

Planning for the Future

Consultation on the Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site



An invitation to take part!

The Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site is planning its operations for upcoming years. To this end, we will be holding public consultations from April 24th to May 24th, 2018. I encourage you to take part in this process by sharing your thoughts and suggestions.

The purpose of this consultation is to give the partners, community stakeholders and general public an opportunity to get involved in the decision-making process related to managing this national historic site.

The management plan is the official document that will guide management of the historic site for the next ten years (2018–2028). It provides orientation for protecting cultural and natural resources, visitor experiences and public education.

This national historic site belongs to you! Join the Parks Canada team in developing a common vision and in protecting this national historic site, while encouraging visitors to discover this unique place.

Nadine Blackburn
Superintendent
Mauricie and Western Quebec Field Unit

Parks Canada's Mandate

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.

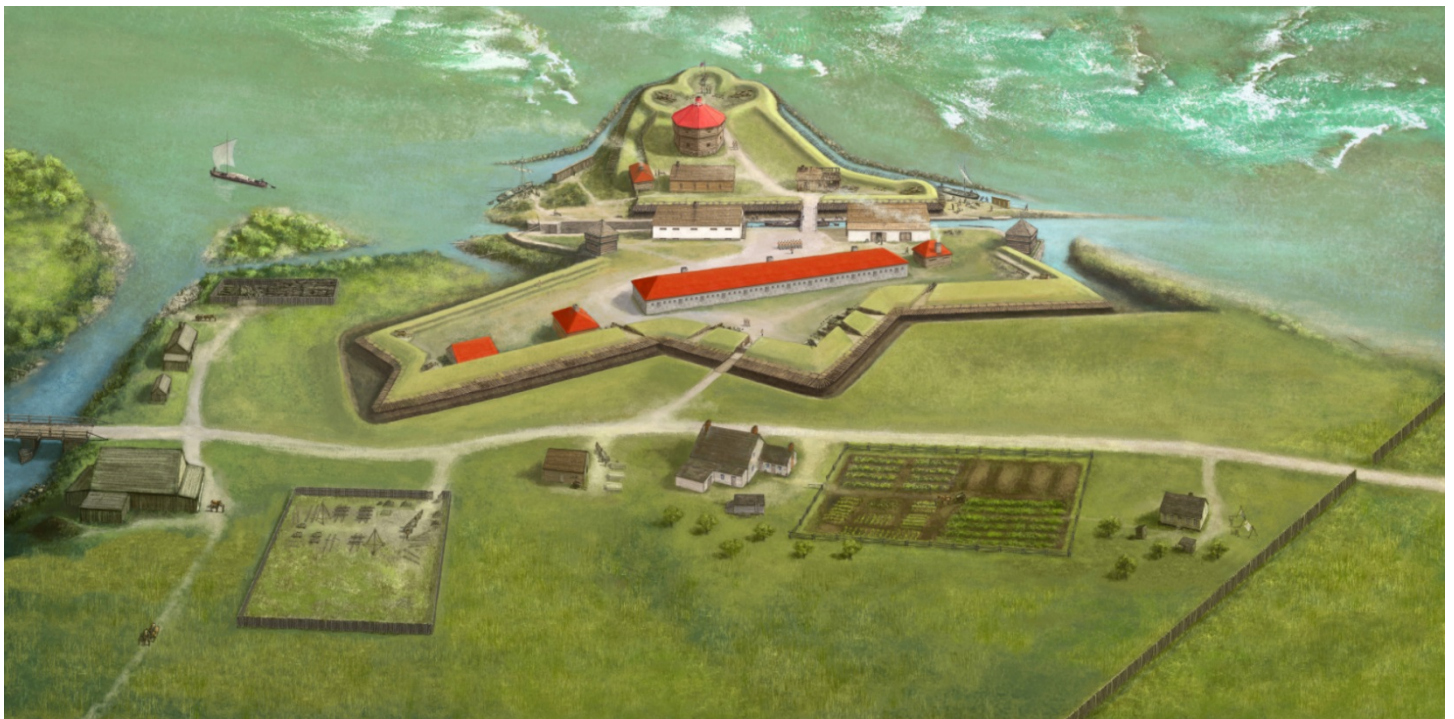
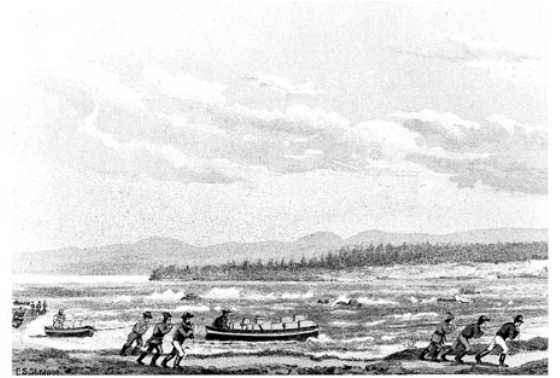
Importance of the Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site

Coteau-du-Lac was designated a national historic site in 1923 for the following reasons:

- *It is the site of one of the oldest lock canals in North America*
- *From 1778 to the mid 19th century, the place was the site of a British military post which defended the corridor and facilitated the transportation of merchandise on the St. Lawrence river*
- *The site was a strategic point during the American Revolution and during the War of 1812*
- *The site was for many years the main port of entry of imports into Upper Canada*

Thanks to its strategic location, this area steeped in history has always been an ideal port of entry into Canada. Artefacts discovered by Parks Canada archeologists in the 1960s confirmed the presence of Indigenous people dating back 7,000 years. The site was subsequently used by French voyageurs and was eventually occupied by the British military, as evidenced by the remains of military buildings, fortifications, a rigolet canal, and the first lock canal in Canada. A British Blockhouse was rebuilt in the 1960s and has marked the cultural landscape.

For local and regional communities, the area is not just a historic site, but also functions as an urban waterfront park where people can relax and enjoy nature. The grassy terrain is criss-crossed by trails and its periphery is dotted with trees and shrubs. The park is accessible at all times, even outside of Parks Canada periods of operation.



Planning context

The national historic site opened its doors in 1968. To date, conservation and development efforts have been carried out based on two previous management plans, the most recent of which has been in effect since 2007. Most of the management measures set out in the 2007 management plan were implemented, particularly those aiming to improve the visitor experience and the protection and development of cultural resources.

In 2011, a marquee and welcome gateway were installed, and in 2014, the outdoor self-guided tour itinerary was updated.

The site's commemorative integrity was enhanced thanks to visual improvements, repeated repointing of the ruins, and more recently, major restoration work on the Blockhouse (2016-2017).

Over the past few years, two activities presented in collaboration with the municipality of Coteau-du-Lac have accounted for more than half of the site's traffic: the "Marché Champêtre" farmer's market (8,000 visitors) and Canada Day (7,000 visitors). Incidentally, the municipality of Coteau-du-Lac is the national historic site's main partner. Other activities were organized by third parties, including many sporting events.

Since 2012, the site is available for self-guided experiences for a short period (from June to September). Groups (mainly day camps) are welcome in July and August and are offered personalized service. Following a 52% drop in visitor numbers between 2012 and 2013 (30,709 to 14,518), these numbers increased by 38% and reached an annual average of 20,000 since 2014.

Some issues were raised during the management plan's development, such as:

- **The difficulty of maintaining visitor numbers at the site:** After a significant drop in 2011 and 2012, visitor numbers have increased in the past few years. However, this growth remains fragile.
- **The historic site's layout does not convey the value of its national historic significance:** Visitors sometimes get disoriented and don't always realize that they are on a national historic site. The visitor circuit does not adequately guide visitors toward the site's cultural resources, which makes it difficult for them to understand all aspects of its historical significance. The site is accessible to everyone, even outside of the park's hours and periods of operation. Its extensive green spaces and proximity to the Delisle and St. Lawrence rivers make it ideal for recreational activities.
- **The importance of forging relationships with the Indigenous communities connected to the site:** Many traces of paleohistoric occupation confirm the presence of Indigenous people at the site before the arrival of Europeans. To this day, however, no relationships have been established with the Indigenous communities concerned. Forging ties with these communities would allow us to assess their interest in hosting activities at the national historic site, and if need be, to plan a joint initiative to enhance the development and commemoration of this chapter of history.

Vision

The Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site is an evocative landscape where history, nature, and cultures come together.

It is an iconic place for residents of Coteau-du-Lac and the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region.

Within the next 15 years, the national historic site will be:

A welcoming area rooted in its surroundings, where everyone can enjoy a variety of experiences.

A place where cultural resources are protected, preserved, and highlighted.

A place with a rich tapestry of history that is adequately conveyed, recognized, and understood by visitors. This history, which spans more than 7,000 years, includes the successive use of the site by Indigenous people, French voyageurs, and the British military.

A key element of regional tourism thanks to the involvement of regional partners.



Key Strategies

KEY STRATEGY NO. 1: TURN THE HISTORIC SITE INTO A VITAL AREA OF CONVERGENCE FOR THE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PARTNERS

This strategy emphasizes the site's various possibilities of collaboration and integration within a regional tourism context. Furthermore, it focuses on increasing opportunities to use the site in alternative ways, such as for events and activities. The aim is to strengthen the site's position as a must-see destination for the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region and the municipality of Coteau-du-Lac, and to consequently draw a wider and more diverse audience.

Objective 1.1: Renew and expand our collaboration with stakeholders, Indigenous communities, and partners to organize activities and events that align with the site's vocation.

- ✓ Goal : The historic site will host two annual events or visitor experiences organized in collaboration with stakeholders, partners, or Indigenous communities.

Objective 1.2: Integrate the site into regional tourism development.

- ✓ Goal : Every year, the historic site will take part in the regional promotional strategy.
- ✓ Goal : An annual promotional activity or networking event will take place.



KEY STRATEGY NO. 2: PROMOTE THE HISTORIC SITE'S SIGNIFICANCE AS A HERITAGE CENTRE

This strategy aims to raise public awareness of the historic site's significance as a heritage centre, either by adapting the site's traditional activities or encouraging alternative ways of using the site. Due to the site's layout, many visitors are unaware of its heritage value and fail to understand its historical significance.

Objective 2.1: Improve visitor reception, orientation, and flow.

- ✓ Goal : By 2020, the visitor circuit will be updated to improve visitor reception, orientation, and flow.

Objective 2.2 : Improve the public's understanding of the historic site's heritage value through our interpretation services.

- ✓ Goal : By 2020, a relationship will be established with the Indigenous communities with the aim of working together to better communicate the significance of the site for Indigenous people.
- ✓ Goal : By 2025, the interpretation program will be updated to better convey the original functions of the military relics and canal remnants visible on site.

Objective 2.3 : Continue to ensure the protection of cultural resources.

- ✓ Goal : The condition of priority cultural resources will remain stable or improve.



Strategic Environmental Assessment summary

In compliance with the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* (2010), a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) was carried out on the Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site's management plan proposal. The SEA aims to incorporate environmental considerations into the development of policies, plans, and program proposals to support environmentally conscious decisions. The specific projects developed to implement the Coteau-du-Lac NHS management plan objectives will be separately evaluated to establish if an impact assessment is necessary under the *2012 Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* or any successor legislation.

The strategies set out in the Coteau-du-Lac NHS management plan will allow Canadians to gain a broader understanding and appreciation of the historic site, strengthen the site's ties with the community, and preserve its heritage resources. The implementation of measures to achieve the objectives set out in the management plan will help protect the site's cultural resources and improve the commemorative integrity of the Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site.

Certain strategies/objectives/targets identified in the management plan could eventually have negative environmental effects and require mitigation measures. Specifically, more visitors and increased site usage may result in greater resource usage and waste production, which may in turn impact the site's cultural resources. The SEA also made it possible to identify potential environmental effects on the site's vegetation and riparian strip. However, these potential environmental impacts could be mitigated by following the existing guidelines and carrying out impact assessments for on-site projects such as installations, activities, and new events, as well as cultural resource conservation and maintenance projects. These assessments will determine the effects on the site's value components and help minimize potential negative impacts on the cultural and natural resources, the visitor experience, and the relationships with different partners.

It is impossible to determine whether the management plan will make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy's goals, but it is unlikely that it will hinder their progress.

No significant negative environmental impacts are expected following the implementation of the management plan.



What do you think?

This document summarizes and presents the site, its issues, a management approach, key strategies, objectives and measurable targets. Now, it's your turn to take part in the discussion. Here is your chance to add to the conversation and help us develop Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site's management plan. Your knowledge of the area, combined with your experience of the historic site and the future you envision for it are important to us.

How to participate?

There are two ways to share your opinion:

- Send your comments by email to: sebastien.bachmann@pc.gc.ca

Or

- By mail to:

Public Consultation on The Coteau-du-Lac National Historic Site
Parks Canada Agency at Fort Chambly
2 De Richelieu Street, Chambly, Quebec, Canada J3L 2B9

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or would like further information on the public consultation.

Visit the Parks Canada website:

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/qc/coteaudulac/gestion-management/gestion-management>

You have until May 24th to share your opinions, comments or ideas with us, or to submit a memory.

Thank you for your participation!