



Forges du Saint-Maurice National Historic Site

Annual report, 2021 and 2022



Forges du Saint-Maurice National Historic Site @Parks Canada

Parks Canada manages one of the finest and most extensive networks of protected natural and historic sites in the world. The Agency's mandate is to commemorate, protect and present these places for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

The Forges du Saint-Maurice National Historic Site Management Plan, which came into effect in 2020, defines the long-term vision and guides the site's management. This Implementation Report presents Canadians with the actions and accomplishments Parks Canada has put in place in 2021 and 2022 to achieve the vision, strategies and objectives of the 2020 Management Plan.



STRATEGY 1: A MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR THE COMMUNITY AND MAURICIE'S TOURISM OFFERING

Objective: The national historic site stands out for its lively, evocative and original offer.

In 2021, Parks Canada launched a number of new features, including the exciting "Diabolus ex machina" audio tour in partnership with artist Fred Pellerin, and a virtual immersive experience "1600°C trial by Fire".

Interpretive guided tours resumed following the pandemic, allowing groups to once again enjoy a personalized tour experience. Several discovery walks along the site's nature trails were organized in partnership with the Association forestière de la Vallée du Saint-Maurice.

New glass panels have been added to enhance interpretation of the archaeological remains.

Finally, a temporary exhibition called "Regalia" presented visitors with wonderful portraits of men, women and children dressed in their regalia, magnificent colourful clothing symbolizing Indigenous cultures and identities.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the introduction of these new high-profile activities has increased visitor numbers from 4,669 in 2020 to 12,160 in 2021. In 2022, the site had 8,646 visitors as the novelty wore off. However, this figure is still higher than the average for the past five years.

Objective: The site is recognized as a gathering place, and the community makes it its own.

Several partners held activities on the Forges du Saint-Maurice site, including an event in partnership with the Trois-Rivières Opera, which presented the opera "Carmen" outdoors in August 2022, and an activity with sculpture artist Myriam Fauteux during the 2022 Journées de la Culture.

Furthermore, to make the site a better community space, major work was carried out on the infrastructure: the access road was resurfaced, the nature trail was reopened following the repair of several footbridges and general upgrades were made (painting, landscaping, etc.). Signs were updated to better guide visitors, and welcome signs were installed on Boulevard des Forges to indicate the entrance to the national historic site. Finally, refurbishments were done to the rest and relaxation areas as well as the reception area in the big house and the gift shop.



STRATEGY 1: A MAJOR ATTRACTION FOR THE COMMUNITY AND MAURICIE'S TOURISM OFFERING

Objective: The historic site is integrated in the dynamic development of the local and regional tourism sector.

Parks Canada is involved in local and regional tourism promotion and development. The national historic site is represented in promotional tourism initiatives. Regular meetings are held with partners and stakeholders. The site is also promoted on social media as well as in traditional media.

Objective: Parks Canada works with Indigenous communities who have an interest in the site to honour and present their cultures, skills and traditions to the public.

The national historic site is important to the First Nations, particularly members of the Atikamekw Nation, with whom Parks Canada enjoys a cooperative relationship.

The "Regalia" exhibition showcased native cultures and traditions. In 2021, the site welcomed several Atikamekw rowers as part of an activity initiated by the Atikamekw Nation.



STRATEGY 2: A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE THAT PROTECTS AND ENHANCES CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Objective: Continue to ensure the protection of cultural resources.

Parks Canada works continuously to conserve the cultural resources of the national historic site.

In 2021, several of the remains were repointed to enhance their integrity and preserve them for future generations. Further repointing work will be carried out over the next few years.

Objective: New activities raise public awareness of the cultural and natural attractions of the national historic site and demonstrate Parks Canada's leadership in conservation.

The new activities mentioned earlier in this document have raised public awareness of the value of the site's cultural and natural attractions. With regard to the natural environment, Parks Canada has posted new content on the Forges du Saint-Maurice website, highlighting the site's natural attractions. In the picnic area, an installation highlights natural elements of interest. Last but not least, the three nature trail walks, organized in collaboration with the Association Forestière de la Vallée du Saint-Maurice, provided an opportunity to share the site's most beautiful landscapes with visitors.

Objective: The natural environment is recognized, protected, and enhanced, and contributes to the site's importance.

Parks Canada has implemented several measures to protect the natural environment, including the planting of butternut trees (an endangered species in Canada) and the installation of swallow boxes in collaboration with the Trois-Rivières Sustainable Foundation. A follow-up plan for species at risk has also been launched. Parks Canada's first priority is to acquire knowledge about the site and confirm the presence of species at risk.



CONCLUSION — NEXT STEPS

The Parks Canada Agency is proud of its 2021 and 2022 achievements at the Forges du Saint-Maurice National Historic Site.

Efforts to enrich the service offer, active collaboration with partners and integration of the site into the region all contribute to promoting the heritage of Forges du Saint-Maurice and Parks Canada's mandate.

In the coming year, the site will continue to implement the objectives identified in the 2020 Management Plan. These initiatives will support site promotion, attract more visitors and reaffirm the commitment of Parks Canada to preserving and showcasing this important part of the country's history for the enjoyment of present and future generations.



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