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Skmaqñ- Port-la-Joye- Fort Amherst

National Historic Site of Canada

Management Plan

2023



2023

Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–
Fort Amherst
National Historic Site of Canada

Management Plan

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SKMAQN–PORT-LA-JOYE–FORT AMHERST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA MANAGEMENT PLAN, 2023.

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Note to readers

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

Parks Canada acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic may have unforeseeable impacts on the Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan. Parks Canada will inform Indigenous peoples, partners, stakeholders and the public of any such impacts through its annual implementation update of this plan.

For more information about the management plan or about
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Foreword



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

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

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

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

This new management plan for Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site of Canada supports this vision.

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

As the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, I applaud this collaborative effort and I am pleased to approve the *Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan*.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steven Guilbeault', written in a cursive style.

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

Recommendations

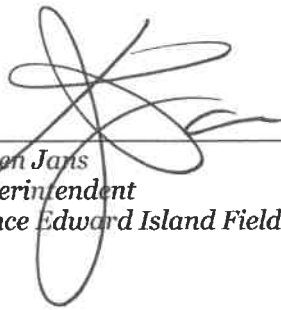
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Executive Summary

Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site of Canada is located on Prince Edward Island, across the harbour south of Charlottetown. Given its strategic location at the harbour entrance, the site was an active gateway and gathering place for centuries. As its name suggests, the site has a distinct significance for different cultural groups as alliances and conflicts evolved.

In the present management plan, three key strategies are presented to guide the management of the site for the next decade. An overall theme of the plan is “working together,” as the vision, voices, and resources of partners and stakeholders will be important in defining the specific activities that take place at the site over the next ten years. Today, working with Mi’kmaw, French, Acadian and British partners and stakeholders, Parks Canada strives to share the storied human history of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst from a range of perspectives.

Key Strategy 1: Working Together to Increase Awareness

This key strategy focuses on collaboration to promote the site. In addition to Mi’kmaw, French, Acadian and British partners and stakeholders, the site will work with other key stakeholders in tourism; nature appreciation; outdoor recreation; and education.

This strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Efforts to promote Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site off-site has increased; and
- Visitation to the site has increased.

Key Strategy 2: Working Together to Enhance Visitor Experience

Continuing discussions related to the addition of the Mi’kmaw name in 2018, this key strategy seeks to strengthen the connection that cultural groups have to the site, as well as the collaboration among cultural groups. This key strategy ensures that partners have ample opportunities to share their perspectives on the site’s complex human history.

This strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- The site’s stories are shared from multiple perspectives;
- Opportunities to connect with Mi’kmaw culture have increased; and
- The number of special events offered or hosted at the site has increased.

Key Strategy 3: Protecting a Cultural Landscape

This key strategy emphasizes the need to protect the site’s cultural resources and its scenic and environmental values.

This strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

- The good condition of cultural resources is maintained; and
- The condition of the natural environment and scenic beauty of the landscape is maintained.

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1.0 Introduction

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

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

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* requires Parks Canada to prepare a management plan for national historic sites administered by Parks Canada. The *Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site of Canada Management Plan*, once approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and tabled in Parliament, ensures Parks Canada’s accountability to Canadians, outlining how national historic site management will achieve measurable results in support of Parks Canada’s mandate.

Indigenous peoples are important partners in the stewardship of heritage places, with connections to the lands and waters since time immemorial. The Mi’kmaq of Prince Edward Island, stakeholders, partners and the Canadian public were involved in the preparation of the management plan, helping to shape the future direction of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site. The plan sets a clear, strategic direction for the management and operation of the site by articulating a vision, key strategies and objectives. Parks Canada will report annually on progress toward achieving the plan objectives and will review the plan every ten years or sooner if required.

This plan is not an end in and of itself. Parks Canada will maintain an open dialogue on the implementation of the management plan, to ensure that it remains relevant and meaningful. The plan will serve as the focus for ongoing engagement and, where appropriate, consultation, on the management of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site in years to come.

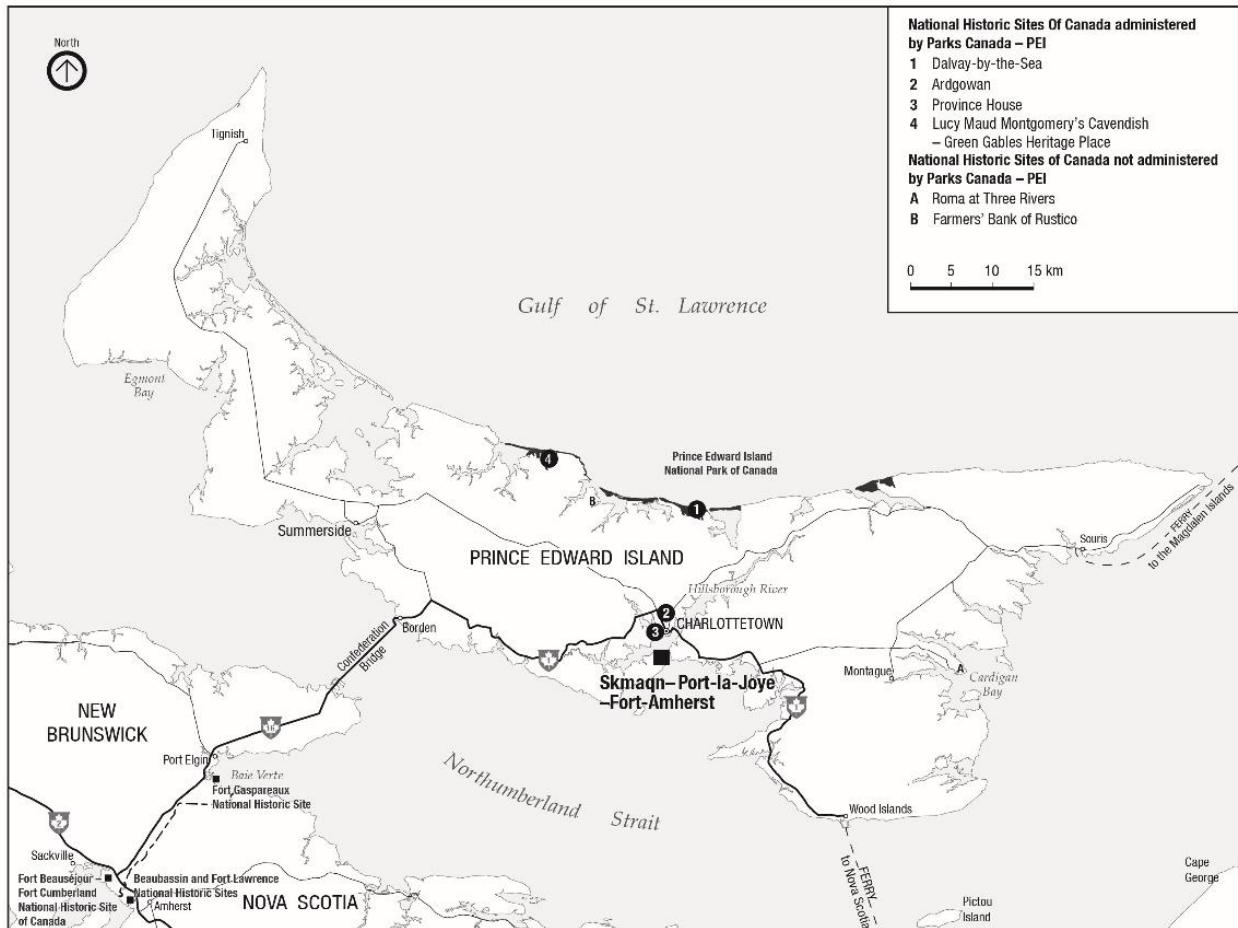
2.0 Significance of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site

At the meeting point of Mi’kmaq travel routes, as a port of entry to what is now Prince Edward Island, the seat of government for settlers, and a colonial outpost in the French-British struggle for dominance in North America, Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst National Historic Site was first designated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1958. Originally designated as Fort Amherst National Historic Park after the British fort, Port-la-Joye became part of the site name in 1985 to reflect its French and Acadian history. In 2018, on the recommendation of the Mi’kmaq First Nations of Prince Edward Island, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada added the name Skmaqñ to the site, to better reflect its importance to the Mi’kmaq, and the site’s multifaceted history. In Parks Canada’s *Framework for History and Commemoration: National Historic Sites System Plan 2019*, Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst is highlighted as an example of how the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Parks Canada and partners can work together to re-examine a site’s history and reasons for designation.

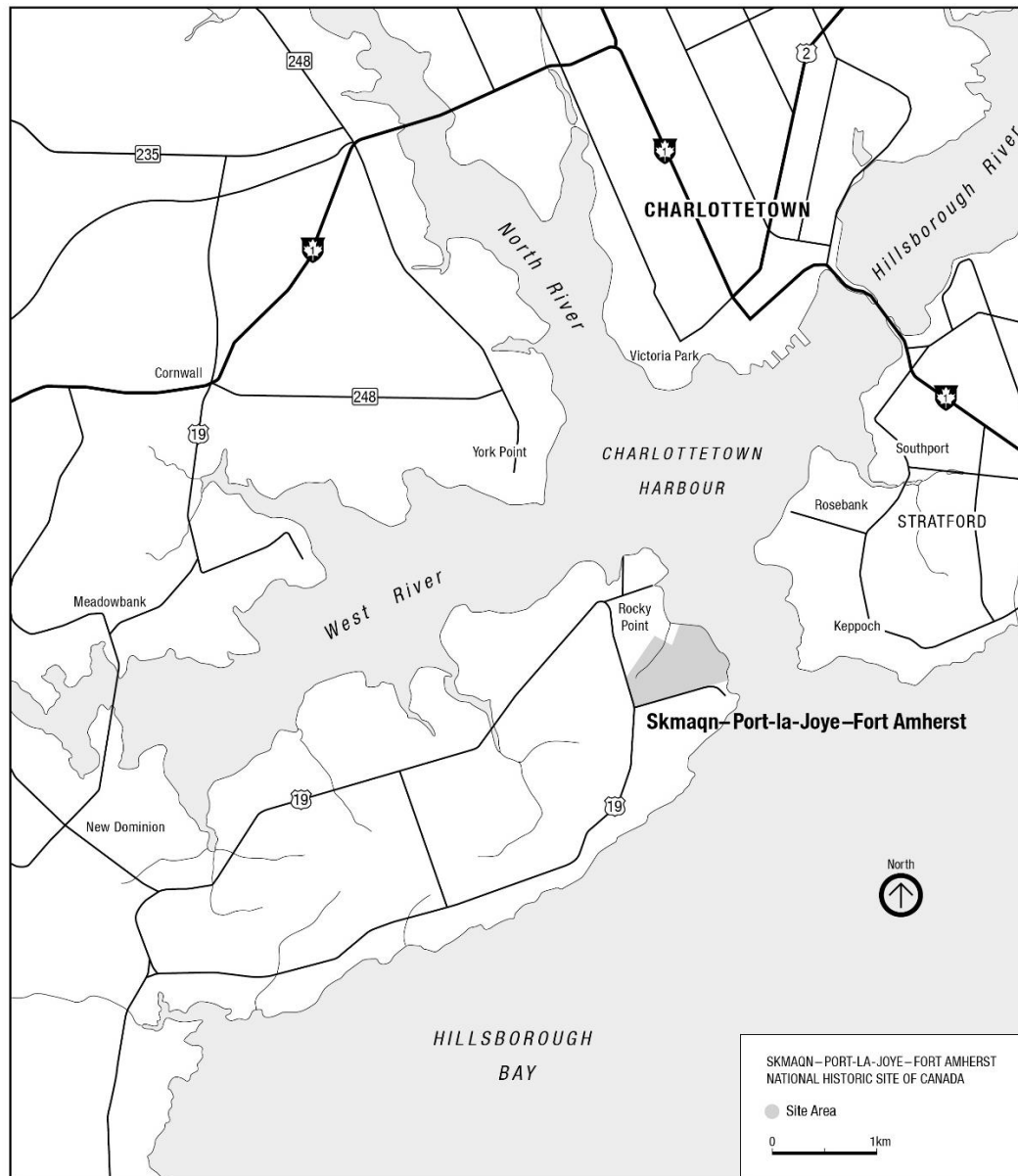
The area surrounding Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst (Maps 1 and 2) has long been an important part of the ancient Mi’kmaq cultural landscape of *Epekwitk*. The Hillsborough River, known in the Mi’kmaq language as *Elsitkuk*, is an ancient travel route between the island’s south and north shores. In 1720, 300 French settlers arrived at Île Saint-Jean (as Prince Edward Island was known to them) to establish a military outpost and a fishery. The small French garrison and some Acadian settlers established a community here, which they called Port-la-Joye. Most of the settlers continued on to the north shore to establish Havre Saint-Pierre. Port-la-Joye served as the seat of government for the French

colony, with an agricultural community developing around the outpost. Most years, Mi'kmaw and French leaders from across the region travelled to meet at Port-la-Joye to strengthen and renew their alliance, which is reflected in the Mi'kmaw name *Skmaq̄n* (“the waiting place”). Port-la-Joye served as a military and administrative outpost of the French colony of Île Royale, the capital of which was at the Fortress of Louisbourg, now a national historic site. During the French period, other fishing and trade settlements developed on the island, such as Roma at Three Rivers on the east shore, also now a national historic site. Port-la-Joye was at the entrance to three river systems that linked to Mi'kmaw and French places throughout the island. The Hillsborough River, since designated a Canadian Heritage River, facilitated access via a portage to the French settlement of Havre St. Pierre (St. Peter's Harbour) in the northeast, part of which was on present-day Greenwich Peninsula, now part of Prince Edward Island National Park.

Map 1: Regional Setting



Map 2: Local Setting



As tensions mounted in the French-English struggle for control of North America during the 1740s and 1750s, Port-la-Joye and Île Saint-Jean twice came under attack. Although the French and Mi'kmaq here managed to resist the invading forces, as Île Royale fell into British hands from 1745 to 1748, so did Île Saint-Jean. After 1749, the French were briefly restored and in the 1750s, the French at Port-la-Joye received Acadian refugees from across the region as they fled during mounting tensions and the Deportation of 1755. In 1758, following the siege and capture of Louisbourg, and one year ahead of the British victory at the Plains of Abraham in Quebec, the British again gained control of Port-la-Joye and then deported the vast majority of French and Acadian inhabitants from Île Saint-Jean. A British post was established and named "Fort Amherst" after the commander of the Louisbourg expedition. During the tragic deportations of over 3,000 people from Fort Amherst in 1758, three of a dozen ships were lost at sea, resulting in the highest number of fatalities during the period of Acadian deportation.

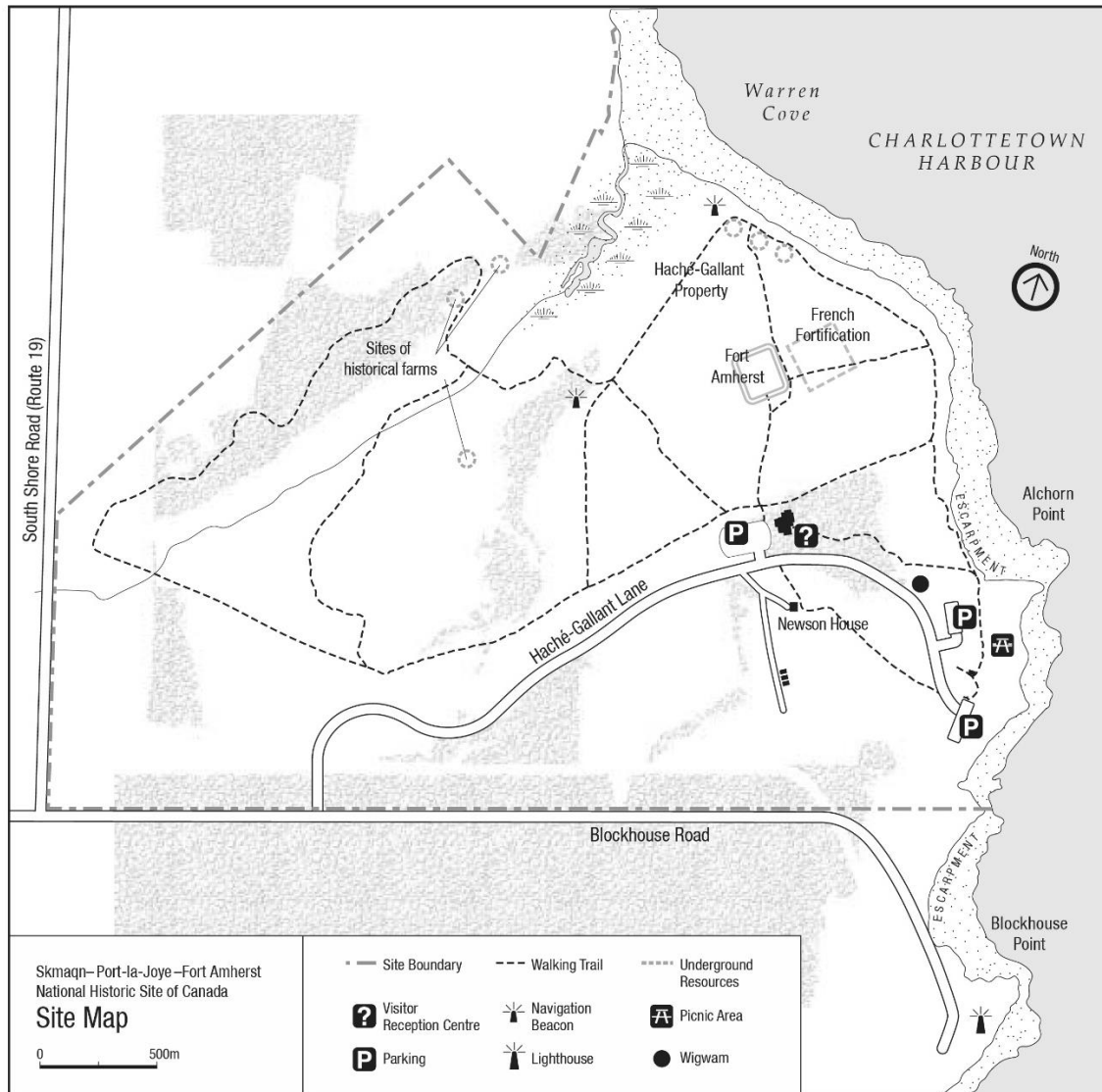
Fort Amherst became the British administrative centre for the island for the next decade. During this period, the groundwork was laid for British administration and settlement, which would shape the future of Prince Edward Island. This site nonetheless remained an important place for the Mi'kmaq. British Captain Samuel Holland undertook a land survey of the island from this site from 1764 to 1765, using advanced techniques for the time, producing maps far more accurate than any previous. His work is designated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as a national historic event, and a plaque is in place on a property near Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst. Captain Holland is also recognized (with a plaque in Québec) by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as a national historic person. In 1768 the capital changed to Charlottetown and the British abandoned the fort. Plough replaced cannon here, and when new military defences were needed, they were established across the harbour, such as at Prince Edward Battery, located in what is now Charlottetown's Victoria Park.

Adding to the original designation of the site, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada has also recognized the significance of specific events at Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst, including the 1758 deportation of the inhabitants of Île Saint-Jean (designated in 2011), and the 18th century Mi'kmaq-French alliance (designated in 2014). The site includes plaques, monuments, and interpretation panels that share these stories. Artifacts uncovered during archaeological investigations at Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst are preserved and made available for study at an off-site facility managed by Parks Canada.

Though not directly related to the reasons for designation, the national historic site has other cultural resources of note (Map 3). The Newson farmhouse, located across from the visitor reception centre, but not maintained for public use, dates from the turn of the 20th century, at which time a century of farming on the site was giving way to leisure use of the area. On the north side of the creek are vestiges of the Warren Farm site (sites of historical farms, Map 3), which appears to have been the site of the home of the earliest British colonial administrators. Another noticeable feature of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst is the Warren Cove range lights (navigational beacons); erected in 1907 and owned by the federal Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Canadian Coast Guard), the range lights relate to the site's theme of navigation.

In addition to the visible remnants of the earthworks from Fort Amherst and the in-ground cultural resources from military outer works and surrounding Acadian and British communities, the 90 hectares of rolling grasslands and areas of mixed woodland overlooking the harbour are part of the essence of the site. Collectively, the built and natural features of the site, including its open views, comprise a significant cultural landscape that holds many stories related to the evolution of Prince Edward Island, Canada and the world.

Map 3: Site Map of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst



3.0 Planning Context

Strategically located at the entrance to Charlottetown Harbour, Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst sits approximately six kilometres across the water from the provincial capital, Charlottetown, or approximately 40 kilometres by road, around the west side of the harbour. The Mi'kmaw community of Rocky Point, part of Abegweit First Nation, neighbours the site to the northwest. Land use surrounding the site is largely devoted to agriculture and the development of a few seasonal cottages. The site was opened in 1973.

The site consists of two primary parking/staging areas: an upper area, where the visitor reception centre is located as well as the main access to the self-guided trails and historic grounds, including the remnants of Fort Amherst; and a lower area, where a small washroom building is located, as well as an outdoor stage and more immediate access to the ocean. Entry to the site is along Haché-Gallant Drive, named for Michel Haché dit Gallant, whose extended family formed the core of Port-la-Joye's Acadian community.

The essence of the site is its historically strategic location and open landscape. The outdoor space is available to visitors year-round, but without facilities or maintenance from mid-October to mid-June. In July and August, the visitor reception centre is open and staffed daily. On request, guided tours of the site are available for a fee. Mi'kmaw programming was introduced in 2016 in collaboration with the Mi'kmaw Confederacy of PEI. A number of recreational and cultural events organized by Parks Canada partners or third-party organizations have been held at the site over the years. In previous years, a national Scouts Canada jamboree was held at the site as well as provincial school cross-country running races, musical concerts, and kite flying contests. The site has also offered or hosted annual or periodic cultural celebrations for events such as Canada Day, National Historic Places Day, Acadian National Feast Day and Acadian Remembrance Day, as well as family reunions as part of Congrès Mondiale Acadien.

For a number of years following the change to a self-guided site in 2012, visitation was not monitored. Currently, visitors pay no fees for parking or entrance to the site, and the visitor reception centre is only open in July and August. In 2019 a new method of estimating attendance was implemented based on vehicle counts. From June 15 to October 15, 2019, the site received an estimated 33,269 person visits. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Rocky Point area offered more amenities (such as a ferry service), and therefore more appeal to visitors from Charlottetown. With the loss of various services, there was a marked decline in visitation to the Rocky Point area.

Since the previous management plan for the site was published in 2003, a number of significant changes, many in consultation with partners and stakeholders, have occurred at the site:

- In 2005, interpretive exhibits were removed from the visitor centre due to water damage.
- In 2008–2009, the Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst Redevelopment Committee (comprised of Parks Canada, Prince Edward Island Mi'kmaw communities, the Mi'kmaw Confederacy of PEI, Acadian and Francophone communities, and the Royal Commonwealth Society of Prince Edward Island) was created to make recommendations on the future development of the site.
- In 2009 and 2010, a series of archaeology digs and field schools focused on the area of Acadian homes were held, and in 2009, new interpretive panels were installed along the Old Harbour Path trail.
- In 2012, there was a reduction in operational capacity and a shift to a self-guided site. A small complement of daily summer staff was reintroduced in 2016.
- A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Société Nationale de l'Acadie, Parks Canada, and Canadian Heritage in 2015.
- In 2018, a Mi'kmaw name was added to the site name.

Key investments in the site in the past ten years have included:

- Approximately \$950,000 in infrastructure investment in refurbishing the visitor reception centre to create a multi-purpose space for special events, expanded trail system, stabilization of Newson House, and development of an outdoor stage in the day-use area, 2009–2011;
- Stories of Canada project initiated in 2019 to enhance the interpretation at the site to include multiple perspectives; interpretive film and new interpretive panels are currently in development;
- Further upgrades to access roads, parking areas and Newson House, 2015–2016; and
- Establishment of a traditional wigwam area and the building and launching of a birch bark canoe, 2016–2021.

Several of the initiatives noted above, and related consultation with partners and stakeholders, contributed to delays in preparing the new management plan.

Collaboration on strategic planning for Skmaq–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst, including the recommendations from the Redevelopment Committee (2009) and Parks Canada's Stories of Canada initiative (2019), aligns well with the implementation of the previous management plan, guidance from memoranda of understanding and other relationships, and the development of this management plan. This management plan also builds on the initial phases of planning in the *State of Site Assessment* (2016) and the scoping phase (2017). Key issues included maintaining the condition of the Fort Amherst earthworks; maintaining the views of the harbour; improving the consistency of the offer in terms of staff presence; increasing awareness and visitation; strengthening the involvement of cultural groups,

including Mi'kmaw and Acadian partners; and maximizing the use of the visitor reception centre and other facilities on the grounds for special events. Considering the quality and significance of the local, regional, national, and global stories that have roots at Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst, previous and ongoing initiatives related to awareness of the site and visitor opportunities at Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst support that the site could enjoy a more prominent public profile.

4.0 Development of the Management Plan

Parks Canada staff have sought input and ideas to help shape the new Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst management plan and ensure that it is based on a shared vision that reflects the priorities of Parks Canada, Indigenous communities, partners and stakeholders, and the general public.

A state of the site assessment was completed in 2016 and a scoping process was completed in 2017.

In 2018, Parks Canada began initial pre-consultations for this process and met with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI (now L'nuey), as well as with key cultural stakeholders. An engagement session was also held with island youth. Feedback was incorporated into a draft plan, which would be the subject of public review and comment during phase two of the process.

Plans for the second phase of public engagement were communicated broadly in winter of 2019, but all management planning consultations were placed temporarily on hold between March 2020 and January 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In January 2021, Parks Canada cautiously resumed management planning engagement activities, and consultations on the Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst draft management plan were active through May 2021.

Various traditional and web-enhanced methods were used to promote and engage the public. Shareable videos were produced in both official languages to promote the Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst management planning consultations, and encourage public participation in the process. The videos were well received and served as a helpful introduction to facilitated meetings. Eight, two-hour engagement sessions were facilitated – wholly virtual or combined virtual/in-person – each with a small number of specific, grouped partners and stakeholders, including L'nuey/Mi'kmaq, community representatives, Indigenous community, Acadian, French and British cultural stakeholder groups, tourism, industry, nature and recreation groups, municipalities, as well as sessions open to the general public (English and French). Thirty-eight people attended the sessions. An online comment card was created for interested Canadians to share their feedback and 76 responses were received.

The feedback received was generally very favourable and very few changes were suggested. Based on comments received, the vision and key strategies were refined in order to create the final draft plan. The final draft was reviewed by Mi'kmaw/L'nuey partners before the completion of this plan.

5.0 Vision

The vision for Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst in 10 to 15 years is for the site to remain a beautiful, park-like space that honours the stories of the different cultures involved in the site's history: Mi'kmaw, French, Acadian, and British.

Continuing its role as a gateway and a gathering place, the site is alive with history. Everything about the site speaks to its storied past, from the views offered by the grounds themselves to the remains of the British fort, to the insightful and evocative interpretive media. Each element invites the visitor to take a

look at some aspect of history, culture, or nature. The grounds and facilities serve as an inviting setting for gatherings and a welcome venue for a variety of cultural and community events.

Time spent at Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst is an experience that engages the senses and inspires the mind. Visitors take in its spectacular harbour vistas, enjoy scenic trails through peaceful landscapes, and absorb the sounds and smells of the grass, trees and the ocean breeze. A visit to the site invites contemplation of its complex history.

Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst has a unique placement within the greater network of historic sites with an extensive reach that showcases how the events that took place here have meaning and significance locally, regionally, and globally. Stories are shared that reflect a variety of themes, from individual and family histories of life at the site in the 1700s, to connections to the broader history of Acadia and Canada, and also to the ongoing experiences of new arrivals everywhere, as global migration and settlement continue to evolve.

Bringing this information to light heightens awareness of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst and the site’s role in the settlement of Prince Edward Island and Canada. This, in turn, gives island residents and Canadians a closer connection to the site and a greater understanding of the significance of the national historic site.

6.0 Key Strategies

The ten-year strategic priorities for Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst will be achieved through a management framework consisting of three key strategies. The strategies have associated objectives and targets that support Parks Canada and its partners and stakeholders in achieving the vision for the national historic site.

Key Strategy 1: Working Together to Increase Awareness

A focus of this strategy, and indeed implementation of this management plan, is a continued collaboration with key partners and stakeholders. As a gathering place for specific cultural groups, including Mi’kmaq, French, Acadian and British, the vibrancy of Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst depends on the active involvement of partners and stakeholders, both on-site and off-site. In addition to cultural groups, Parks Canada will work with other key stakeholders involved with tourism, nature appreciation, outdoor recreation, and education. This strategy seeks to raise awareness of the site among target audiences, build support among local and regional residents, and draw additional visitors to the site. Based on visitors’ feedback, efforts will be made to improve pre-trip information and road signage for finding the site. A new method for calculating visitation based on vehicle counts was started in 2019 and will continue.

Objective 1.1: Efforts to promote the national historic site off-site have increased.

Targets

- By 2028, the number of off-site outreach or promotional events where the national historic site is promoted to target audiences, whether by Parks Canada or partners, in-person or otherwise, has increased.
- By 2028, the availability of outreach or promotional products to promote the national historic site to target audiences has increased.
- By 2033, the number of third parties engaged with the national historic site has increased.

Objective 1.2: Visitation to the national historic site has increased.

Targets

- By 2033, visitation to the site has increased by ten percent from 2019 levels.
- By 2033, facilitate, where possible, revenue-generating tours to the site.

Key Strategy 2: Working Together to Enhance Visitor Experience

Continued and expanded collaboration with key partners and stakeholders is also a focus of this strategy. As a strategic location and a gathering place where different cultures became allies, established roots or met in armed conflict, there are different perspectives to be shared on events that took place at Skmaq–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst. This strategy continues discussions related to the addition of the Mi'kmaw name in 2018 and seeks to strengthen the connection that cultural groups have to the site, as well as the collaboration among cultural groups. This strategy ensures that partners have ample opportunities to share their perspectives on the site's complex human history. It also builds on previous special events, to identify a wide range of opportunities that could be explored with partners. Overall, visitor feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction and learning from visits to the national historic site. Some have expressed interest in the addition of family activities, and many have appreciated Mi'kmaw programming. As collaboration with partners and stakeholders identifies opportunities to enhance programming, consideration will be given to meeting the needs of target audiences as well as a wide range of social identities, abilities and interests.

Objective 2.1: The stories of the national historic site are shared from multiple perspectives.

Targets

- Members representing Mi'kmaw, Acadian, and British communities continue to collaborate with Parks Canada, forming advisory committees (or similar structures) as needed, working together toward the creation of high quality, engaging experiences.
- By 2033, interpretive materials at the site are renewed and enhanced, using new approaches to share multiple perspectives.

Objective 2.2: Opportunities to connect with Mi'kmaw culture has increased.

Targets

- By 2028, in cooperation with the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, the national historic site has expanded content that shares Mi'kmaw history and culture.
- By 2033, the site is an integral part of the Indigenous tourism offer in the region.
- By 2033, the number of visitors who participate in Mi'kmaw programming at the site has increased.

Objective 2.3: The number of special events offered or hosted at the site have increased.

Target

- By 2033, the number of community or cultural events offered by Parks Canada or hosted by partners and stakeholders at Skmaq–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst has increased by at least 15 percent based on the 2019 baseline.

Key Strategy 3: Protecting a Cultural Landscape

The essence of the site is its open landscape and strategic location and the overlap of geography, human nature and history. This strategy includes protecting the landscape itself, as well as the cultural resources related to the site. Ensuring the commemorative integrity of the site includes protecting the land, including its cultural significance to all of the cultural communities whose history is rooted here; protecting key cultural resources such as the remnant earthworks of Fort Amherst and belowground artifacts throughout the site; maintaining the condition of other cultural resources, such as Newson

House; and maintaining the feel of the site's open grasslands and pockets of forest cover, with views to the harbour entrance. Visitor feedback indicates that enjoyment of the scenery is a significant reason why visitors come to the site.

Monitoring programs and promoting compliance to visitors (for example, not using metal detectors and not disturbing artifacts) will need to be maintained, especially as climate change could lead to increased storms and erosion. In addition to monitoring and protecting cultural resources, necessary monitoring of priority habitats and species will also be carried out at the site. These objectives for resource protection are also supported through collaboration with other levels of government, non-government organizations, and academic institutions, such as with the University of Prince Edward Island.

Objective 3.1: The good condition of cultural resources is maintained.

Targets

- The earthworks of Fort Amherst are maintained in good condition, including by managing the growth of young trees (to maintain a clear area for the remnants of the fort and due to the potential of tree roots to disturb underground resources).
- By 2028, historic view planes of the cultural landscape will be identified to guide future forest management decisions, including the restoration of Acadian forest, where possible.
- Newson House is maintained in good structural condition (not for occupancy or programming).
- The collection of artifacts from the site (over 18,000, stored in an off-site facility) is maintained in good condition.

Objective 3.2: The condition of the natural environment and scenic beauty of the landscape is maintained.

Targets

- Through 2033, the open nature of the rolling grasslands and views to Charlottetown Harbour are maintained.
- By 2028, in partnership with the Mi'kmaw First Nations of Prince Edward Island, the presence and use of suitable habitat for species-at-risk will be assessed and sufficiently understood to support necessary measures to maintain or improve available habitat and connectivity.
- By 2028, understanding of the potential impacts of climate change at the site will be improved through an assessment of historic rates of coastal erosion.

7.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

The purpose of a strategic environmental assessment is to incorporate environmental considerations into the development of public policies, plans, and program proposals, to support environmentally sound decision-making. In accordance with *The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals (2010)*, a strategic environmental assessment was conducted on the Skmaqñ–Port-la-Joye–Fort Amherst management plan.

Many positive effects will occur as a result of the implementation of the plan, for example, ensuring the commemorative integrity of the site, including maintaining the condition of cultural resources and assets and improved understanding of climate change impacts at the site. The biggest positive effect of this plan will be the protection of the environment, specifically the mix of open grasslands and pockets of forest cover and improved understanding of potential species at risk and their habitats. This is important because the site contains suitable habitat for migratory birds and potentially for several bird and bat species at risk. The management plan will help connect Canadians with nature contributing to the implementation of the *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*. The management plan also supports the *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy* goal of Effective Action on Climate Change.

Objectives and targets identified in the management plan that could potentially result in negative environmental effects include increased visitation, more special events, and vegetation management to maintain the cultural landscape. Environmental effects could include disturbance or harm to nesting bird species, vegetation damage, and alteration of wildlife habitat. However, these effects can be minimized by following existing guidelines, including the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*; conducting project-level impact assessments; developing species-specific mitigations as appropriate; implementing a monitoring program for species at risk at the site (for example, breeding bird surveys, acoustic monitoring, and building inspections for bats); and complying with the requirements of the *Species at Risk Act*, *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and relevant Parks Canada policy and guidance. Operations at the site are required to mitigate impacts on climate according to Greening Government requirements in support of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Comments from Indigenous partners, stakeholders and the public were incorporated into the strategic environmental assessment and management plan as appropriate.

There are no important negative environmental effects anticipated from the implementation of the management plan. Individual projects at the site will be evaluated separately under the *Impact Assessment Act*, or successor legislation, as necessary.