserve, Chilkoot Trail NHS and the national historic sites in Dawson City, but this opportunity for creating enhanced awareness could be more fully utilized.

3.3.1 Commemorative Integrity

The essential and defining feature of S.S. *Klondike* NHS is the outstanding condition of the vessel and the profound mental and sensory impression that this makes on the visitor. Although the S.S. *Klondike* serves as a symbol of an era in Canadian history, its very real physical presence turns this symbol into something the visitor can experience for

his or her self. The condition of the vessel is fundamental not only to the physical component of its commemorative integrity, but also to its ability to engage, inspire, and educate Canadians. Currently the S.S. *Klondike* has a high level of commemorative integrity, as determined in the 2007 Commemorative Integrity Evaluation for the Site. The condition of the vessel was found to be excellent, the S.S. *Klondike* retains its iconic stature within the community, and the on-site interpretive program effectively communicates the reason for designation. The overall commemorative integrity rating for the Site, on a scale of one to ten, was ten. But there is room for improvement, and careful planning is required to ensure the continued high rating of the Site's commemorative integrity.

3.3.2 Protection of Resources

There are several areas identified by the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation where work is required to maintain and enrich the S.S. *Klondike* NHS's high level of commemorative integrity.

The two main threats to the condition of the S.S. *Klondike* are water damage and vandalism. Water infiltration, particularly through the seams in the canvas on the decks, is an on-going issue. This problem is typical of this type of construction and causes some damage to the original fabric of the vessel. To address the issue the seams are repaired on a seasonal basis. This on-going regular maintenance is essential to avoid the need for periodic substantial injections of capital funds. Vandalism to the vessel and the associated barge is also a concern. Mitigation measures, such as light sensors and additional security during special events, are in place to discourage acts of vandalism. The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation also stated that the need for regular maintenance of infrastructure such as the Visitor Services Building and furnishings is important. Areas identified for further attention include the integration of the Site's inventory of objects with other systems (e.g., Parks Canada's Artifact Information System); more complete development of the statement

of values for objects in the Commemorative Integrity Statement; and the development of a formal preventative maintenance plan for the waterfront site, including landscape maintenance. Fortunately, resident technical specialists are available within the field unit to provide support to the Site when required. The Atlin Barge will require restoration work in the future. An evaluation conducted of the Atlin Barge in 2007 rated its condition as fair. Work has started to determine the scope, cost and timing of restoration.



Observation lounge. Parks Canada/F. Mueller

3.3.3 Visitor Experience

Carefully restored from stem to stern and furnished with hundreds of authentic artifacts and expert reproductions, the S.S. *Klondike* awakens the mind and the heart to truly envision another time in Canadian history: a time of determined ingenuity, back-breaking work, old-fashioned elegance, and simple pleasures. There is a genuine sense of curiosity, pleasure and surprise as visitors explore the large vessel and discover the crowded freight deck loaded with food crates, ore-bags, and cordwood, the giant wood-burning boiler, the sophisticated engine-room, the crew's cramped quarters, and the upper decks with the passenger's cabins, dining room, and lounge.

Visitors are welcome to walk the grounds and view the exterior of the vessel throughout the year, and interpretive signage at two on-site locations provides information about the Site. The principal Site offer is a 40-45 minute guided tour of the S.S. *Klondike* and a 20-minute video presentation, which is well received by visitors. Interpretive programming and visitor services are

provided at the Site by uniformed Parks Canada staff and students.

The Visitor Services Building is small and outdated, and does not contribute to an enhanced visitor experience. Although it serves the basic function of accommodating ticket sales it has little room for interpretive displays or other visitor information services, and it provides only minimal restroom facilities. The visitor experience could be greatly enhanced by the presence of a more modern facility with updated interpretive displays and greater capacity for providing visitor information about other Parks Canada and regional attractions. Consultations with the public and stakeholders showed support for a larger Visitor Services Building with improved visitor facilities.

The Commemorative Integrity Evaluation and Visitor Experience Assessment both suggest that visitor satisfaction at the Site is high, but the established Site offer is somewhat limited. Visitors are only able to board the vessel and view its interior exhibits by joining a scheduled guided tour, and there has generally only been one standardized tour available. The current offer is certainly a good core program that meets both operational requirements and most visitor needs, but an expanded program with greater choice and flexibility could enhance the overall visitor experience and reach new audiences, including local audiences who currently do not make up a large portion of Site visitors. Public consultations during this management plan review process show support for increased volunteer opportunities for local residents and youth, which would create new ties and connections to the local community. Local school groups currently do visit the Site on an ad-hoc basis, but a greater variety of on-site programs could encourage more frequent visits from schools and students. A critical element of commemorative integrity is the effective communication of the Site's national historic significance. This communication can take many forms, including on-site interpretive programs; interpretive exhibits, panels, and products; school programs; web-based resources;

and other means of communication that reach out to a broad range of Canadian audiences. In the area of on-site messaging, the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation determined that although a few minor gaps exist in terms of communicating specific messages, the on-site interpretive program delivered by Parks Canada staff is well developed and effectively communicates the reason for designation.

Results from a Visitor Experience Assessment completed in late October 2007 indicate that:

- Visitor research and planning is strong in the area of understanding the expectations and needs of current markets, but more work is needed to identify and understand potential markets, including what would motivate locals to make repeat visits to the Site.
- While patterns of visitor use are known, the Site does not capitalize on special events that are happening near the Site.
- On-site personal interpretation is very strong. Ninety-nine point six percent of visitors participate in at least one interpretive activity and 96% are overall satisfied (64% very satisfied) with the interpretive activities they participate in.
- Visitor services, including arrival and reception, non-personal interpretation and collectibles, are well provided. Inadequate washrooms were identified as an issue. Primary areas for further work are awareness and promotion, pre-trip planning and way finding, and offering a greater diversity of activities and enhanced programs.
- Outcomes such as visitor satisfaction, participation and learning are all successful. Organizational capacity related to staff training, partnerships to facilitate visitor experiences, and visitor feedback is doing well. Connections with other local tourism providers could be strengthened. Funding regular maintenance is also an issue.

Visitors

Over the past five years, visitor attendance has fluctuated between 13,000 and 15,000, with fairly consistent patterns in Site visitation. Commercial bus tours and RV caravans have accounted for approximately 30% of visitation, and American visitors have formed a significant portion of both commercial and independent visitors, comprising 38% of bus and van tours and 27% of independent visitors. The majority of Site visitors are Canadian, generally older couples travelling without children.

Noticeably, local Yukoners make up only a small percentage of Site visitors, making very few repeat visits to the Site. This is a reflection not of dissatisfaction with the current Site program, but of the basic nature of its interpretive offer. New opportunities for locals to experience the Site in different ways may draw Yukoners to return to the Site more often and strengthen their connection to place. Public consultations held during this management plan review process indicate that local community members support a larger Visitor Services Building and more interpretation on-site.

A Visitor Information Program Survey conducted in 2006 offered this information about independent visitors:

- 59% were Canadian, 27% were American, 13% were from overseas, 8% were from the Yukon.
- Current visitors tend to be older. Over half of all visitors were between the ages of 45 and 60. Very few young people or children visit the Site.
- Visitors came to the Site looking for memorable experiences, high quality service, and good value, rating these opportunities as more important to them than opportunities to relive the paddlewheeler experience, learn about Gold Rush history, learn about national parks and national historic sites, or about aboriginal culture or history.
- Over 90% of visitors were satisfied or very satisfied by their overall visit, and

follow-up surveys showed that visitors' expectations were exceeded for all indicators.

- Eighty-eight percent of people at the Site are first time visitors.
- Local community members do not make many repeat visits to the site.

Changes in international visitation patterns are likely to affect the number of visitors who choose to travel to the Yukon in the future. Parks Canada needs to be able to understand and respond to these changes, and S.S. Klondike NHS needs to ensure its program and services will appeal to new audiences. Social science research will be used to guide the development of new future programs and services.



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3.3.4 Public Appreciation and Understanding

In terms of outreach and education activities, the Site currently has somewhat limited reach. Greater integration of the Site into local school curriculum and programming may be possible. A grade 5 edukit was recently developed for S.S. Klondike NHS and S.S. Keno NHS, designed for delivery by teachers to Whitehorse and Dawson City students. Future use of the program in Whitehorse and other Yukon schools will create greater awareness and understanding of the Site's historic significance within local and regional communities, and adaptations for distribution on the "Teachers' Resource Centre" feature of Parks Canada's national website are possible.

In general there is a need to define the Site's outreach program and focus on building a stronger connection to place at the local,

regional, and national levels. Current levels of stakeholder and public engagement, and public consultations throughout the review of the 2004 management plan, seem to reflect general local satisfaction with the status quo, but there is potential to cultivate greater interest, involvement and sense of ownership through meaningful opportunities for enjoyment and learning.

Connection to Place:

A concept that reflects the relevance and importance of protected heritage places to Canadians. It expresses the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual attachment that Canadians and visitors feel toward a heritage place. (see Glossary)

3.4 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES/CHALLENGES:

- On-going maintenance of the vessel, infrastructure and furnishings: On-going regular maintenance of the vessel is necessary to avoid the need for a substantial injection of capital funds as was necessary in the past decade. Asset maintenance is a capacity and funding issue.
- Visitor experience offer. Although current audiences are very satisfied with their S.S. *Klondike* NHS experience, 88% of visitors are first time guests and repeat visitation is very low. Locals tend to send their guests to the Site, rather than accompany them, feeling they have already seen it and don't need to return. The current offer does not encourage repeat visitors. To reach new audiences and draw more local and repeat visitors to the Site Parks Canada will need to offer a greater variety of opportunities and learning experiences.
- The Site's role within the Whitehorse Waterfront Development: Though Parks Canada staff have been involved in various aspects of the waterfront's development over the years (e.g., paving and the development of exhibits along the riverside Millennium Trail behind the boat), involvement has not been consistent. With more active waterfront development planned by the City of Whitehorse, Yukon government, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, and private business in the coming years, it is important that the S.S. *Klondike* NHS take a more active role.
- The Visitor Services Building: Built in the 1970s, the Visitor Services Building is now inadequate in terms of meeting staff and visitor needs and in acting as a gateway to other Yukon national parks and national historic sites. Lack of funding will not permit major recapitalization of the Visitor Services Building in the next five years, unless there is a partnership interest from a third party. Short-term solutions are needed to improve the existing situation until major re-capitalization can occur.
- Restoration of the Atlin Barge: the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation of this resource indicates a need to restore and protect the barge. This will also require significant funding and expertise.
- Tourism trends: General Canadian tourism trends have an impact on the type and number of visitors to the Site. The Site's ability to attract more visitors to the Yukon is limited, but strategies to capture more of the visitors arriving in the Yukon are possible and need to reflect changes in visitation patterns. For example, adapting the existing program to meet the needs of Holland America clientele has led to increased visitation.
- Being relevant to Canadians: The local Whitehorse community does not use the Site as much as they could. There is potential for S.S. *Klondike* NHS to play a larger role in community events and identity, and to become a valued part of community life. Building greater relevance to regional and national audiences is also an issue.

4.0 Vision Statement



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The vision statement for S.S. Klondike NHS provides a foundation for the management plan as it describes the future desired state of the Site in 15-20 years:

Walking up the bow gangplank, visitors gaze at the huge anchor, the great wooden spars with heavy rope rigging, and catch sight of the powerful steam winches mounted on the bow deck. They feel curious and excited to explore this impressive three-storey vessel, and sense they are entering a special place with great stories to tell. As they make their way through the vessel they discover stories of the woodcamps, the shipyards, the thrill of working this fast and remote northern river, and the sophisticated engineering that made it all possible. Leaving S.S. Klondike NHS, visitors feel they have just taken their own riverboat journey.

The S.S. Klondike sits proudly on the Whitehorse waterfront, accurately restored to her historic appearance. The central location, attractive grounds, welcoming facilities, and outstanding condition of the vessel make an immediate impression on all those who visit downtown Whitehorse. The Site grounds bustle with activity, creating an atmosphere reminiscent of the old days on the waterfront, attracting Yukoners and visitors to explore the rich history of the river and the city. Engaging interpretive programs immerse visitors in the romantic and historic days of the riverboats, when the ships crews worked night and day, passengers and citizens depended on the sternwheelers, and docks and warehouses lined the Whitehorse riverbanks.

S.S. Klondike NHS is integrated within the Whitehorse Waterfront, a vibrant centre of community activities. For residents of Whitehorse and the Yukon, S.S. Klondike NHS is a gathering place, fostering connections between the past, the present, and the future, building a strong personal sense of place and community.

5.0 Key Strategies

Key strategies are a way of focussing efforts and resources to help achieve the Site vision in an integrated fashion. Within a key strategy, objectives provide a more specific description of outcomes (short- to long-term) and key actions state what will be done during the five-year term of the management plan's implementation. Three key strategies have been developed for S.S. Klondike NHS:

- A Premiere Sternwheeler Experience Based on the Real Thing
- A City Icon Integrated Within the Whitehorse Waterfront and Community
- Experience Beyond Boundaries

5.1 A PREMIERE STERNWHEELER EXPERIENCE BASED ON THE REAL THING

The main objective of this strategy is maintain or enhance the integrity of the Site's major cultural resources, which are integrated into a more developed interpretive program, supported by improved visitor facilities and services.

This strategy recognizes that the foundation of all visitor experiences is the vessel itself, which offers visitors the opportunity to truly immerse themselves in the history of the riverboat era. As one of only a few remaining original Yukon sternwheelers, the vessel becomes an even more valuable asset over time, in terms of both its importance as a historic artifact and its ability to tell its story in a uniquely engaging manner. To ensure the continued excellent condition of the vessel and the quality of the visitor experience, on-going maintenance of the vessel and its exhibits is critical.



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Interpretive programming and supporting facilities and services are also essential to providing opportunities for meaningful visitor experiences and encouraging visitation. This strategy builds on the Site's strong core interpretive program and aims to enhance it with a greater diversity of activities and programs, leading to increased visitation and connections to new audiences. Social science will be used to identify target audiences for the Site and understand their needs and interests, and will guide the development of new programs and products. New opportunities for visitors may include self-guided tours and tours guided by costumed interpreters. Planning and development of an enhanced visitor experience will also recognize the complete "visitor experience cycle", which encompasses more than just the on-site experience. The planning, travelling, arriving, departing, and remembering aspects of the experience will also be addressed.

Improved facilities and services will also increase the Site's capacity to deliver enhanced visitor experiences and play a larger role in special community events. Through long-term planning and actively exploring partnering opportunities we will work towards improving the overall on-site experience, including the Visitor Services Building and Site promotion.

**A PREMIERE STERNWHEELER EXPERIENCE BASED ON THE REAL THING:
OBJECTIVES, TARGETS AND ACTIONS FOR 5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Objective 1:

Resources that symbolize or represent the national historic significance of the S.S. Klondike remain unimpaired.

Targets:

- Maintain Commemorative Integrity rating of 10/10 for the S.S. *Klondike* for 2013 Commemorative Integrity Evaluation.
- Maintain Commemorative Integrity rating for Atlin Barge in “fair condition” for 2013 CI Evaluation.
- Maintain 90% of historic objects in good or fair condition for 2013 CI Evaluation.

Actions:

1. Provide on-going cyclical maintenance, including inventory and assessment, to the vessel and artifacts to maintain the S.S. *Klondike* in “good” condition for future Commemorative Integrity Evaluation ratings.
2. Complete canvassing on the vessel.
3. Develop and implement a maintenance program for the vessel’s large fixed machinery.
4. During this plan cycle, maintain the current condition of the Atlin Barge (“fair”) and conduct the necessary planning for major restoration work to take place in the next management plan cycle (> 5 years).
5. Complete a Scope of Collections Statement for the Site.
6. Complete the determination of Level I and Level II cultural resources (see Glossary) associated with the Site and develop a strategy for the management, retention, acquisition, and disposition of those resources.
7. Complete an installation manual and curatorial handbook to ensure authentic placement and interpretation of artifacts and fittings.
8. Improve, maintain, and integrate data management systems into the national Parks Canada data system (e.g. amalgamate designs, plans and reports related to S.S. *Klondike* NHS; maintain a photographic reference collection for conservation and presentation activities; digitize the primary Site manuscript report into a searchable file)
9. Review, update and implement the Preventive Maintenance Plan for the Site.

Objective 2:

Visitors participate in a diverse selection of experiences enriched through enhanced interpretation and visitor facilities.

Targets:

- 60% of visitors in Visitor Information Program (VIP) survey consider that they learned about the cultural heritage of the S.S. *Klondike* NHS.
- 75% of visitors in VIP survey understand key messages of the Site.
- 90% of visitors in VIP survey enjoy their visit.
- 85% of visitors in VIP survey consider S.S. *Klondike* NHS meaningful to them.
- 90% of visitors in VIP survey are satisfied, and 70% are very satisfied, with their visit.

**A PREMIERE STERNWHEELER EXPERIENCE BASED ON THE REAL THING:
 OBJECTIVES, TARGETS AND ACTIONS FOR 5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Actions:

1. Conduct and start implementing interpretive planning for the Site, which includes innovative ways to augment the current program and includes investigating the use of new technology and partnerships.
2. Develop and implement a staff retention strategy to support enriched programming at the Site.
3. Explore potential partnering opportunities, which may enable acceleration of recapitalization or expansion of visitor facilities and services at the Site.
4. If partnering opportunities are limited, develop and implement short-term strategies to address operational needs associated with the Visitor Services Building and conduct the planning needed for further facility development (e.g., recapitalization of the Visitor Services Building to include additional restrooms), that will be undertaken in the next management plan cycle in another five years.
5. Conduct on-going cyclical social science research including Visitor Information Program surveys to gauge visitor needs and interests, satisfaction, and understanding of commemorative values.

Objective 3:

Current markets continue to enjoy and new markets are attracted to the Site.

Targets:

- On average, overall visitation at the Site is increased by 3% each year, over three years, resulting in a total increase of 9% by 2012.
- An increased number of Yukoners visit the Site.

Actions:

1. Identify targeted audiences for the Site, including potential Site visitors e.g., organized tour travellers, convention participants, locals, youth, new Canadians, and develop appropriate programs that meet market needs.
2. Work with others to promote the Site, e.g., City of Whitehorse, Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, Yukon government, and cross-market other Whitehorse/ Yukon/First Nation heritage sites.
3. Use opportunities along the Whitehorse Waterfront, e.g., Shipyards Park, to increase awareness of S.S. Klondike NHS and promote visitation (linked to next strategy).
4. Complete and implement the S.S. Klondike NHS portion of the Yukon Field Unit Sign Plan for highway and directional signage.
5. Update and expand information and marketing tools associated with the Site, e.g., photos, website, Explorer Quotient (EQ).
6. Implement national Parks Canada branding program locally.
7. Promote increased and more varied use of the Site by developing special event guidelines for use by outside organizations.



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5.2 A CITY ICON INTEGRATED WITHIN THE WHITEHORSE WATERFRONT AND COMMUNITY

The main objective of this strategy is to expand S.S. Klondike NHS's reach along the waterfront and within the city of Whitehorse in order to encourage stronger community loyalty and greater engagement while attracting new visitors. The main focus of this strategy will be to take advantage of the opportunity of the developing Whitehorse Waterfront.

This key strategy builds on the central role that the riverboats played in the history of the Yukon, such that a sternwheeler is the official symbol of the City of Whitehorse. Greater awareness of the Site's historic significance, combined with more wide-spread recognition of the Site's modern potential as a place to enjoy the waterfront, share stories and build memories, will lead to an increased sense of community pride and connection to the Site. Yukoners and Whitehorse residents will feel a sense of ownership and feel more personally connected to the ongoing management of the Site. Greater community pride and awareness will consequently be communicated to tourists and visitors, who will find the stories and memory of S.S. *Klondike* NHS more fully integrated into the wider community. This will elevate its drawing power for visitation and support a more comprehensive visitor experience.

Within the context of a vibrant city, S.S. *Klondike* NHS's location in the heart of the city and its prominent setting along the developing Whitehorse Waterfront will be used to increase general awareness of the Site. As the waterfront area becomes an increasing

focus of visitor and community activity, S.S. *Klondike* NHS will further develop connections to other related waterfront attractions and expand its presence on the greater waterfront landscape. This includes off-site promotion and joint marketing that may lead to a Site visit e.g., greater presence elsewhere along the waterfront. Mutual recognition between sites will add to the historic story of Yukon transportation, First Nations' current and historic use of the river, and promote interest and understanding of the vital role of the river and riverboats.

This strategy also takes advantage of the continuing coordinated development of the Whitehorse Waterfront. Strategic involvement in development activities may include participating in waterfront committees, the Kwanlin Dun First Nation cultural centre development, and related planning exercises. This will shape the role of the S.S. *Klondike* NHS within an integrated waterfront and contribute to a stronger sense of community ownership. It will also contribute to the Site's commemorative integrity as the importance of the viewscape of the vessel can be considered in the planning processes.

The Site will also capitalize on its popularity as a place for special events. More events like the Boat Builder's Ball, which bring to life the romance of the paddlewheeler era, and broader community events like Prince Charles' visit and the national firefighters' competition, will contribute to a strong sense of community loyalty and connection to the Site.

By strengthening relationships with the City of Whitehorse and partnering with other community groups, the Site will develop innovative ways of enhancing its offer. This will broaden the appeal of the Site, increase visitation, and foster community members' connection to the Site.

**A CITY ICON INTEGRATED WITHIN THE WHITEHORSE WATERFRONT AND COMMUNITY:
OBJECTIVE, TARGETS AND ACTIONS FOR 5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Objective 1:

S.S. Klondike NHS is an integral part of the Whitehorse Waterfront and broader community experience.

Targets:

- Increased involvement of Parks Canada in the development of the Whitehorse Waterfront.
- S.S. Klondike NHS messages are clearly visible along the Waterfront and are integrated into other local and regional heritage initiatives.
- Increased coordination of the delivery of heritage messages along the Whitehorse waterfront.

Actions:

1. Work with the City of Whitehorse, Yukon government and Kwanlin Dun First Nation to integrate S.S. Klondike NHS messages along the Whitehorse Waterfront.
2. Work with the City of Whitehorse and the Miles Canyon Historical Railway Society to encourage the extension of the trolley from Rotary Park to S.S. Klondike NHS.
3. Become active in Waterfront development planning groups.
4. Work with local museums and heritage associations to coordinate the delivery of themes and messages linked to S.S. Klondike NHS, the waterfront, and the Yukon River.

**A CITY ICON INTEGRATED WITHIN THE WHITEHORSE WATERFRONT AND COMMUNITY:
OBJECTIVE, TARGETS AND ACTIONS FOR 5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Objective 2:

A strong local connection to S.S. Klondike NHS is evident in regular community member use and support for the Site and its offerings.

Targets:

- Increase repeat visitation to the Site by 10% over the next five years.
- Increase the number of community events at the Site.
- 10% increase in the number of Yukon residents who are familiar with S.S. *Klondike* NHS (using the 2009 Telephone Survey of Yukon Residents as a baseline).

Actions:

1. With others, develop new events at the Site, which focus on local community participation, e.g., major charity fundraiser, event for people with historical connections to sternwheelers.
2. Explore incentives that encourage locals to accompany friends and relatives on visits to the Site.
3. Promote Ambassador Passes to local visitors.
4. Based on Parks Canada's guidelines in the Recreational Activity and Special Event Assessments bulletin, develop and market special event guidelines/protocols for the Site that encourage compatible events to take place on the vessel or the grounds.
5. Explore ways in which the grounds of the Site can be used to help tell the stories of S.S. *Klondike* NHS for people who may not board the vessel.
6. Explore volunteer opportunities that give local residents an opportunity, among other things, to share their stories of sternwheeler river travel.

Objective 3:

S.S. Klondike NHS is a gateway to Yukon heritage; national parks, national historic sites and other heritage areas in the territory.

Target:

- Increased awareness of visitors and Canadians of the other Parks Canada sites and other heritage areas in the Yukon

Actions:

1. Promote other Yukon national parks and national historic sites through the S.S. *Klondike* NHS Visitor Services Building.
2. Promote other Yukon River heritage sites through outreach education and new media products aimed at residents of the Yukon and visitors to the Site.

5.3 EXPERIENCE BEYOND BOUNDARIES

The main objective of this strategy is to extend the Site’s reach locally and nationally through effective and relevant opportunities designed to increase understanding and appreciation of S.S. Klondike NHS.

This strategy focuses on strengthening the Site’s reach to engage local and national

audiences even though they do not necessarily have the opportunity to visit the Site. It includes reaching Canadians through the popular media, modern technology and outreach programming, to bring current, lively and engaging content into homes, schools, and communities.

EXPERIENCE BEYOND BOUNDARIES: OBJECTIVE, TARGETS AND ACTIONS FOR 5-YEAR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
<p>Objective 1: <i>Canadians, locally, regionally, and nationally, are familiar with S.S. Klondike NHS stories and understand its significance.</i></p> <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of Canadians who understand and appreciate the national significance of the Site’s history is increased. • Increase the number of Yukon students to 50% of grade 5 students, increasing to 75% by year five of the plan, who have contact with S.S. Klondike NHS school programming either in the classroom, on-site, or through the internet. • The number of hits to the S.S. Klondike NHS website increases.
<p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a Site outreach program, focussed on local residents, Whitehorse schools and targeted national audiences. 2. Actively market the S.S. Klondike NHS edukit in Yukon and adapt it for on-line use on the Parks Canada Teachers’ Corner website. 3. Continually refresh and renew content for an enhanced web presence that provides learning, sharing, and experiential opportunities for Canadians and others so that they can experience the excitement of virtually being there. 4. Target youth, urban Canadians, and new Canadians with learning experiences that link them to S.S. Klondike NHS themes and messages.

Guiding Principles

In implementing these key strategies, Parks Canada will:

- Ensure Site management and interpretive planning is guided by Parks Canada’s Cultural Resource Management Policy and the Site’s Commemorative Integrity Statement.
- Consider the complete “visitor experience cycle”, which includes all phases in the

planning, participation, and remembering of a Site visit.

- Work with the City of Whitehorse and adjacent land owners/managers to help ensure that management and use of the adjacent waterfront are compatible with the values of designated place.
- Maintain the viewsapes from the vessel to the Yukon River.
- Ensure that the Site’s furnishing plan remains consistent with the period of commemoration, 1937-1955.

- Conduct research as needed to support conservation and presentation needs at the Site.
- Share information (e.g., historical information, photos) with other institutions and make information available to researchers as needed.
- Charge user fees to maintain and improve the Site's visitor offer, and consult members of the tourism industry in a timely fashion about fee changes.
- Provide alternate means of access, e.g., photos, to visitors who cannot physically access the boat.
- Keep a current Site emergency preparedness strategy for visitor safety and a current contingency plan to protect the vessel and artifacts in case of emergency.
- Set high environmental standards for all development, operations and activities at the Site.
- Use the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* to assess potential impacts of projects before they are undertaken.
- Use the Parks Canada Management Bulletin (2008), Recreational Activity and Special Event Assessments to assess new or existing activities and events that present significant opportunities and/or areas of concern at the Site.



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6.0 Partnership and Public Engagement

The support and involvement of stakeholders and partners is essential to Parks Canada's program delivery and continued relevance. Engagement and partnering activities ensure that Canadians' needs and priorities are clearly expressed to Parks Canada and that these interests inform and influence Parks Canada's actions and direction. Working with a variety of stakeholders and partners results in new and expanded opportunities for Canadians to discover and develop a sense of connection to their protected heritage areas.

Because of S.S. *Klondike* NHS's central location in downtown Whitehorse, the fact that the sternwheeler is the city icon, its importance as one of the city's main tourist attractions, and through involvement in past joint projects, the City of Whitehorse is the key S.S. *Klondike* NHS stakeholder. The Waterfront development project will provide new opportunities to further develop this relationship. It will also provide opportunities for working more closely with Yukon government and Kwanlin Dun First Nation, other partners in the Waterfront development. As Kwanlin Dun First Nation constructs and opens their cultural centre on the Whitehorse waterfront there may be opportunities to work together on complementary messaging and marketing initiatives. And as all of these governments work together to develop new tourist attractions and community facilities on the waterfront there may be opportunities for Parks Canada to work with them on a coordinated approach to marketing and messaging.

There are two First Nations with ties to S.S. *Klondike* NHS. Whitehorse and the surrounding area are within the traditional territories of Kwanlin Dun First Nation and



City of Whitehorse shipyards, 1960. *Public Archives of Canada*

Ta'an Kwach'an Council, each self-governing First Nations with completed land claim final agreements. The Kwanlin Dun First Nation Final Agreement calls for the presentation of Kwanlin Dun First Nation history to the public, e.g., signage and displays, along the Whitehorse Waterfront, and the First Nation has started building a cultural centre along the waterfront. Parks Canada looks forward to working with Kwanlin Dun First Nation as they develop interpretive materials to ensure complementary messaging and to share in marketing initiatives. Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Ta'an Kwach'an Council may also be interested in employment opportunities at the Site. Parks Canada will continue to work towards further on-going engagement with the two First Nations.

Other key relationships that Parks Canada wants to continue, strengthen, and build in the future include the Downtown Business Association, the Government of Yukon Department of Tourism and Culture, the Government of Yukon Department of Education, the Yukon Historical & Museum Association, Yukon Electric, and other Whitehorse heritage attractions. Regular and open communications with these partner agencies will enhance regional coordination of messaging, marketing, and planning activities.



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Another significant interested party includes the variety of bus companies that bring their clients to tour S.S. *Klondike* NHS. Parks Canada will continue to work closely with these bus companies to ensure their client needs are met.

It is also important that S.S. *Klondike* NHS ensures the ongoing engagement of the community of Whitehorse. When the local community feels a sense of pride and ownership in S.S. *Klondike* NHS, and when that relationship is demonstrated through regular community events occurring at the Site, involvement of citizens in volunteer programs, and increased visitation by local community members, S.S. *Klondike* NHS's overall connection to place will be greatly enhanced. Greater community interest and involvement in the Site will lead to a greater capacity to achieve the mandate, as the local community becomes a true partner in the protection and recognition of the Site's importance.

7.0 Administration and Operations



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The most significant operational issue at S.S. *Klondike* NHS is the inadequate Visitor Services Building. The Visitor Services Building has significant deficiencies with respect to visitor and staff needs and its ability to act as a central visitor facility for Parks Canada in the Yukon. However, the current field unit funding levels and priorities will not permit major re-capitalization of the Visitor Services Building in the next five years. Pressure on the field unit's capital budget for Visitor Reception Centre work throughout the field unit is significant over the next five years. Although funding will not be available for significant Visitor Services Building work at S.S. *Klondike* NHS during the five-year span of the next management plan, a long-term strategy for Visitor Reception Centres in the field unit is underway. Short-term solutions are being sought to improve the existing situation until major re-capitalization can occur.

In all of its operations, S.S. *Klondike* NHS will adopt best practices in environmental stewardship. Recycling and energy and resource conservation will be incorporated in all daily operations. The Site will also incorporate green standards into its guidelines for special events.

8.0 Monitoring

Parks Canada uses a variety of tools to monitor the state of S.S. *Klondike* NHS. Cultural resources are monitored through a cyclical maintenance program that includes both in-situ (the vessel, the barge) and moveable resources



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(artifacts, reproductions). Asset management and cultural resources management staff from the field unit conduct regular assessments of the Site's cultural resources. The condition of cultural resources is also assessed every five years through Commemorative Integrity evaluations.

Visitor experience and public education opportunities are evaluated through regular Visitor Information Program surveys, and some of the information from these surveys is also examined within the overall Commemorative Integrity Evaluation.

With the approval of new a national 2008 Parks Canada Guide to Management Planning, a State of the Site Report is now required for all national historic sites every five years. These reports are intended to become an integral part of the management process, and they will provide measures of the Site's condition and trends in terms of its commemorative integrity and heritage resources protection, public appreciation and understanding, facilitation of visitor experiences and people's connection to place. They will document the implementation and effectiveness of the Site's management plan and identify issues and challenges to be considered in the next management plan review. The State of the Site Report will also contribute to the State of the Protected Heritage Areas Report, a biennial national report, which documents the state of all national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas administered by Parks Canada. A State of the Site Report for S.S. *Klondike* NHS will be produced in advance of the next management plan review in five year's time.

9.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The strategic environmental assessment approach used to identify and assess the key issues and critical decision-making factors associated with the 2010 S.S. Klondike NHS management plan is briefly documented here. Federal government strategic environmental assessment obligations are defined in a Cabinet Directive, The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plans and Program Proposals (2004). Consistent with guidance in the directive, the focus of this strategic environmental assessment was to identify strategic considerations at a broad, conceptual level, rather than by assessing in detail individual actions within the plan itself. It is recognised that strategic environmental assessment is part of a tiered approach to assessing and managing impacts. Detailed impact assessment analysis of individual projects and activities will take place after the management plan has been approved and initiatives are considered for implementation. The intent is for the strategic environmental assessment to inform the subsequent review stages of individual undertakings as they are planned and implemented. This iterative approach provides the necessary checks and balances to minimize the chance of Parks Canada overlooking key issues when managing and making decisions.

The 2010 management plan is largely a confirmation of existing direction from the 2004 management plan. It responds to the need to restructure management plans to meet new Parks Canada guidelines, and to focus requirements on delivery of Parks Canada's integrated mandate (heritage resource protection; facilitation of visitor experience opportunities; and enhanced public outreach and education). It also incorporated emerging issues identified



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through monitoring and reporting. Many positive impacts are expected as a result of implementing the management plan. These include enhanced protection of heritage resources, improvements in heritage presentation, improved quality of visitor experience, and modest upgrading of the Visitor Service Building as a temporary measure until funds become available for recapitalization of this asset. The management plan review process offered considerable opportunity for public input. Public and expert review during plan development resulted in a strengthened final management plan clearly focused on delivery of Parks Canada's integrated mandate. The plan recognizes effective public education is essential to Canadians understanding why the site is of national significance, and the importance of Parks Canada's work as steward of these heritage resources. Increased levels of public knowledge, understanding and support for Parks Canada, and the S.S. Klondike NHS, are expected.

Several actions focus on enhancing relationships between Parks Canada, local First Nations, and the community of Whitehorse. The plan aims to encourage increased visitation to the Site and to increase its role in the community. It is hoped this will strengthen the connection local residents

have with the Site and diversify the role it plays in the community.

Overall the direction in the management plan is to restore, maintain and interpret the vessel S.S. *Klondike* and its associated cultural landscape. Construction of new facilities is not anticipated. Given the nature of the actions and strategies in the management plan, there is little potential for generating adverse environmental effects. Many of the projects and activities are routine cultural resource management maintenance projects to maintain the vessel or to restore the Atlin Barge. These types of projects have well known impacts, readily available mitigation measures, and a high degree of certainty in impact assessment prediction. The specific impacts of individual projects will be assessed under the provisions of the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* as required.

In conclusion, the 2010 management plan is expected to achieve the desired results for commemorative integrity, education, and visitor experience at S.S. *Klondike* NHS. The management plan is not expected to result in any adverse cumulative effects.

Acknowledgements

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Glossary

Commemorative integrity: A concept used for national historic sites to describe the site's health and wholeness. A national historic site may be said to possess commemorative integrity when the resources that symbolize or represent its importance are not impaired or under threat, when the reasons for its significance are effectively communicated to the public, and when the heritage values of the place is respected.

Commemorative intent: Commemorative intent is a statement of that which is nationally significant about the Site. It refers specifically to the approved recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC).

Connection to place: A concept that reflects the relevance and importance of protected heritage places to Canadians. It expresses the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual attachment Canadians and visitors feel toward natural and cultural heritage places. Parks Canada works to foster this sense of attachment through meaningful opportunities for enjoyment and learning provided on-site and through public outreach education. Respecting, understanding, and facilitating the relationship between heritage places and Canadians, including Aboriginal peoples, visitors, partners and stakeholders help promote a shared sense of responsibility for heritage places and engage minds and hearts to support their protection and presentation now and for future generations.

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

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

Historic Value: Historic value is a value or values assigned to a resource, whereby it is recognized as a cultural resource. These values can be physical and/or associative.

Level I Cultural Resource: A cultural resource that is of national historic significance. It directly relates to the reasons for a site's national significance.

Level II Cultural Resource: A resource that is not of national historic significance may have historic value and thus be considered a cultural resource.

National Historic Site: Any place declared to be of national historic interest or significance by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada.

Public Outreach Education: Public outreach education is reaching Canadians at home, at leisure, at school and in their communities through effective and relevant learning opportunities designed to increase understanding and appreciation of the natural and historical heritage of Parks Canada places, and to encourage individuals and communities to support and become engaged in their protection and presentation.

Visitor Experience: Visitor experience is the sum total of a visitor's personal interaction with heritage places and/or people that awakens their senses, affects their emotions, stimulates their mind and leaves them with a sense of attachment to these places.

Yukon Field Unit: An administrative unit of Parks Canada, based in the Yukon, responsible for the management of the following heritage places: Chilkoot Trail NHSC; S.S. *Klondike* NHSC; S.S. *Keno* NHSC; Dawson Historical Complex NHSC; Dredge No. 4 NHSC; Kluane National Park and Reserve and Vuntut National Park.

Summary of Planned Actions

KEY STRATEGY 1: A PREMIERE STERNWHEELER EXPERIENCE BASED ON THE REAL THING

Resources that symbolize or represent the national historic significance of the S.S. Klondike remain unimpaired.

- Provide on-going cyclical maintenance to the vessel and artifacts to maintain commemorative integrity of S.S. Klondike NHS.
- Complete canvassing on the vessel.
- Develop and implement a maintenance program for the vessel's large fixed machinery.
- Maintain current condition of the Atlin Barge, and conduct planning for future restoration work.
- Complete a Scope of Collections Statement for the Site.
- Complete the determination of Level I and Level II cultural resources and develop a management strategy for them.
- Complete an installation manual and curatorial handbook describing correct placement and interpretation of artifacts and fittings.
- Improve, maintain, and integrate data management systems into the national Parks Canada system.
- Review, update and implement the Preventive Maintenance Plan for the Site.

Visitors participate in a diverse selection of experiences enriched through enhanced interpretation and visitor facilities.

- Conduct and start implementing interpretive planning for the Site, including innovative use of new technology and partnerships.
- Develop a staff retention strategy to support enriched programming.
- Explore potential partnering opportunities which may enable acceleration of recapitalization or expansion of visitor facilities at the Site.
- If partnering opportunities are limited, develop and implement short-term strategies to address operational and visitor needs associated with the Visitor Services Building and conduct planning for further facility development.
- Conduct on-going cyclical social science research to gauge visitor needs and interests.

Current markets continue to enjoy and new markets are attracted to the Site.

- Identify targeted audiences for the Site and develop appropriate programs that meet market needs.
- Work with others to promote the Site and cross-market with other regional heritage sites.
- Use opportunities along the Whitehorse Waterfront to increase awareness of the S.S. *Klondike* NHS and promote visitation.
- Complete and implement the S.S. *Klondike* NHS portion of the Yukon Field Unit Sign Plan.
- Update and expand information and marketing tools associated with the Site.
- Implement national Parks Canada branding program locally.
- Promote increased and more varied use of the Site by developing special event guidelines for use by outside organizations.

KEY STRATEGY 2:

A CITY ICON INTEGRATED WITHIN THE WHITEHORSE WATERFRONT AND COMMUNITY

S.S. *Klondike* NHS is an integral part of the Whitehorse Waterfront and broader community experience.

- Work with the City of Whitehorse, Yukon government and Kwanlin Dun First Nation to integrate S.S. *Klondike* NHS messages along the Whitehorse Waterfront.
- Work with the City of Whitehorse and the Miles Canyon Historical Railway Society to encourage the extension of the trolley from Rotary Park to S.S. *Klondike* NHS.
- Become active in Waterfront development planning groups.
- Work with local museums and heritage associations to coordinate the delivery of themes and messages linked to S.S. *Klondike* NHS, the waterfront, and the Yukon River.

A strong local connection to S.S. *Klondike* NHS is evident in regular community member use and support for the Site and its offerings.

- With others, develop new events at the Site which focus on local community participation.
- Explore incentives that encourage locals to accompany friends and relatives to the Site.
- Develop and market special event guidelines that encourage compatible events to take place at the Site.
- Explore ways in which the grounds of the Site can be used to help tell the stories of S.S. *Klondike* NHS for those who may not board the vessel.
- Explore volunteer opportunities that give local residents an opportunity to share their stories of sternwheeler river travel.

S.S. *Klondike* NHS is a gateway to Yukon heritage; national parks, national historic sites and other heritage areas in the territory.

- Promote other Yukon national parks and national historic sites through the Visitor Services Building.
- Promote other Yukon River heritage sites through outreach education and new media products aimed at residents of the Yukon and visitors to the Site.

**KEY STRATEGY 3:
EXPERIENCE BEYOND BOUNDARIES**

Canadians, locally, regionally, and nationally, are familiar with S.S. Klondike NHS stories and understand its significance.

- Develop and implement a Site outreach program, focussed on local residents, Whitehorse schools and targeted national audiences.
- Actively market the S.S. *Klondike* NHS edukit in Yukon and adapt it for on-line use on the Parks Canada Teachers' Corner website.
- Continually refresh and renew content for an enhanced web presence that provides learning, sharing, and experiential opportunities for Canadians.
- Target youth, urban Canadians, and new Canadians with learning experiences that link them to S.S. *Klondike* NHS themes and messages.

APPENDIX

History of Site Management



S.S. *Klondike* being moved up 1st Avenue to present location, 1966. *Parks Canada/G.I. Cameron*

In 1959 the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada recognized the opportunity to protect a representative example of one of Yukon's inland water transportation vessels. It recommended that the federal government purchase one of the sternwheeler riverboats dry-docked in Whitehorse and undertake its preservation. The next year, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway donated the S.S. *Klondike* to the Government of Canada and a research and restoration program was initiated. The history of transportation in the Yukon was recognized as having national significance in 1967, and the S.S. *Klondike* was declared a National Historic Site. The designation of the S.S. *Klondike* was largely due to the physical integrity and intactness of the vessel. Restoration work was undertaken and completed between 1979 and 1981, and the boat was opened to the public for interpretive tours. Public consultations regarding the future management of S.S. *Klondike* NHS began in 1993, as Parks Canada completed new national guiding principles and operational policies for national historic sites and statements of commemorative integrity were developed for all national historic sites. In 1997 the statement of Commemorative Integrity was prepared for the S.S. *Klondike*, and the first management plan for S.S. *Klondike* National Historic Site was completed in 2004.