



Aulavik National Park of Canada Management Plan Update 2010-11

Newsletter #1 December 2010



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Planning for the Future of Our National Parks

Every national park in Canada has a management plan. These plans lay out how Parks Canada will meet our goals of protecting park resources, educating people, and helping all Canadians to enjoy our most treasured places. Management plans provide a vision of a national park at its future best, along with strategies and actions for achieving that vision over the next five to ten years. The plans are reviewed every five years, with involvement from Aboriginal peoples, partners, stakeholders and the Canadian public. This ensures that management plans remain relevant and effective for decision-making, and that we satisfy our legal and policy responsibilities.

The current management plan for Aulavik National Park of Canada was tabled in Parliament in 2002. Actions in that plan have now been implemented and it is due for an update. This fall, work began to update Aulavik's plan and we need to hear from you. The values and views of Canadians are at the core of every park management plan. Your comments and suggestions are essential to producing an effective and meaningful management plan for Aulavik National Park. The new plan is scheduled to be completed by fall 2011.



Photo credit: Parks Canada



Photo credit: Parks Canada



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Aulavik: An Overview

Aulavik National Park is located in north-central Banks Island, Northwest Territories. Created in 1992, the park protects more than 12,000 km² of the Western Arctic Lowlands bioregion.

Aulavik National Park was established under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984) and the Western Arctic (Inuvialuit) Claim Settlement Act (1984). The Park is co-operatively managed by Parks Canada and the Inuvialuit. Inuvialuit from the region have strong ties to Banks Island. They depend on the animals and plants harvested and gathered. Inuvialuit rights to hunt, fish and trap within the park are protected under the land claim. Sachs Harbour (population 88) is the nearest Inuvialuit community located 250 km from the southern park boundary. While local residents only occasionally use the north end of the island, Aulavik is seen as an important reservoir for the island's wildlife populations such as muskoxen, Peary caribou, and migratory birds that are so important for Inuvialuit subsistence.



Aulavik means “place where people travel” in Inuvialuktun. The Park encompasses a range of landscapes from fertile river valleys to polar deserts, buttes and badlands, rolling hills and seacoast. The record of human inhabitation by Inuit peoples in what is now known as Aulavik National Park stretches back almost 3,500 years. European exploration began in the mid-1800s during the search for the lost Franklin expedition, and had a significant social and cultural impact on Banks Island. From the late 1920s to the 1970s, the lucrative arctic fox fur trade drew Inuit to Banks Island from across the Western Arctic.


Over the past decade, 451 people have visited Aulavik, most to paddle the Thomsen River. Other visitor activities include hiking, fishing, wildlife viewing and visiting cultural sites. There are no publicly accessible facilities in Aulavik. Parks Canada operational staff, researchers and local educational youth camp participants use Green and Polar Bear cabins that are operated within the park by the Sachs Harbour Hunters and Trappers Committee and the Government of the Northwest Territories, respectively. There are two unmaintained landing areas in the park, accessible by chartered aircraft only.



The Management Planning Process

The park management planning process involves a cycle of activities. This includes consultation with Aboriginal Peoples, visitors, general public, partners and stakeholders, and park staff. The process ensures that a range of perspectives are considered on important issues and concerns.

With the condition of the park assessed in the State of the Park Report completed in 2010 and key issues identified, Aulavik's management plan will be updated in three stages over the next ten months.

| STAGE | FOCUS | STATUS |
|---|---|---|
| STAGE 1 - Fall 2010 – Winter 2011 | Introduce the management planning process and invite Inuvialuit, stakeholder and public input on the draft elements of the new plan (e.g., challenges & opportunities faced, strategies to address them, the vision for the park). | WE ARE HERE NOW  |
| STAGE 2 – Winter - Spring 2011 | Develop a draft management plan based on input and then invite further comment from the Inuvialuit, stakeholders and the public in spring 2011. | |
| STAGE 3 Summer - Fall 2011 | Incorporate input and finalize management plan. Submit for recommendation by Inuvialuit land claim cooperative management organizations and the Parks Canada Chief Executive Officer, followed by approval of the Federal Minister of the Environment responsible for Parks Canada. The approved plan will then be tabled in Parliament. Inuvialuit, stakeholders and public informed of the results of the planning process. | |

Accomplishments Under the Current Plan

Since 2002, Aulavik National Park has:

- Informed and engaged Inuvialuit co-management and community partners in the protection of the park's natural and cultural resources through; establishment of the Aulavik National Park Advisory Board; quarterly field unit newsletter and the annual WAFU Research & Monitoring report;
- Advanced long-term understanding of ecosystems and cultural resources within the park through long standing partnerships with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Canadian Centre for Remote Sensing, Environment Canada, Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, Aurora Research Institute and University of Western Ontario. Examples of research, monitoring and traditional knowledge inventory programs include: work on Peary caribou and muskoxen populations; plant productivity, water quality, Inuvialuit ethnobotany, and archaeological studies;
- Promoted and encouraged education, training and development of Inuvialuit youth through an annual Environmental Stewardship course for Grade 4 students in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, and park camps for Sachs Harbour youth;
- Enhanced public awareness and appreciation of the park through: publication of the Western Arctic Handbook and Inuvialuit Nautchiangit: A Study of the Relationship Between People and Plants; completion of the new Park Visitor Reception and Interpretative Centre in the community of Sachs Harbour;
- Delivered economic benefit for Inuvialuit residents and businesses from Sachs Harbour and the greater Inuvialuit Settlement Region through implementation of a human resources plan that sees Inuvialuit making up over 50% of staff working for Western Arctic Field Unit and 100% of Parks Canada staff in Sachs Harbour, hiring locals for short-term contracts, purchasing millions of dollars of goods and services from Inuvialuit-owned businesses.



Challenges & Opportunities Ahead

Aulavik's first State of the Park Report was completed in 2010. This report provides a snapshot of the condition of the park, assessing performance in areas such as protection of natural and cultural heritage resources, public education and engagement, and visitor experience. It helps Parks Canada, Inuvialuit co-operative management partners and other key stakeholders identify some of the key challenges and opportunities that need to be considered in the updated management plan for Aulavik. These include:

- Declining numbers of Peary Caribou living on the Island;
- Unrealized economic benefits from the park for Inuvialuit and the community of Sachs Harbour;
- Aulavik's monitoring program, that assesses the health of the Park's natural and cultural heritage, is still a work in progress in the early stages of development;
- Need to increase awareness and understanding of and visitation to this remote Arctic national park among local communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, and connecting Canadians to the remarkable landscapes and fascinating history of Aulavik.

YOUR COMMENTS WELCOME...

What do you think are some challenges for the Park that should be considered during this planning program?

What are some opportunities?

YOUR COMMENTS WELCOME...

How is Aulavik National Park important to you?

What changes should happen in Aulavik between now and 2021 that would be better for the national park, the neighbouring community of Sachs Harbour and Banks Island?



Photo credit: Parks Canada



Photo credit: Parks Canada

The Vision

The vision is meant to convey the special character of the park and to paint an inspiring picture of the desired future state of Aulavik. Draft elements of the vision could include:

In 2021, you will be welcomed to...

... Aulavik National Park – a place where people travel a thread through time, share their discoveries, knowledge and experiences for the benefit of future generations.

... our home - a gift from the Inuvialuit to the people of Canada

... a park that supports the basic goals of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement to preserve the Inuvialuit cultural identity and values within a changing northern society; enables Inuvialuit to be equal and meaningful participants in the economy and society; protects and preserves the wildlife and the arctic environment.

... a place where the lands, water, wildlife and over 3,000 years of cultural heritage are maintained for the benefit of all Canadians using science, traditional knowledge, and co-operative management.

... a sanctuary for supporting the island's wildlife populations such as muskoxen, Peary caribou, and migratory birds that Inuvialuit still depend on today for subsistence

... a beacon for others to learn about, understand and appreciate the northern landscape, the vibrant culture and traditions of the Inuvialuit, and rich history of the Western Arctic.

... a pristine Arctic experience drawing visitors from around the world in search of vast landscapes, enormous solitude, the challenge and risk of Arctic travel, and the opportunity to experience and learn about Inuvialuit and the earliest peoples to occupy these lands.

... a site that connects all Canadians to Canada's captivating history of Arctic exploration and contact between Inuit and European travellers in the western Arctic.

... a place of inspiration for youth of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and Canada to become stewards for healthy ecosystems and rich cultural heritage in Canada's north.

... a part of a larger natural and cultural landscape of Banks Island and renowned among eco-tourists, naturalists and adventure travellers as a premier destination to discover Arctic experiences unique to Banks Island. The community of Sachs Harbour will contribute to and benefit from being a gateway to visitors.



Photo credit: Parks Canada



Photo credit: Parks Canada



Key Strategies

The key strategies are the backbone of the management plan. They chart the course for addressing the challenges and opportunities that we have identified and realizing the parks' vision through a framework of objectives, targets and actions that integrate the three elements of Parks Canada's mandate: protection, education, and visitor experience. Four key strategies have been identified for Aulavik National Park.

Maintaining and enhancing visitor opportunities for Aulavik National Park, Sachs Harbour and Banks Island

This strategy focuses on maintaining and where possible enhancing visitor opportunities to the park and increasing opportunities for Sachs Harbour and Banks Island to be a draw for visitors in combination with a visit into Aulavik or as an alternative destination for those where the park is out of reach due to high costs and significant logistical challenges associated with a park visit.

Keeping Aulavik healthy and enduring

This strategy addresses the need to develop an effective ecological integrity and cultural resource monitoring and management program through building on existing activities, programs and partnerships. The concept of managing this park as a cultural landscape that includes past and current traditional land uses will be explored.

Engaging Inuvialuit Settlement Region communities beyond Sachs

This strategy is intended to broaden our engagement of people from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region to include Sachs Harbour and other communities in the region. Opportunities will be sought to increase visits to the park from people in the region, involvement in park management activities and research, and levels of awareness and support for the park.

Bringing Canadians closer to this piece of Canada's northern heritage

Recognizing that few Canadians will ever have the opportunity to visit Aulavik National Park or Canada's Arctic due to its remoteness, logistics and associated costs, this strategy will focus on connecting Canadians through building public awareness, understanding and support through new partnerships, and by telling our stories through improved web presence and new media, education programs and other forms of outreach.



A summary of how these key strategies will address Aulavik's challenges & opportunities ...

| | Strategy 1 Maintaining and enhancing visitor opportunities for Aulavik NP, Sachs Harbour and Banks Island | Strategy 2 Keeping Aulavik healthy and enduring | Strategy 3 Engaging Inuvialuit Settlement Region communities beyond Sachs | Strategy 4 Bringing Canadians closer to this piece of Canada's northern heritage |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Issue 1 - Peary Caribou Decline | | √ | √ | |
| Issue 2 - Economic Benefits for Inuvialuit and Sachs Harbour | √ | | √ | |
| Issue 3 - Ecological Integrity Monitoring | | √ | √ | |
| Issue 4 - Increasing awareness, understanding and visitation | √ | | √ | √ |

YOUR COMMENTS WELCOME...

Do you have ideas or suggestions for key strategies?

What about the Area Management Approach proposed for the Thomsen River?

Area Management Approach

An area management plan for the Thomsen River – “the River at the Top of the World” - will also be developed as part of the Aulavik Management Plan. This area management plan will focus on the Thomsen River's unique management needs related to visitor use, park operations and cultural resources.

Stay connected!

Visit us at www.parksCanada.gc.ca/aulavikplan for all the latest news on our planning process, public consultations, a selection of key information documents such as the State of the Park Report for Aulavik, and future issues of our newsletter...

To receive updates during the planning process, send us your request today to be added to our Aulavik mailing list. Email us at aulavik.plan@pc.gc.ca or call 867.777.8800. Please provide your name, mailing address and email (if available).



How Do I Get Involved?

Starting this fall 2010 and continuing on until spring 2011, Parks Canada will be consulting with Canadians on the new management plan for Aulavik National Park. Views will be gathered through public open houses held in various communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories and through face to face meetings with Inuvialuit leadership and stakeholder groups. Canadians are also invited to submit their views to us in writing by email, fax, or mail. For your convenience a comment form is available for you through our website at www.parkscanada.gc.ca/aulavikplan or by contacting us.

We want to hear from you! Your comments and suggestions are important for helping shape Aulavik's management plan.

Please submit your comments on challenges and opportunities, the park vision and/or the key strategies on or before **Monday January 31, 2011** to us so that they may be considered in the first draft of the updated management plan:

c/o Aulavik Management Plan Update 2010 - 2011

Email: aulavik.plan@pc.gc.ca

Fax: 867-777-8820

Mail: Parks Canada - Western Arctic Field Unit
P.O. Box 1840, Inuvik, NT, X0E 0T0

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Phone: 867.777.8800

Website: www.parkscanada.gc.ca/aulavikplan

In accordance with Access to Information and Privacy Acts, all information you provide will be confidential.

Aussi disponible en français

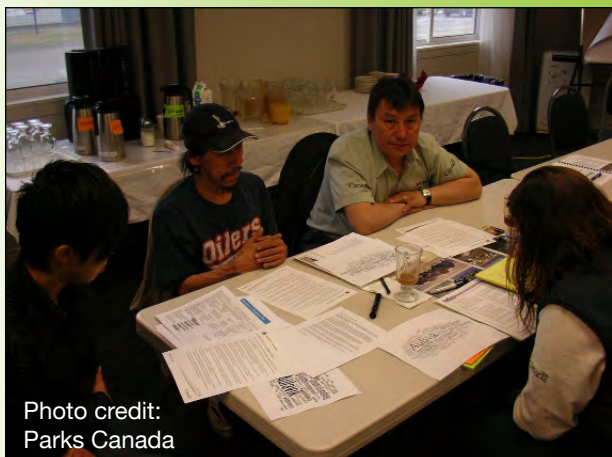


Photo credit:
Parks Canada

Upcoming Public Open Houses Dates in the Western Arctic

Inuvik, NT - Thursday January 27, 2011

Two sessions scheduled starting at 1pm and 6pm,
Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre

Sachs Harbour, NT - Monday January 31, 2011

One session scheduled starting at 6pm,
Sachs Harbour Community Complex