

Obadjiwan-Fort-Témiscamingue National Historic Site

Draft Management Plan, 2025

Obadjiwan-Fort-Témiscamingue National Historic Site

[An invitation to participate](#)

Obadjiwan-Fort-Témiscamingue National Historic Site is planning its operations for the coming years. To this end, I invite you to take part in this reflection by sharing your views and suggestions with us during the public consultation period from June 14 to July 14, 2025.

The objective of this consultation is to enable the general public, members of Indigenous nations, the municipality, partners and local stakeholders to participate in decision-making concerning the management of the national historic site.

The management plan will guide the site's management for the next 10 years (2025-2035). It provides direction for the collaborative management of the site, as well as the protection of cultural and natural resources, visitor experience, public awareness and tourism positioning.

This national historic site belongs to you! Join the Parks Canada team in developing a common vision, continuing to protect and promoting the discovery of this unique place.

Geneviève Caron
Superintendent

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1.0 Significance of Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site

The Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site is located in the traditional territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin people, in the municipality of Duhamel-Ouest, in Abitibi-Témiscamingue. It occupies a 27-hectare site located directly on the shores of Lake Timiskaming, where the two shores come within 350 metres of each other. The main facilities are located in an open area at the end of a point of land jutting out into the lake. The remaining 80% of the site is covered by an exceptional cedar woodland, sacred for Anishnabe Algonquin People and known as the “enchanted forest” for non indigenous People.

The site was designated to be of national significance by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1967 as “Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site.” The objective was to commemorate the trading post’s role in the fur trade and the rivalry between the French and British to exploit the supply of pelts in Hudson’s Bay. The site was renamed the “Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site” after a review of its designation in 2018 highlighted its important connection to the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, which used the land for several millennia and played an important role in the fur trade. The designation also recognizes the site’s significance as an Indigenous gathering place in the 19th century, for Anishnabe Algonquin Nation, particularly for the Timiskaming First Nation.

The site’s history spans more than 6,000 years. Numerous archaeological traces testify to pre-European occupation by nomadic groups. The artifacts discovered demonstrate the existence of extensive trade networks among the Anishinabe Algonquin people and other Indigenous cultures west of Lake Superior, in the James Bay area, near Lake Saint-Jean and in southern Ontario. In 1720, a French company built a fur trading post on the site of the current national historic site to compete with English settlements near Hudson Bay. Thanks to this post, the French were able to take advantage of Anishinabe Algonquin trading networks to collect furs and trade them for European products. Commercial activity flourished here until the British conquest in 1760. Later, various independent merchants took over. In 1795, the North West Company obtained a trading monopoly, followed by the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1821. The trading post closed in 1902, after some 200 years of use, and was sold to private owners. In 1955, the community of priests of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate bought the old post and kept it until 1970, when it was acquired by Parks Canada.

The place has spiritual significance for the peoples who have used it. Catholic and Protestant cemeteries were laid out around 1838. In 1998, an Indigenous burial site was accidentally disturbed during development work. This area is now protected by a low rock wall and cedar posts to prevent any further disturbance. Moreover, in Anishinabe Algonquin culture, humans beings and the objects they have created, fauna and flora and the natural environment are intimately linked to the Creator. Speaking the Anishinabe Algonquin language is also a spiritual and sacred act. The national historic site is still considered a spiritual place by members of the Nation.

Covered for the most part by woodland, the historic site protects a diverse natural environment with some twenty forest stands, including the exceptional cedar grove. It is also home to several plant species with protected status for the province of Quebec, as well as plant species of significance to the Anishinabe Algonquin people.

The national historic site is open to the public during the summer. The tour begins in a reception and interpretation centre, built in 2000, whose architecture evokes the palisade of an old wooden fort. The interior design is reminiscent of a trading post. An exhibition highlights the millennia-old presence of the Anishinabe Algonquin people, the history of the Fort Témiscamingue trading post and the significance of the fur trade. A small shop is integrated into this area. Located close to the reception centre, the activity centre can be used for events and one-time activities. After visiting the reception centre, the public can follow an outdoor trail through the remains of the trading post, the beach, the cemeteries and the enchanted forest. Interpretive panels and several life-size historical displays depict what life was like at the time of the trading post. Visitors can also experience the stories of the historic site as told by enthusiastic interpreter-guides. During the summer, three to four events are usually offered to the public in collaboration with Anishinabe Algonquin and non-Indigenous partners. They also offer craft workshops and entertainment. Since 2016, the historic site has been collaborating with the non-profit organization *Les Amis du Vieux-Fort*, which manages the site’s shop and contributes to the entertainment.

In terms of attendance, the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site welcomes an average of 6,950 visitors annually. The majority of our clientele are Canadian, from Quebec (over 80%) and Ontario. Given the geographical location of the site, visitors come from two distinct population bases. First, there is clientele from the region itself, i.e., Abitibi-Témiscamingue, the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, who travel less than two hundred kilometres (58%); and second, the clientele from distant metropolitan areas, mainly Montreal, but also Toronto and Ottawa, who travel distances of over four hundred kilometres (30%) and need to stay in the region to enjoy its attractions.

2.0 Planning context

The government of Canada became the owner of the national historic site in 1970. After several archaeological digs to uncover the remnants of the trading post buildings, the site is now open to the public. The first visitors were welcomed to temporary facilities, including an interpretation centre set up under a huge canvas in 1974. The non-Indigenous Témiscamingue community quickly rallied to support the development of the site. Following public hearings, the first management plan was submitted in 1990. A regional fundraising campaign raised \$500,000 to complement the Government of Canada's \$2.3 million investment in the historic site's development.

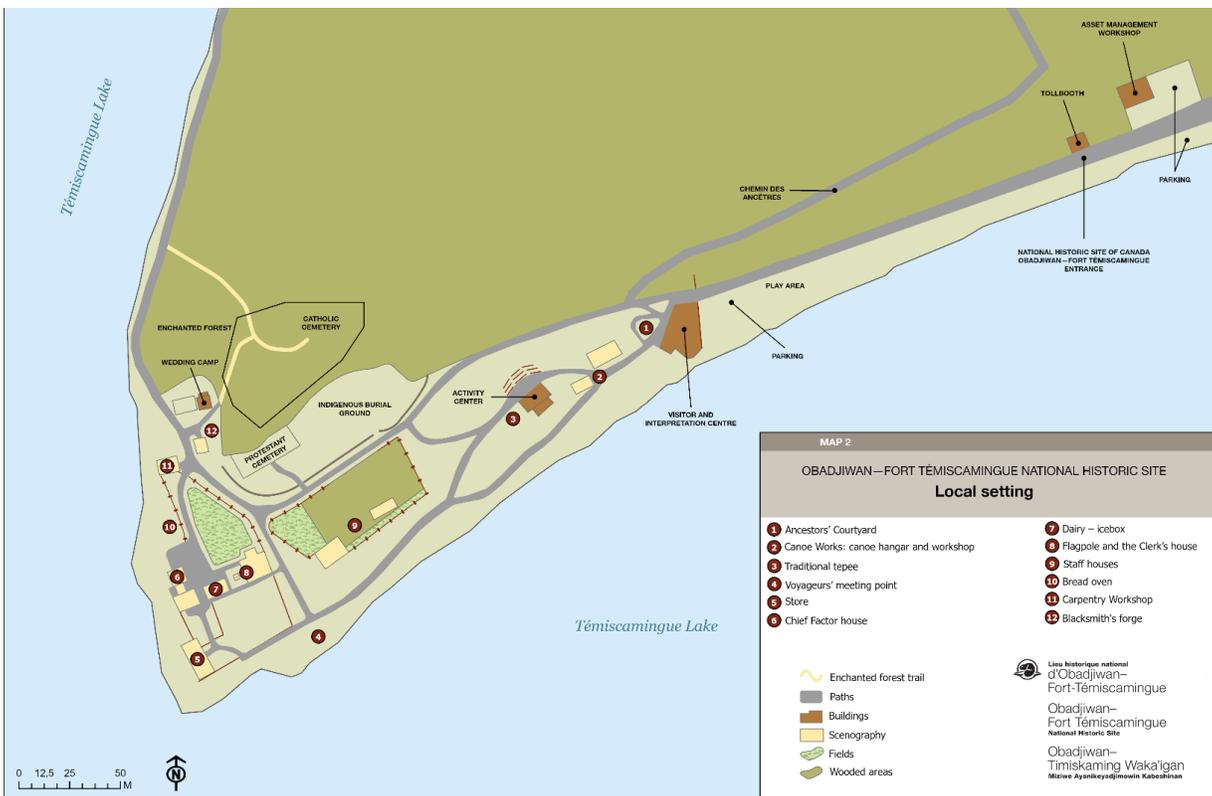
In 1998, Indigenous burials were accidentally disturbed during work conducted for site development. Work stopped and dialogue began to protect this sacred site. An agreement in principle between Parks Canada and the Timiskaming First Nation was concluded in 2000 to negotiate a Trust Patrimony Agreement. The purpose of this agreement is to transfer half of the undivided ownership of the historic site property into a Trust Patrimony administered by eight trustees who will have an ongoing role in the management of the site. Once the agreement in principle was reached, development work was resumed and permanent facilities were built. The role of the Anishinabe Algonquin people is growing, and members of the Timiskaming First Nation are getting involved in animation activities. In 2007, a new management plan was submitted, specifying, among other things, the need to revise the commemorative intent of the national historic site (to incorporate the significant role of Indigenous Peoples) and to continue negotiating the Trust Patrimony Agreement.

In 2019, the Trust Patrimony Agreement was signed, and a 50% undivided co-ownership in the historic site was transferred to the Obadjiwan Corporation. This agreement makes Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue the first national historic site in Canada to be co-owned. In consensus with the Timiskaming First Nation, the non-Indigenous community of Témiscamingue and Parks Canada, an eight-member committee was formed to agree on the site's direction: four members were appointed by the Obadjiwan Corporation and four by Parks Canada. Of these four trustees, Parks Canada retains one seat, while the others are non-Indigenous representatives of the Témiscamingue community. The first meetings of the fiduciary committee took place in 2021. The committee meets at least twice a year and oversees the strategic management of the national historic site, while operational management remains the responsibility of Parks Canada. Since its first meetings, the fiduciary committee has proved to be a forum for dialogue and cooperation, strengthening relations among Témiscamingue's Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The committee is thus renewing a tradition of trading and collaborating among peoples who have been gathering here for over 6,000 years.

Map 1: Regional setting



Map 2: Local setting, Site map



3.0 Development of the management plan

This management plan has been developed in close collaboration with the fiduciary committee. Members were consulted and approved every step in the process. The first meetings highlighted three main themes that will be addressed in the management plan:

The fiduciary committee collaborative management model

This management model is unique in Canada, and Parks Canada recognizes the exemplary way in which the committee operates. This approach is an asset, as it facilitates dialogue and decision-making among the various stakeholders. However, a number of factors need to be taken into account to perpetuate this form of management, including the development of a common funding model for the fiduciary committee's initiatives, and the long-term maintenance of the representativeness, commitment and collaborative spirit of its members.

Positioning the national historic site within the regional and national tourism offer

The national historic site is at a turning point following recent changes in its status: collaborative management, new reasons for designation incorporating an Indigenous component, and changes in tourist travel habits. This is an opportunity to review the positioning of the historic site to maximize its real attraction potential and to meet the expectations of target audiences. The new positioning should reinforce the site's regional roots (in the Témiscamingue region), as well as its significance to the Anishinabe Algonquin people, so that members of the Nation strengthen their ties with the site and visit it regularly. Lastly, the approach should help attract visitors from distant metropolitan areas such as Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto as well as from nearby urban centers.

Conservation and enhancement of cultural and natural resources

Cultural heritage is the very essence of the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site. It is essential to protect and enhance heritage resources, including archaeological remains and collectibles, as well as intangible heritage elements linked to the spiritual significance of the site for the peoples who have used it. To date, the natural component of the historic site's experience has been limited. In the context of climate change, specific monitoring and conservation measures may be required to improve the site's resilience. A key element of the site's actions, is sharing the knowledge that has been and will be gathered.

4.0 Vision

The vision below represents the aspirations for the national historic site over the next 10 to 15 years. Respectful of the past, it expresses the desired future and will guide the fiduciary committee in charge of the site's strategic management, as well as its collaborators and partners, in their decisions and directions. The vision presented below therefore reflects the intended outcomes of implementing the management direction proposed in this plan:

As guardian of a majestic and spiritually charged landscape, and witness to more than 6,000 years of history, collaboration and cultural exchange, the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site is recognized as a place of convergence, partnership and reconciliation among First Nations and non-Indigenous people.

The millennia-old stories of the site are told in an integrated way, not as a parallel narrative from one community to the next. The various perspectives are presented equally. The different languages used over time—the Anishinabemowin, the Algonquin language, French and English—are used both orally and in writing. The cultural, spiritual and scientific practices and knowledge of the various communities associated with the national historic site are respected and integrated into management and presentation approaches.

The wealth of tangible and intangible cultural heritage is protected for present and future generations. Visitors discover the site's value, conveyed by the people who shaped it. The spiritual significance of the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site is understood, alive and respectfully presented to the public. The natural environment in which the site is located is protected and valued culturally and spiritually as well as historically and scientifically.

Accessible and inclusive, the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site is a lively heritage site that attracts many visitors. Local communities perpetuate their connection with the site and gather there regularly. The site’s collaborative management, the responsibility of which is shared by the members of the trustee committee, is recognized and celebrated. The spirit of openness and collaboration continues to be respected by current and future committee members. The various communities and institutions represented by the fiduciary committee, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, maintain an ongoing commitment to ensuring the viability and longevity of the site’s collaborative management approach.

Non-Indigenous people from Témiscamingue, Anishnabeg Algonquin Nation and Parks Canada work together to showcase the historic site and to develop and implement an attractive tourism offer, while respecting the capacities of the parties represented on the fiduciary committee. Thanks to a good understanding of visitor expectations and interests, the promotion and offer of experiences are adapted to the national historic site’s target clientele. It welcomes visitors from the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, the Anishinabe Algonquin traditional territory and the urban and metropolitan regions of Quebec and Ontario.

5.0 Key strategies

The management plan for the Obadjiwan–Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site includes three key strategies. These describe the broad approaches that should guide the management of the site over the next 10 years, in order to achieve the desired vision over the longer term. Each of the key strategies includes more specific objectives as well as targets for measuring progress made in the coming years.

Key strategy 1: A place of convergence and collaboration, whose vitality reflects the aspirations of the communities linked to it.

This strategy capitalizes on the opportunities offered by the new management model for the national historic site, as set out in the Trust Patrimony Agreement, particularly with regard to collaboration among the non-Indigenous Témiscamingue community, the Timiskaming First Nation and Parks Canada. In a respectful and open atmosphere, the establishment of the fiduciary committee has created a platform for discussion and decision-making, increased opportunities for collaboration in bringing the national historic site to life and showcasing it and generated positive outcomes for the Témiscamingue community and Indigenous partners. To ensure the model’s longevity, the culture of respect, exchange and commitment must be maintained over time, regardless of who joins the committee. As a result, it will have to ensure continuity and adequate representation of the non-Indigenous Témiscamingue community, the Anishinabe and Parks Canada. It will also be necessary to achieve a degree of financial viability in order to have the necessary funds to implement the trustee committee’s initiatives. Everyone will have to commit to contributing to a common funding and revenue-generation strategy.

In addition, the strategy focuses on the national historic site’s role as a gathering place. The site is significant to both the Anishinabe and the non-Indigenous Témiscamingue community, as both have been heavily involved in its development. It is therefore necessary for them to be able to present their cultures and perpetuate their knowledge and traditions, notably through a variety of activities aimed at the general public or, more simply, at members of the surrounding communities. In addition, the historic site will continue its efforts to make facilities more inclusive and accessible to enable a greater diversity of visitors to discover and enjoy the site, regardless of ability, culture or gender.

Objective 1.1: Collaborative management of the national historic site is consolidated and sustainable

Targets

- The level of regional representativeness and the spirit of collaboration of the fiduciary committee continue unabated.
- The fiduciary committee meets at least twice a year.
- Every two years, the fiduciary committee holds one or more meetings to inform and consult Indigenous partners, non-Indigenous partners from the Témiscamingue community and the public about the site’s management directions.

- From 2027 onwards, the development of new initiatives by the fiduciary committee, in collaboration with Parks Canada, is supported by a common funding and revenue-generation strategy.

Objective 1.2: The site’s role as a gathering place is reinforced

Targets

- Depending on operational capacity, each year the historic site hosts one or more varied initiatives offered by Indigenous or non-Indigenous partners from the Témiscamingue region.
- On an ongoing basis, the site’s level of inclusiveness and accessibility is taken into account in the operations and development of the national historic site.

Key strategy 2: A flagship site that attracts Témiscamingue residents, members of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation from across the traditional territory, and tourists from metropolitan and urban areas of Quebec and Ontario.

This strategy aims to strengthen the site’s appeal to retain local visitors and members of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation, and to attract new clientele. This requires a better understanding of the needs, expectations and behaviours of existing and potential clienteles, in order to better guide promotional strategies and experience offerings. Collaboration with partners in the tourism industry will help us pool our expertise in clientele analysis and integrate the historic site into a promotional strategy that is aligned with the regional approach. Collaboration with partners from the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation will help attract members of the Nation to develop a sense of ownership of the site and to use it regularly.

In parallel the experience offering will be renewed and adapted to better meet the expectations of target clienteles and encourage repeat visits from people from the region and members of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation. Collaboration and partnership with other tourism and museum institutions will help integrate the site into the region’s main tourist circuits.

Lastly, alternative online experiences will be developed as a complement to promotional campaigns to reach clientele located at a considerable distance from the historic site, particularly in the metropolitan and urban areas of Quebec and Ontario. As a result, a first virtual contact with the historic site may encourage this clientele to visit it in person on a trip to the region or initiate a specific trip to discover the site in person.

Implementing this strategy will increase the average number of visitors to the national historic site and generate positive outcomes for both the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and the non-Indigenous community of Témiscamingue.

Objective 2.1: The experience offering is more diversified and better adapted to the needs of clienteles

Targets

- On an ongoing basis, the site’s target audiences and their expectations are defined in collaboration with the tourism community and Indigenous partners.
- By 2028, at least three new or renewed visitor experiences will be implemented to better meet the needs and expectations of target audiences.

Objective 2.2: In collaboration with partners from the Témiscamingue and Indigenous communities, the site is better positioned as a regional attraction, and its reach is broadened

Targets

- On an ongoing basis, promotional actions aimed at the site’s target clientele are carried out in collaboration.
- By 2030, one or more productive partnerships with other tourism or cultural sites or associations are implemented or consolidated to attract a greater number of visitors.
- By 2035, at least two alternative experiences (virtual, publications, partnerships) will enable us to promote the historic site beyond its boundaries and reach new, distant audiences.

Objective 2.3: Average visitation to the national historic site increases

Target

- By 2035, the national historic site's 10-year average visitation increases by 10% as of 2024 (from 6,975 to 7,672 visitors).

Key strategy 3: A living, protected heritage site, showcasing the diversity of the cultures that have shaped it and the nature that surrounds it.

This strategy aims to better communicate, honour and discover the different perspectives and histories of the peoples who have shaped the national historic site. To this end, visitor experiences and activities will be initiated by both the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and the non-Indigenous community. The use of the Anishinabe Algonquin language will be reinforced to highlight the three languages that have been spoken here: the Anishinabe language, French and English.

In addition, the strategy aims to continue efforts to conserve the most significant cultural resources. Based on new historical, ethnological data as well as Anishinabe Algonquin traditional knowledge, the cultural resource inventory will be updated to reflect, among other things, the new reasons for designation defined for the historic site in 2018. This will enhance the protection and presentation of the site's diverse cultural heritage (of Indigenous, French or English origin)

Also, the natural environment will be given greater consideration, both for the significance of its biodiversity and for its cultural value. Inventories of flora and fauna will be made to establish a knowledge base that will facilitate the development and implementation of an effective approach to the site's conservation and resilience to climate change. This approach will integrate traditional Indigenous knowledge and scientific and historic information. Activities and visitor experiences focused on the natural environment will raise awareness of environmental and cultural values.

Objective 3.1: Anishnabeg Algonquin culture and perspectives are honoured, communicated and integrated into the visitor experience

- Annually, the site offers one or more visitor experiences designed to honour and showcase Anishnabeg culture, knowledge and values.
- By 2028, Anishnabemowin, Algonquin language, will be part of the visitor experience.

Objective 3.2: Témiscamingue community cultures and perspectives are honoured, communicated and integrated into the visitor experience

- Annually, one or more visitor experiences designed to honour and showcase the cultures, knowledge and values of Témiscamingue community are offered by, or in collaboration with, these communities.

Objective 3.3: Cultural resources that illustrate the site's heritage significance, whether built, landscape, archaeological, tangible or intangible, are better known and protected

- By 2030, the inventory and evaluation of the site's cultural resources will be updated in collaboration with partners and based on new data.
- By 2035, the condition of cultural resources is maintained and their value is communicated to the public and visitors.

Objective 3.4: The natural environment is better known, protected and enhanced by integrating scientific and Indigenous knowledge

- By 2030, the inventory and evaluation of the natural environment will be updated in collaboration with the scientific community and Indigenous partners.
- From 2028 onwards, experiences integrated into the service offer will enable the public to enjoy the natural environment and become more aware of its significance.
- By 2035, management practices for the natural environment aim to increase the site's resilience to climate change.

What do you think?

This document summarizes and presents the site, its challenges and management strategies and objectives. The floor is now yours! Here is an opportunity to reflect and work together on a management statement for Obadjiwan-Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site. Your knowledge of the site, your experience of it and your vision of its future are important to us.

How can you contribute?

4 ways to give your feedback between June 14 and July 14:

1. By filling out the online [questionnaire](#) (hyperlink to questionnaire – to be sent by Social Sciences – May 6)
2. By meeting the management team on-site during the season launch on **Saturday, June 21, 2025**, between 10 AM and 4 PM. Admission is free, and a variety of activities will be presented.
3. By email at the following address: sebastien.bachmann@pc.gc.ca
4. By mail to the following address:

Public Consultation – Obadjiwan-Fort-Témiscamingue

Parks Canada Administrative Office at Fort Chambly:

2 Richelieu Street, Chambly (Quebec) J3L 2B9 Canada

If you have any questions or require information about the public consultation, please do not hesitate to contact us.

You have until July 14, 2025, to send us your opinions, comments and ideas.

Thank you for your valuable collaboration!