



Mountain Parks

National Historic Sites of Canada

Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Howse Pass, Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass, Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station, First Oil Well in Western Canada

Management Plans



Yellowhead Pass NHSC



Cave and Basin NHSC



Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC



Jasper House NHSC



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Yellowhead Pass NHSC - *McCord Museum of Canadian History M472*

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Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC - *Parks Canada Agency*

Jasper House NHSC - *Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas (31.78-136)*

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Parks Canada

Mountain Parks National Historic Sites of Canada : Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Howse Pass, Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass, Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station, First Oil Well in Western Canada : management plans / Parks Canada.

Issued also in French under title: Lieux historiques nationaux du Canada des parcs des Rocheuses : Jasper House, Centre-d'Information-du-Parc-Jasper, Col-Yellowhead, Col-Athabasca, Col-Howse, Kootenae House, Col-Kicking Horse, Auberge-de-Ski-Skoki, Salon-de-Thé-des-Chutes-Twin, Refuge-du-Col-Abbot, Caveand Basin, Musée-du-Parc-Banff, Station-d'Étude-des-Rayons-Cosmiques-du-Mont-Sulphur, Premier-Puits-de-Pétrole-de-l'Ouest-Canadien, plan directeur.

Issued also on CD-ROM.

ISBN 978-0-662-45550-9

Cat. No.: R64-105/76-2007E

1. Mountain Parks National Historic Sites (Alta. and B.C.)--Management.
2. Historic sites--Alberta--Management.
3. Historic sites--British Columbia--Management.
4. Historic sites--Canada--Management.
5. National parks and reserves--Alberta--Management.
6. National parks and reserves--British Columbia--Management.
7. National parks and reserves--Canada--Management.
- I. Parks Canada. Western and Northern Service Centre
- II. Title.

FC215. P36 2007

971.23'32

C2007-980142-0

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

Mountain Parks

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES OF CANADA

*Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre,
Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Howse Pass,
Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass,
Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House,
Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Cave and Basin,
Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic
Ray Station, First Oil Well in Western Canada*

Management Plans

October 2007

Foreword



Canada's national historic sites, national parks and national marine conservation areas offer Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast unique opportunities to experience and understand our wonderful country. They are places of learning, recreation and fun where Canadians can connect with our past and appreciate the natural, cultural and social forces that shaped Canada.

From our smallest national park to our most visited national historic site to our largest national marine conservation area, each of these places offers Canadians and visitors unique opportunities to experience Canada. These places of beauty, wonder and learning are valued by Canadians - they are part of our past, our present and our future.

Our Government's goal is to ensure that each of these special places is conserved.

We see a future in which these special places will further Canadians' appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Canada, the economic well-being of communities, and the vitality of our society.

Our Government's vision is to build a culture of heritage conservation in Canada by offering Canadians exceptional opportunities to experience our natural and cultural heritage.

These values form the foundation of the new management plans for Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Howse Pass, Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass, Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station and First Oil Well in Western Canada National Historic Sites of Canada. I offer my appreciation to the many thoughtful Canadians who helped to develop these plans, particularly to our dedicated team from Parks Canada, and to all those local organizations and individuals who have demonstrated their good will, hard work, spirit of co-operation and extraordinary sense of stewardship.

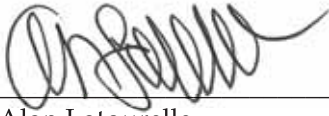
In this same spirit of partnership and responsibility, I am pleased to approve the Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Howse Pass, Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass, Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station and First Oil Well in Western Canada National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plans.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "John Baird". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

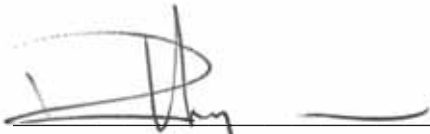
John Baird
Minister of the Environment

Recommendations

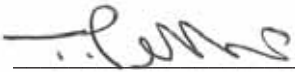
Recommended by:



Alan Latourelle
Chief Executive Officer
Parks Canada



Ron Hooper
Field Unit Superintendent
Jasper National Park including Jasper House NHSC, Yellowhead Pass
NHSC, Athabasca Pass NHSC, and Jasper Park Information Centre NHSC



Terry Perkins
Field Unit Superintendent
Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay including Kicking Horse Pass NHSC,
Howse Pass NHSC, Twin Falls Tea House NHSC, Kootenae House NHSC,
Skoki Ski Lodge NHSC and Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC



Jillian Roulet
Field Unit Superintendent
Banff including Cave and Basin NHSC, Banff Park Museum NHSC, and
Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station NHSC



Rod Blair
Field Unit Superintendent
Waterton Lakes including First Oil Well in Western Canada NHSC

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Introduction

1.0 Introduction

I followed the rut of an old trail to the edge of a willow-fringed clearing. The morning wind wafted the familiar smells of spring in the Rockies through the air. Sunlight cast shadows on the uneven ground and distant peaks. Images of tipis, rough hewn log buildings and the sound of fiddle music danced through my mind. I wanted to know more...

1.1 Background

National historic sites commemorate the diversity of human experience and the legacy of thousands of years of human history. They mark the tangible cultural remains of the lives and stories of the people who forged Canada. The family of national historic sites is very large, encompassing more than 900 sites and representing every province and territory. Parks Canada administers more than 150 of these sites.

Fourteen national historic sites – Jasper House, Yellowhead Pass, Athabasca Pass, Jasper Park Information Centre, Howse Pass, Twin Falls Tea House, Kootenae House, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin, Skoki Ski Lodge, Kicking Horse Pass, Banff Park Museum, Cave and Basin, Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station and the First Oil Well in Western Canada – are located in or near the mountain national



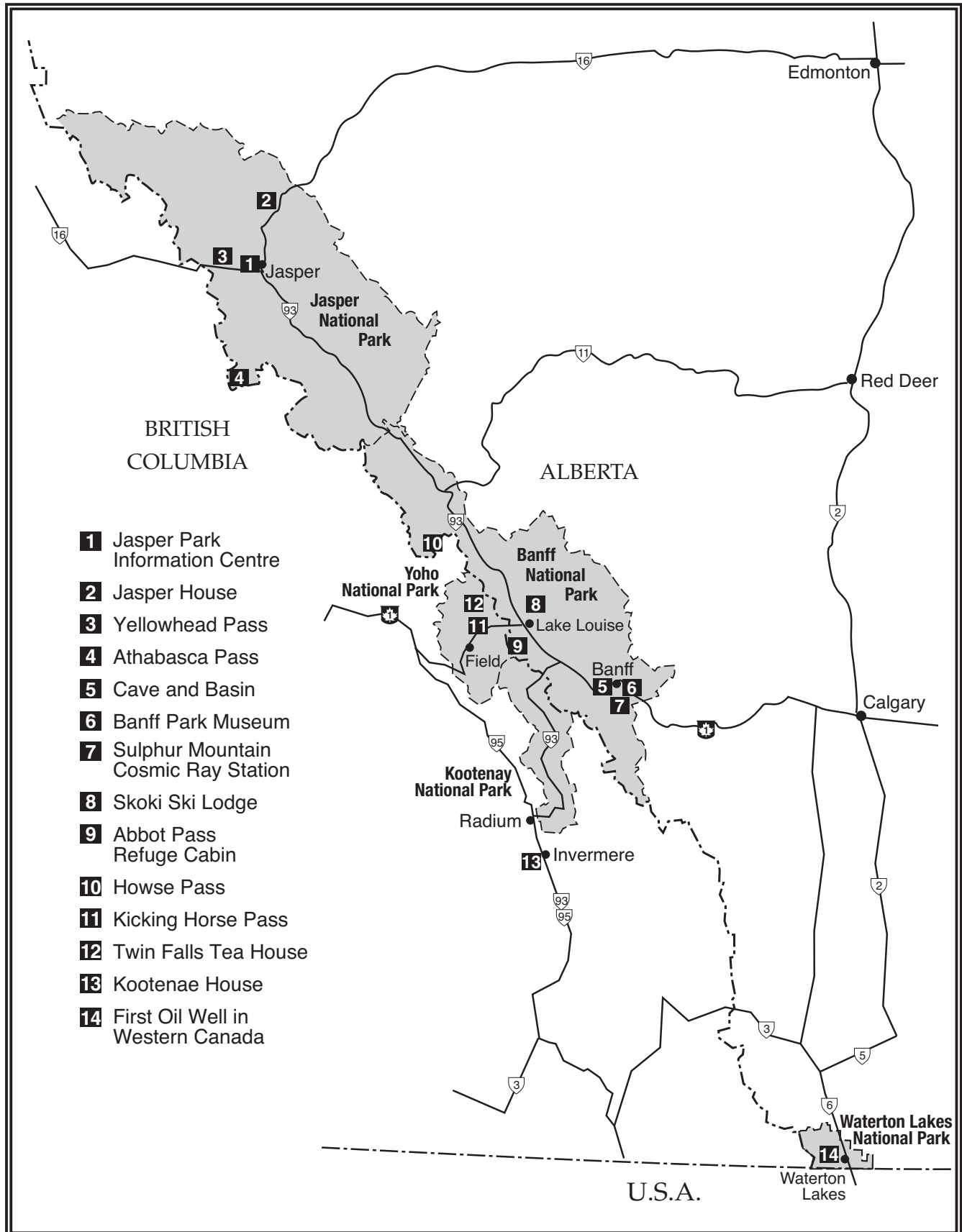


Figure 1. National Historic Sites in and near the mountain national parks



parcs administered by Parks Canada (Fig. 1). Still other national historic sites are located in and near national parks, but are not administered by Parks Canada (for example, the Prince of Wales Hotel and the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel).

While these sites are in some of the most popular national parks in Canada, few people are aware of them – yet their stories are as important to Canadians as the mountains, lakes and wildlife. Visitors can discover and enjoy fur trade posts, the birthplace of Canada’s national park system, early park buildings and ancient travel corridors through remote mountain passes. Each national historic site recalls Canada’s past and contributes to its present. Each connects us to our mountain environment, our values and our history.

In the spring of 2005, Parks Canada began a planning process to prepare the first ever management plans for these 14 national historic sites. A number of people and organizations provided suggestions and ideas throughout the planning process. The approved management plans set out a vision and strategic directions for the sites, along with objectives and actions in three key areas: Heritage Protection, Education and Visitor Experience.

1.2 Legislative and Policy Framework

Management planning for individual historic sites takes place within a larger multi-faceted framework of legislation and policy. In essence, the Parks Canada Agency mandate has three key elements or pillars: protection, education and facilitating memorable visitor experiences. This section describes the main laws and policies applicable to national historic sites administered by Parks Canada. In addition, the 14 national historic sites located in the mountain national parks are managed under the legislation and policies governing national parks. These long-established parks have been instrumental in maintaining the landscape features and cultural resources that make the historic sites places of national value. It is a legislative requirement that Parks Canada work to fulfill all elements of the mandate to the fullest extent possible.

Canada National Parks Act

The *Canada National Parks Act* dedicates the national parks of Canada to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the Act and regulations. It specifies that parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

The Act establishes the responsibility of the Minister for the administration, management and control of parks. Maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity, through the protection of natural resources and natural processes, is the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of park management.

Historic Sites and Monuments Act

The Government of Canada is dedicated to ensuring the system of national historic sites represents the full range of Canada’s human history. The *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* (2000) authorizes the Minister of the Environment to designate historic places of national significance as national historic sites. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, composed of representatives from all provinces and territories, advises the Minister on this type of commemoration.

National Historic Sites of Canada Systems Plan

The *National Historic Sites of Canada Systems Plan* (2000) identifies the history of Aboriginal peoples, ethnocultural communities and women as insufficiently represented in the current family of national



historic sites. These three areas are Parks Canada's strategic priorities.

National Historic Sites Policy

The *National Historic Sites Policy* sets out the Government of Canada's objectives for national historic sites:

- to foster knowledge and appreciation of Canada's past through a national program of historical commemoration;
- to ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites administered by Parks Canada by protecting and presenting them for the benefit of this and future generations, in a manner which respects the significant and irreplaceable legacy represented by these places and their associated resources; and
- to encourage and support the protection and presentation by others of places of national historic significance that are not administered by Parks Canada.

Parks Canada Agency Act

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* requires that a management plan be tabled in Parliament for every national historic site and that each plan be reviewed every five years. The Act also states that it is in the national interest to ensure the *commemorative integrity* of national historic sites.

Commemorative Integrity reflects the health and wholeness of a site. A national historic site possesses commemorative integrity when:

- the resources directly related to the reasons for designation as a national historic site are not impaired or under threat;
- the reasons for designation as a national historic site are effectively communicated to the public; and
- all decisions and actions respect the site's heritage values (including those not related to the reasons for designation).

Parks Canada prepares a *Commemorative Integrity Statement* (CIS) for each site. This statement reflects the Agency's *Cultural Resource Management Policy* (see below) and describes the conditions that must exist to ensure commemorative integrity.

While it serves as the basis for decision-making, a Commemorative Integrity Statement does not prescribe particular actions. Instead, it provides information about historic values and acts as a framework to assess the impact of proposed actions. The management plan is the primary vehicle for identifying direction to ensure the commemorative integrity of a site.

Cultural Resource Management Policy

Cultural resource management is an integrated, holistic approach to the management of cultural resources. It applies to all activities that affect national historic sites administered by Parks Canada. It calls for the principles of value, public benefit, understanding, respect and integrity to guide decision-making at all levels of planning and administration.

Commemorative Integrity Statements may also include values and objectives drawn from sources such as the UNESCO World Heritage Program, the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, the Federal Heritage

A Level I Cultural Resource is of national historic significance. This is the highest level assigned to a cultural resource for which Parks Canada is responsible.

A Level II Cultural Resource is not of national historic significance, but may be considered a cultural resource because of its historic value.



Buildings Policy and provincial or municipal programs.

Parks Canada's Corporate Plan

The corporate plan stresses that memorable visitor experiences, resource protection, and education are the three central pillars of the Parks Canada Agency's mandate. A central goal for the Park Canada Agency is to engage partners and stakeholders in a way that better integrates these three elements.



This plan sets key priorities for national historic sites:

- recapitalize deteriorated assets in a manner that reflects the expectations and needs of visitors.;
- ensure Commemorative Integrity Statements form the foundation of sound management at national historic sites administered by Parks Canada;
- ensure regular evaluations of the state of commemorative integrity and improve the condition of all elements that are rated as poor;
- ensure that Aboriginal voices and stories become an even more integral part of Parks Canada's programs and management; and
- increase public support and maximize the number of visitors having lasting, memorable experiences at national heritage places.

Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO)

It is the policy of the Government of Canada to protect the heritage of Crown-owned buildings under the Treasury Board Policy on management of Real Property. The Heritage Character Statement is the means used to clarify both the sources of heritage significance for a building and supporting attributes. There are two levels of designation: *Classified* and *Recognized*. It is the responsibility of managers whose decisions affect buildings under Crown ownership to be aware of and support management practices which protect heritage character.

1.3 Visitor Experience

Tourism in the mountain parks is about providing a range of exceptional visitor experiences inspired by the mountain landscape, cultural heritage, ecology and architecture. National historic sites enrich the overall visitor experience of the mountain parks by celebrating significant aspects of Canada's cultural heritage.

Protecting resources, presenting engaging stories and encouraging products and services that support memorable experiences are important goals if Parks Canada's work is to remain relevant to all Canadians. Relevance is significantly stronger when Canadians are presented with opportunities to use and enjoy national historic sites in ways that allow them to create their own unique connections with these national treasures. Understanding the needs and expectations of visitors is central to this approach. The challenge for national historic sites is to respond to shifting Canadian demographics and visitor attitudes, while respecting the commemorative integrity of these special places. Parks Canada is currently developing a process to carry out *Visitor Experience Assessments* that will help to assess and



enhance opportunities for memorable visitor experiences at national historic sites.

1.4 Public Consultation

Parks Canada, acting alone, cannot ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites. Public support and the cooperation of visitors, other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, neighbouring land managers, cooperating associations, and heritage organizations are essential in safeguarding and celebrating Canada's cultural legacy.

The multidisciplinary team of Parks Canada staff responsible for the preparation of this document relied on the participation of interested stakeholders and the public in setting protection, education and visitor experience priorities.





2.0 Vision & Strategic Goals

Interested stakeholders and the public helped craft this vision to guide the future of all fourteen national historic sites.



2.1 Vision

A Vision for the National Historic Sites of the Mountain Parks

The 14 national historic sites administered by the mountain national parks are special places that protect and present a range of irreplaceable cultural resources, authentic cultural landscapes, unique natural resources, early park buildings and collections.

They tell a story that began hundreds of years ago: a story of Aboriginal use, early travel and trade routes, exploration and economic development, the origins of the national park system, early federal buildings, recreation and resource development, even rays from outer space. Aboriginal peoples, residents of local communities and urban centres, new Canadians, the tourism industry, seasoned travellers and international guests, young and old, seek out and celebrate the relevance of each site.

As cultural attractions and catalysts of positive working relationships, each site enriches the mountain park visitor experience. Improved on-site presentation, increased promotion and marketing activities, new off-site learning opportunities and a greater availability of published and website information responds to visitors' needs and expectations.

Canadians, and people from the world over, understand and appreciate why places such as a mountain pass, a pioneering oil well, a rustic backcountry lodge and a remote fur trade site are part of the history and identity of Canada and why they are now commemorated as national historic sites.

With an emphasis on shared stewardship, Parks Canada partners with Aboriginal groups, the Province of British Columbia, local museums and historical groups, the oil and gas industry, national park communities, non-profit organizations, railway companies, tourism operators and many others to protect and present these special places.

2.2 Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals apply to all 14 national historic sites:

Commemorative Integrity

- To ensure the commemorative integrity of each national historic site as the principle goal.
- To use approved Commemorative Integrity Statements to guide the protection of the sites' resources and to communicate their national significance.
- To use the Commemorative Integrity Evaluation as the key process to report on the state of national historic sites and to address elements that have been rated "poor" as a result of an evaluation.
- To work closely with a variety of partners to protect and present these fourteen national historic sites.



Cultural Resource Management

- To ensure up-to-date inventories of cultural resources.
- To evaluate whether the resources are cultural resources and, if so, identify their historic values.
- To consider historic values in actions affecting conservation and presentation.
- To protect and monitor Level I and Level II cultural resources and related natural resources.
- To be aware of and support management practices which protect the heritage character of designated federal heritage buildings.

Visitor Experience

- To provide a range of unique national historic site opportunities to targeted visitor segments.
- To use research on actual and potential visitor needs and expectations to make decisions.
- To facilitate opportunities for every visitor to have a positive, memorable experience.
- To deliver consistently high quality services which meet or exceed visitors' needs and expectations.

Education

- To increase the public's awareness, appreciation and understanding of these historic sites.
- To improve the communication of reasons for a site's designation and information about the family of national historic sites.
- To ensure all the non-operational national historic sites clearly communicate the reasons for designation to both on-site and off-site audiences.
- To ensure Aboriginal voices and stories are accurately depicted in the presentation of national historic sites commemorating Aboriginal themes.
- To employ a variety of communication techniques to enhance visitors' awareness and understanding of national historic sites at key visitor locations.







3.0 Jasper Field Unit

Four national historic sites – Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass and Athabasca Pass – are located in one of the most popular national parks in Canada, Jasper National Park, designated in 1907. Parks Canada shares jurisdiction for the two mountain passes with the Province of British Columbia. Yellowhead Pass is shared with Mount Robson Provincial Park, designated in 1913. The four sites protect a diverse range of irreplaceable cultural resources, related natural resources and built heritage. The pre-existing national park (and one provincial park) designation has been instrumental in maintaining the landscape features that contribute to the sites' national historic value.

Jasper House, Yellowhead Pass and Athabasca Pass are non-operational sites with no regular on-site staff presence. They share a connection to the fur trade, offering opportunities to link the telling of their stories. Athabasca Pass and Jasper House are difficult to reach. Yellowhead Pass is a national transportation corridor requiring cooperation among infrastructure managers including Parks Canada, the Province of British Columbia, Canadian National Railway and Kinder-Morgan.



The Jasper Park Information Centre, originally designed as a residence and park office, serves as a visitor information centre in the absence of a more appropriate venue within the Town boundary. Within the rustic building, nearly 200,000 visitors are oriented each year to park experiences, local attractions and visitor services, and the community.

These management plans are intended to foster awareness and understanding, support meaningful visitor experiences, safeguard cultural resources and promote the sites as a more integral component of the Jasper National Park heritage tourism experience. These management plans are also intended to ensure effective integration of management objectives for the sites with those of Jasper National Park.

Parks Canada is mindful that these four national historic sites commemorate places and events of Canadian significance, yet they represent only a portion of the broad and colourful cultural fabric associated with Jasper National Park. In contributing to the development of the management plans, members of the public underscored the need to integrate and communicate the many narratives and important places that contribute to the history of the park area. Parks Canada recognizes the importance of an inclusive presentation approach. These plans provide an opportunity to present core national historic site messages (Level I and II), and to integrate supporting context to:

- relate the fur trade, early exploration and evolving transportation networks;
- provide for the perspectives of Aboriginal people to be told in their own words;
- reveal the significance of mountain/valley landscapes and their influence on history, cultures and communities; and
- explain the significance of the national park in relation to human use of the area.

Parks Canada will formulate additional direction as required to better present the broad cultural history of Jasper National Park through a review of the park management plan in 2008.

Ongoing public participation and lasting partnerships will continue to play a key role in the successful implementation of these management plans.

Table 1. Status of National Historic Sites in the Jasper Field Unit

| National Historic Site | CIS Approved | CI Evaluation | FHBRO Designation |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Jasper House | ✓ | | N/A |
| Jasper Park Information Centre | ✓ | ✓ | Classified |
| Athabasca Pass | ✓ | | N/A |
| Yellowhead Pass | ✓ | | N/A |

* CIS = Commemorative Integrity Statement, CI = Commemorative Integrity
FHBRO = Federal Heritage Building Review Office



3.1 Jasper House National Historic Site of Canada

3.1.1 Vision

Jasper House National Historic Site of Canada is a semi-remote place that protects significant archaeological resources and a burial ground. The site receives low visitation, consistent with its designation as a Special Preservation Area. Jasper House stands at a crossroads of cultures and landscapes where three major valleys converge on ancient trade routes. Those who visit the site feel a strong sense of place shaped by its setting, a quiet clearing along the Athabasca River. Those who arrive by water personally connect with the site as part of an authentic Canadian Heritage River experience. For off-site visitors, the rich historical record and artifacts bring the story alive at accessible locations, to allow Canadians to appreciate the significance of this special place to the region and the country.

3.1.2 Background

First established by the North West Company in 1813, Jasper House was relocated in 1830 to the west bank of the upper Athabasca River near the north end of Jasper Lake. The site was a key staging point for people crossing over the Rocky Mountains. It was also strategically located for the movement of Aboriginal peoples travelling the historic route through the Snake Indian Pass into the upper Smoky River drainage.

The post became the centre of a modest and diverse community responsible for equipping

expeditions using the Athabasca and Yellowhead Passes. This included caring for horses and trading goods for meat and furs with Aboriginal groups. The post operated sporadically after 1853, gradually falling into decline until it finally closed in 1884.



Jasper House, photographed on 15 January 1872. View to north-west.

Credit: Charles Horetzky/Library and Archives Canada/PA-009173.

3.1.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

In 1924, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated the second Jasper House a national historic site, citing its importance to the trade route across the mountains and to travellers through the Yellowhead and Athabasca passes. The site consists of archaeological remains and a cemetery.

Level I cultural resources include the remains of building footprints and chimney mounds, and archaeological resources such as middens, depressions, the cemetery and historic trails. The site is managed as a Zone I, Special Preservation area, under the *Jasper National Park Management Plan* (2000).

The adjacent Athabasca River is a Canadian Heritage River, designated in 1989.



3.1.4 Setting

Jasper House now occupies a modest clearing of a hectare and a half in size, on the bank of the Athabasca River. The site retains its charm and isolation despite nearby railway and highway corridors. Its relationship with the landscape is integral to its aesthetic and historic appeal. Framing the site are four mountain ranges (De Smet, Bosche, Miette and Jacques) and the intersecting valleys of the Athabasca, Rocky, and Snake Indian Rivers. A plaque located on nearby Highway 16 offers travellers a brief insight into the site's history.

3.1.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Parks Canada has completed an inventory and evaluation of the site's archaeological resources. Jasper House has a strong sense of place and time, having maintained the relationship between the cultural landscape and the natural environment. Archaeological resources and the cemetery are secure.

Jasper House is in the lower Athabasca Valley montane ecoregion, an area of importance to wildlife. This area is fragmented by the highway, railway, and pipeline corridors. Access to the area requires careful attention to ecological considerations.

Education and Visitor Experience

Located 35 km northeast of the Town of Jasper, this semi-remote site has no road access and receives few visitors. A sign on-site encourages river travellers to stop, and there is pedestrian access from the Celestine Lake Road. Visitors can also experience Jasper House and its setting in the Athabasca Valley through the journal writings of early explorers and images captured by artist Paul Kane (1847) and photographer Charles Horetzky (1872).

While many local residents are familiar with the site, public awareness is generally low. Little information, either on-site or in park publications, is available. The Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives does contain some information. The primary source of information about Jasper House is the national historic site plaque.

Opportunities exist to correct this situation and to make the experience more memorable and relevant to visitors. The setting is a major asset and existing day-use facilities on Highway 16 across the Athabasca River from the site provide an opportunity to increase awareness.

Partnerships

The local Jasper museum relates the stories of early human use of the Athabasca Valley including the fur trade and Jasper House. Jasper House offers an opportunity to strengthen working arrangements between Parks Canada, local heritage organizations and the Aboriginal community.

3.1.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Protect the site's sense of place and its Level I and II cultural resources.

Manage access and human use in keeping with the site's designation as a Special Preservation area.



Actions

1. Continue to allow access from the Athabasca River. Allow access overland from Devona Siding for sanctioned guided events and operational purposes, subject to the approval of CN to cross their right-of-way.
2. Provide clear guidelines and messages respecting access and visitation to the site for communication to visitors
3. Conduct annual monitoring for condition of:
 - a. *in-situ* cultural resources;
 - b. the state of woody vegetation encroachment into the clearing;
 - c. non-native plants; and
 - d. shoreline erosion.
3. Continue to protect the cemetery:
 - a. determine the area of the cemetery by non-invasive means, and consider the need for future perimeter fencing; and
 - b. consult with affiliated Aboriginal and family groups respecting appropriate protective measures.
4. Implement measures to control vegetation encroachment into the clearing as needed, and control invasive non-native plant species.
5. Conserve specimens in the archaeological collection that are in poor condition.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Tell the story of Jasper House - the fur trade, Aboriginal use, and activities in the Athabasca Valley.

Emphasize approaches that allow visitors to experience and learn about the site at off-site locations.

Actions

1. Present Jasper House and the stories of the four national historic sites in Jasper National Park together as part of a significant new exhibit at Pioneer Plaza and/or on the grounds of the Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site in the Town of Jasper.
2. Install new highway signs marking the Jasper House plaque as a point of historic interest.
3. Install a new low-key interpretive exhibit on-site.
4. Implement ways to experience Jasper House off-site, including publications, information for the tourism industry, personal presentations, exhibits in other institutions, and roadside media.
5. Review the text on the current plaque; revise and replace if required.
6. Update websites with dynamic text and images.
7. Develop a short interpretive trail from the existing pull-off to the Athabasca River across from the historic site; install a viewing platform and interpretive media where the trail meets the river. Ensure appropriate garbage and vault toilet facilities are provided at the pull-off. Move the plaque from the Disaster Point pull-off to the trailhead pull-off.



Partnerships

Objectives

Enrich the presentation of Jasper House by including the stories and perspectives of Aboriginal groups.

Work with the local museum to present messages on the national historic sites of Jasper National Park and the family of national historic sites.

Actions

1. Work with the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives to update exhibits on the fur trade story in a way that profiles the linkages between Jasper House, Athabasca Pass and Yellowhead Pass.
2. Work with Aboriginal groups to communicate their historic links with Jasper House.

3.2 Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site of Canada

3.2.1 Vision

The Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site of Canada is an irreplaceable cultural resource that continues to serve purposes related to tourism and the management of Jasper National Park. Sidewalks and streets converge to bring high numbers of people to this special place. To visitors and residents alike, the prominent setting of the building together with its preserved interior, exterior rustic design features and spacious grounds convey a feeling of stability, architectural significance and connection with the past. Visitors learn more by viewing engaging exhibits in the building, grounds, and the adjacent Pioneer Plaza. The building, landscape, and surrounding heritage buildings combine to create a unique picture of Jasper National Park's early history. Residents and visitors treasure the national historic site and understand its historic connections to tourism in the national parks.

3.2.2 Background

The Jasper Information Centre is one of the finest examples of rustic architecture in Canada's national parks. Designed by A.M. Calderon, the centre influenced the style of many later buildings both in the town and in other national parks. Completed in 1914, the facility originally housed offices and the home of the park superintendent.

The centre provides information about the park, local attractions, and the community to nearly 200,000 visitors each year. It continues to serve as an information centre in the absence of a more appropriate venue within the Town boundary. The Friends of Jasper operate a store in the building and Parks Canada has offices on the second floor.



*Jasper Park Information Centre historical photo.
Credit: Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives.*



3.2.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

A Classified Federal Heritage Building, the Jasper Park Information Centre was designated as a national historic site in 1992 because of its Rustic Design style and its association with tourism in the national parks. The grounds that surround the building, known as Athabasca Park, are not part of the designation.

3.2.4 Setting

Prominently situated on Jasper's main street and surrounded by Athabasca Park and other unique heritage buildings, Jasper Park Information Centre is a local landmark and a focal point for visitors and residents.

3.2.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Parks Canada faces a number of challenges in conserving the historic fabric of a building originally designed as a residence and small office. No longer serving its original purpose, the building is used as a contemporary information center. At times during the summer, it is congested with visitors seeking park information.

The history, structure and historic values of the Jasper Information Centre are well understood thanks to an inventory and evaluation of the site's cultural resources and an oral history project to gather information from community members.

Parks Canada is addressing significant issues related to the condition of the building. These include fire suppression (a sprinkler system), deterioration of the exterior windows and foundation, and inadequate ventilation in the attic. A maintenance plan, now in preparation, will set out a systematic approach to monitoring the condition of the building, in accordance with conservation standards for historic places in Canada.

In 2002, a Commemorative Integrity Evaluation identified a number of strengths and challenges relative to future protection and presentation of the national historic site.

Education and Visitor Experience

As a working information centre in a busy tourism destination, the Jasper Park Information Centre receives many visitors. Most never realize it is a national historic site nor gain an appreciation of its heritage importance.

The main floor information area is very active and crowded on a summer's day. The average visitor, intent on obtaining park information, is unlikely to step back to appreciate the heritage value of the space. At busy times, noise levels become a factor affecting visitor experience.

The building is not well suited to the current number of visitors and lacks some of the amenities visitors expect in an information centre, including washrooms and Internet access.

Partnerships

Opportunities exist for Parks Canada, the Friends of Jasper National Park, the Chamber of Commerce, and other owners and occupants of heritage properties to work together to protect and present the national historic site and the heritage character of Jasper Townsite.



3.2.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Stabilize and maintain the heritage character and structural integrity of the historic site.

Use the building for a purpose related to management of the park and heritage tourism.

Manage the grounds, which are not part of the national historic site, in a manner that complements and protects the national historic site.

Actions

1. Complete the project to stabilize the foundation, rehabilitate the wooden windows, improve attic ventilation and install a sprinkler system.
2. Ensure ongoing and systematic maintenance is performed and is consistent with the maintenance plan.
3. Implement landscaping actions for Athabasca Park that protect and complement the building, support its role in welcoming visitors, accommodate pedestrians and contemporary uses and incorporate appropriate historic elements.
4. In the event that a new visitor centre is constructed, re-evaluate the role of the Jasper Park Information Centre while maintaining public access.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Improve awareness of Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site.

Communicate heritage messages and the reasons for designation of the national historic site, as well as information about the four historic sites in Jasper National Park and the family of national historic sites.

Maintain the site's sense of place as part of the visitor experience.

Actions

1. Install new interpretive media where practical, given the limited space in the building.
2. Install new displays near the national historic site plaque in Athabasca Park and/or Pioneer Plaza. Highlight the historic links between the Information Centre and rustic buildings in other national parks.
3. Link the new exhibits to interpretation and signs planned for the Jasper Discovery Trail.
4. Improve the communication of messages through off-site heritage presentation, publications, websites, tourism industry information, personal presentation and exhibits in other institutions.
5. Develop new web and print products that provide more detailed information about the building.
6. Address noise levels in the building through measures consistent with the heritage building, such as floor coverings.
7. Continue to pursue ways to ease the pressure on the building by enhancing the capability of other venues in the community to answer commonly-asked questions, including use of the Internet.



Partnerships

Objectives

Work with the Friends of Jasper National Park, the Chamber of Commerce and owners of other heritage properties to protect and present the national historic site and the heritage character of Jasper Townsite.

Work with the Municipality of Jasper and the Chamber of Commerce to enhance the visitor information offer off-site and to address visitor needs not being accommodated in the Jasper Information Centre, including more convenient public washrooms.

Actions

1. Pursue opportunities to associate the Information Centre with other institutional heritage buildings in the area through community planning initiatives (nearby heritage buildings include the Athabasca Hotel, Post Office, Fire Hall, Library, the Stone House or Jackman residence, the Old Robson House, the CIBC building, Rescue Building, and Train Station).
2. Continue to support and encourage program delivery by partners. Develop additional personal interpretation programs and events, such as the Mountain World Heritage Interpretive Theatre Troupe and Friends of Jasper National Park “Walk in the Past” tours.
3. Through the community planning process, engage the Municipality of Jasper and the Chamber of Commerce in initiatives to enhance key visitor services off-site including washrooms and state-of-the-art visitor information services.

3.3 Yellowhead Pass National Historic Site of Canada

3.3.1 Vision

Yellowhead Pass is widely recognized by regional residents and visitors as a large-scale cultural landscape that commemorates a major crossing of the Rocky Mountains for expansion of the fur trade and for early railway and highway development. The site retains a strong sense of place, inspiring views, and intact cultural resources that connect people to the history and cultural landscape of this historic corridor. High numbers of motorists on the Yellowhead Highway stop to appreciate the views and learn why the site is commemorated. The story of Yellowhead Pass is brought alive to train travellers passing through the area. The community of Jasper takes special pride in the national historic site as a treasure that is closely linked to the origins of their community. Exhibits in the community of Jasper and in Mount Robson Provincial Park connect visitors off-site with stories of the Pass. Parks Canada works with Aboriginal groups to enrich the stories presented and to commemorate Aboriginal use of the Pass. Cultural resources and the integrity of the natural landscape are safeguarded by all who are concerned with ongoing operations and evolving uses of Yellowhead Pass as a transportation corridor.

3.3.2 Background

At 1,133 m, the Yellowhead Pass is one of the lowest elevation passes across the Continental Divide in the Northern Rockies. Used by Aboriginal people for centuries, after 1825 the pass became an important connection to the fur trade country of the upper Fraser River and New Caledonia. Its significance as a transportation route languished with reorganization of the Hudson Bay Company in 1853, until new interest arose in the Yellowhead Pass as a national railway route toward the turn of the century.

Ultimately, two new transcontinental railways, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern Railway, were built between 1906 and 1915. Both followed the Yellowhead route. The operation of duplicate rail lines through the Yellowhead Pass was short-lived, however,



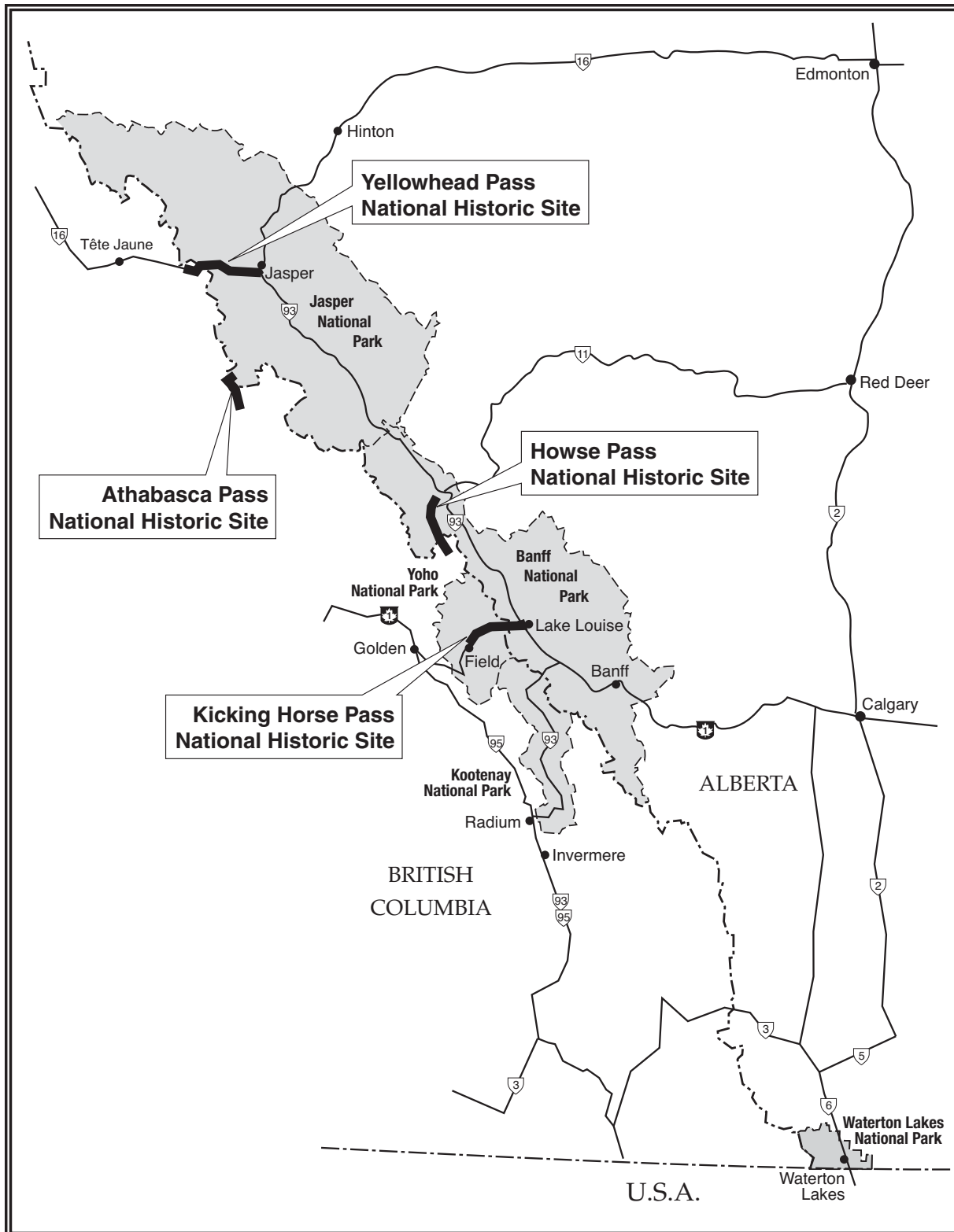


Figure 2. Mountain Pass National Historic Sites



and the two rail lines were consolidated into one route operated by the Canadian National Railway in 1917. The abandoned rail grades of the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific lines were used by automobiles as the first Yellowhead Highway, until the present highway alignment was completed in 1970.

The significance of Yellowhead Pass as a major transportation route continued to grow in the 1950s with the construction of the TransMountain Pipeline (now operated by Kinder-Morgan), and with the installation of a fibre-optics telecommunications cable in the late 1980s. Other land tenures and permits exist for electrical/hydro infrastructure, and for the occupation of three private cabins in the British Columbia portion of Yellowhead Pass NHSC.



Automobile on abandoned rail grade in Yellowhead Pass. Overland car expedition Edmonton to Victoria, ca. June-July 1922.

Credit: Glenbow-Alberta Institute/NA-2336-8.

3.3.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

Yellowhead Pass was designated a national historic site in 1971 for two main reasons:

1. It was used for brief periods from the mid-1820s to the early 1850s by the Hudson's Bay Company.
2. It became the route across the Rocky Mountains for the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern railways as well as for a major highway.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque is located at a pull-off on Highway 16 west of Jasper.

3.3.4 Setting

A large-scale cultural landscape, this historic site stretches from the junction of highways 16 and 93 in Jasper National Park to Fraser Crossing in Mount Robson Provincial Park, a distance of some 37 km. The site is managed within the respective policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks of the two parks. In addition, Canadian National administers the land within their right-of-way for railway purposes.

Valued for its scenic beauty, Yellowhead Pass encompasses a range of natural and cultural resources. Visitor facilities include small roadside rest stops and access to short hikes, cross-country skiing, or wilderness excursions.

The pass is an active transportation corridor that will continue to evolve. Pre-existing provisions allow for twinning of the existing pipeline through the national historic site. Collaborative planning approaches that acknowledge, respect and integrate national historic site values with inherent ecological values, pre-existing park designations, existing approved uses and the evolving nature of the transportation corridor will be fundamental to the long term future of this national historic site.



3.3.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

The site's strong sense of place and time derives as much from its scenery and landscape as from the presence of specific historic or cultural resources. While the area is rich in Level I cultural resources (abandoned rail and early highway rights-of-way, townsites and camps), it is the sum of its parts that makes this site a special place – the combination of landforms and human-engineered changes.

In the Jasper section, zoning allows for the use and maintenance of the transportation rights-of-way (Zones III and IV). The surrounding wilderness area is classified as Zone II to protect its ecological integrity.

To date, no archaeological sites have been discovered that relate to the use of this pass for transportation in the 1820s to the 1850s period. Archaeological sites and in situ resources directly related to the railways and to the highway are extensive. These resources have been largely inventoried and evaluated for the Jasper National Park portion of Yellowhead Pass, and an initial inventory has been completed for the Mount Robson Provincial Park portion of the site. No heritage recording studies have yet been undertaken to document and record character-defining elements of the engineered qualities of the landscape.

In general, cultural resources are not under threat from routine highway, railway, and pipeline operations, provided that established protocols are followed to safeguard the resources and that due processes are followed in the planning of non-routine work, including (where triggered) the application of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

The Kinder-Morgan pipeline looping project involves special planning challenges for Parks Canada to address legislated requirements (for example, the *National Parks Act of Canada*), and overlapping policy considerations for Jasper National Park and Yellowhead Pass National Historic Site. The project is the subject of a multi-jurisdictional regulatory process in progress, and decision-making respecting its outcome is outside the scope of this management plan.

It should be noted that, while there are resources directly related to the reasons for designation in both Jasper National Park and in Mount Robson National Park, Parks Canada Agency is only responsible for those cultural resources within its jurisdiction.

Education and Visitor Experience

Visitors experience the site predominantly through its significant scenery and landscape values, as opposed to contact with specific historic or cultural resources. Some of the area's Level I cultural resources are visible, yet subtle in the landscape (for example, abandoned railgrades and early highway rights-of-way), and many resources are inaccessible. It is the sum of its parts that makes this site a special place – the combination of landforms and human-engineered changes.

More than one million vehicles travel along the Yellowhead Trans-Canada Highway each year, yet few motorists realize they are passing through a national historic site. Clearly there are opportunities to make the experience more memorable and relevant to residents and visitors. The site is accessible year-round and, while somewhat limited, facilities do exist to build awareness; several roadside pull-offs in Jasper National Park and Mount Robson provide interpretive messages relating to the pass. The reasons for designation, other heritage messages and information on the system of national historic sites are not well presented and, in some cases, are not presented at all. The main source of information is the plaque. Websites lack dynamic text and images to attract people and to let them know about the interesting things they can see and do.



Partnerships

Parks Canada administers the section of the park located in Jasper National Park, while the British Columbia section falls under the jurisdiction of BC Parks, part of the Provincial Ministry of the Environment. The site offers an opportunity to strengthen working arrangements between Parks Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

Effective partnerships with managers of transportation infrastructure are essential to the long-term protection and commemoration of cultural resources. Parks Canada has existing working relationships with CN and Kinder-Morgan which can be built on to advance shared stewardship of the Yellowhead Pass.

3.3.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Protect cultural and related natural resources at Yellowhead National Historic Site in a manner that ensures commemorative integrity and respects the site's historic values.

Preserve elements that define the character of the historic site and give meaning to the overall pattern of the cultural landscape, including landforms, transportation, and other significant built features.

Recognize that Yellowhead Pass is an active and modern transportation corridor that will continue to evolve.

Actions

1. Together with BC Parks, complete the cultural resource inventory and evaluation of the national historic site.
2. Complete heritage recording studies to document and record character-defining elements of the engineered qualities of the landscape. With respect to the Kinder-Morgan pipeline looping proposal, ensure appropriate levels of heritage recording are undertaken to record cultural resources that may be affected or lost as a result of the project and to serve as a point of reference for ensuring that the landscape is restored to its previous condition.
3. In cooperation with partners (BC Parks, Canadian National Railway, Kinder-Morgan and Telus) prepare a conservation and presentation strategy for the management of cultural resources and engineered landscape features, to:
 - a. Determine whether and where intervention (eg., protective measures) and monitoring are required;
 - b. Integrate ecological considerations and the management of ongoing natural processes;
 - c. Identify measures to manage vegetation along portions of the former rail/road grades that are Level 1 resources to enhance their visibility for visitor experience; and
 - d. Consider ways to allow visitors to interact with, and experience, authentic resources.
4. Ensure leaseholders and other partners are aware of the location of cultural resources and understand the significance of the national historic site. Provide information and cultural resource sensitivity maps to leaseholders and transportation managers.
5. Work with transportation managers to prepare or update environmental protection plans for routine operations and maintenance, to safeguard natural and cultural resources.



Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Present messages and historic values in a creative manner that allows diverse audiences to understand and appreciate the site's historic significance – nationally, regionally, and locally.

In cooperation with Mount Robson Provincial Park, focus heritage presentation activities where people congregate – including the Summit picnic area and the Lucerne Campground, and near the Train Station in the Town of Jasper.

Actions

1. Include the story of the national historic site in a significant new exhibit in Pioneer Plaza, and/or grounds of the Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site in the Town of Jasper.
2. Develop signage to convey a sense of arrival to the national historic site along the highway corridor.
3. Identify appropriate off-site vehicles for heritage messages, the reasons for designation, and the family of national historic sites (e.g., publications, websites, tourism industry information, personal presentation, and exhibits in other institutions).
4. Collect stories and resource management information from interested residents of Jasper, Aboriginal groups, and surrounding communities (e.g., Tête Jaune Cache). Use the information to enhance presentation of the site.
5. Maintain the national historic site plaque at its existing pull-off beside the Miette River; consider future relocation to the Summit pull-off near Portal Lake in Mt. Robson Provincial Park.
6. Work with BC Parks to install the plaque, new signs and interpretive media in ways that complement existing facilities at the Summit pull-off.
7. Install new highway signs to mark sites of historic interest.
8. Update websites with dynamic text and images to build site awareness.
9. Enhance an existing trail opportunity to learn about the site and related resources, at Decoigne, Wynd Road, or an alternate location.
10. Investigate emerging technologies to communicate/enhance message delivery (eg, automobile tours on compact disc, global positioning systems).

Partnerships

Objectives

Work with the Government of British Columbia to ensure management of the site respects jurisdictions and shared objectives for protection, presentation and visitor experiences.

Pursue cooperative approaches with managers of road, rail, pipeline and utility corridors.

Work with Aboriginal groups to recognize Aboriginal use of the pass in the commemoration.

Actions

1. Pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with the the Province of British Columbia outlining joint management goals for the national historic site.



2. Work with CN and operators of motor coaches and passenger rail services to improve information and education for visitors and create memorable experiences.
3. Work with the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives to present the story of the site. Work with regional museums and educational institutions to present national historic site messages.
4. Work with Aboriginal groups to formally recognize Aboriginal use of the pass in the commemoration, and to tell their stories through on-site and off-site media.
5. Work with gateway communities along the Highway 16 corridor to profile the site, foster visitor awareness and understanding, and establish an appropriate visitor expectation.

3.4 Athabasca Pass National Historic Site of Canada

3.4.1 Vision

Two hundred years after Athabasca Pass first served as the main fur trade route between Canada and the Oregon Country, the area remains unspoiled by modern development. Stepping in the footprints of early explorers, visitors experience a storied mountain landscape associated with the travel route of David Thompson, and such places as the Committee Punch Bowl, Grande Côte, and Kane Meadows. Together, the Government of British Columbia and Parks Canada provide visitors with opportunities to experience Athabasca Pass as a wilderness heritage trail, managed for low levels of use. Parks Canada works with aboriginal groups to enrich the stories presented and to commemorate Aboriginal use of the Pass. Presentation off-site allows visitors to experience the rich stories of Athabasca Pass, and view the associated landmarks of the “Montagne de la Grande Traverse” (Mt. Edith Cavell), and the Athabasca and Whirlpool Valleys.

3.4.2 Background

For almost half a century, from 1811 to the mid 1850s, the Athabasca Pass was part of the main fur trade route between Canada and the Oregon Country. Athabasca Pass is a wilderness destination for self-sufficient travellers seeking a challenge. The site is managed under the respective policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks of Jasper National Park and the Province of British Columbia.



Committee Punch Bowl, Athabasca Pass.

Credit: Parks Canada Agency.

3.4.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated Athabasca Pass as a national historic site in 1971.

The site is nationally significant because, for almost half a century, the Athabasca Pass was part of the main fur trade route between Canada and the Oregon Country. The Province of British Columbia was part of the process to define the designated place for the national historic site.

The *Athabasca Pass National Historic Site of Canada Commemorative Integrity Statement* (2005) provides the foundation for the management plan. It describes the resources and messages directly related to the site’s national historic designation and defines what is meant by commemorative integrity.



3.4.4 Setting

The Athabasca Pass crosses the height of land that forms the Continental Divide in western Canada. Rivers to the west drain into the Pacific while the eastern half drains into the Arctic Ocean. The height of land forms the boundary between British Columbia and Alberta, so the site is situated in two provinces. The Alberta side of the pass falls entirely within Jasper National Park and is administered by Parks Canada. In British Columbia, the trail is entirely on crown land. The Ministry of Tourism, Sport and Arts manages its section of the site as a heritage trail—a 200 m wide corridor from the continental divide to the Wood River. The trail is a provincially designated site that requires a permit from the Archaeology Branch with respect to any alterations. The historic trail on the British Columbia side crosses through the Pacific Creek and Jeffrey Creek drainages. In a land use planning process, the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has assigned an Old Growth Management Area designation to the two drainages, which means the forested vegetation is managed for old growth attributes. As a result of this designation, timber harvesting on lands near the trail is not anticipated in the foreseeable future.

The designated place for Athabasca Pass National Historic Site stretches from Kane Meadows in Jasper National Park to the Wood River, a distance of some 18 km. The current designation includes the Athabasca Heritage Trail in British Columbia. A proposal will be developed to extend the designation with Jasper National Park to the “Meeting of the Waters” to make it more consistent with the other mountain pass designations.

3.4.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Archaeological investigations to date are limited and have not identified any cultural resources in Athabasca Pass positively associated with the fur trade era. While there is a basic inventory of cultural resources in Jasper National Park, more work is required on the British Columbia side.

The wilderness setting has preserved a close relationship between the cultural landscape and the natural environment, creating a strong sense of place and time. The Jasper National Park section is zoned wilderness, and allows for minimal visitor facilities to provide for visitor experiences while protecting its ecological integrity.

It should be noted that, while there are resources directly related to the reasons for designation both in Jasper National Park and in the Province of British Columbia, the Parks Canada Agency is only responsible for those cultural resources within its jurisdiction.

Education and Visitor Experience

Athabasca Pass and the “Committee’s Punch Bowl” at its summit are iconic features of Western Canadian fur trade history, closely linked with the stories of David Thompson and other famous Canadians. The wilderness setting provides for a strong sense of place and connection to the past.

Visitor use of Athabasca Pass is low, due largely to the time and distance required to reach the pass: two days by horse, ski or backpack trip to reach the summit through Jasper National Park. Completing a full transit of the Pass requires five to seven days. The trailhead in Alberta is located at Moab Lake, 25 km south of the Town of Jasper. The trailhead in British Columbia is located along the Wood River, and access involves travel on remote logging roads with arrangements required for transportation across Kinbasket Lake.

Many visitors experience the beginning of the trail and the Moab Lake/“Meeting of the Waters” area as a day-use node. This area is not currently part of the designated place for the historic site, yet contributes importantly to visitors’ sense of place. Other landmarks in Jasper National Park



such as the “Montagne de la Grande Traverse” (Mt. Edith Cavell), the Athabasca and Whirlpool Valleys, Old Fort Point and Buffalo Prairie give visitors an understanding of the effort involved in crossing the pass. There is a good view of the general area of the historic site from a pull-off on the Icefields Parkway, where the plaque honouring David Thompson is located.

Information about the site consists largely of the plaque at the actual pass and an exhibit at the “Meeting of the Waters” pull-off on Highway 93A. Little additional information about the site and its heritage designation is available on-site or in park publications.

There are clear opportunities to make the experience more memorable and relevant to residents and visitors. The trailhead at the Wood River in British Columbia is difficult to access and receives minimal maintenance.

Partnerships

The fact that the site straddles the Alberta/BC border offers opportunities for Parks Canada, land management agencies in British Columbia, and other interested partners to work together to protect and present the national historic site.

3.4.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Preserve the elements that define the character of Athabasca Pass, including the remote setting, scenery, historic transportation routes, and archaeological resources.

Ensure the existing trail between Moab Lake and the Wood River is managed as a heritage trail following the original historic route.

Actions

1. Undertake an archaeological inventory to identify Level I and II cultural resources. Work with the Province of British Columbia to complete the cultural resource inventory in the BC portion of the national historic site.
2. Document any resources that require systematic monitoring and identify any measures required to protect or stabilize any significant resources threatened by natural decay or human use.
3. Work with the Province of British Columbia to adopt similar trail maintenance and use standards, together with consistent marketing and messages, to safeguard wilderness values.
4. Link the trail to the commemoration of Athabasca Pass National Historic Site.
5. Develop a proposal for consideration by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board Committee to extend the designation from Kane Meadows to the Athabasca Valley.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

To provide a special backcountry experience for people seeking the remote wilderness experience of the original route.

Facilitate off-site experiences and learning opportunities for people unable to travel the route itself.



Actions

1. Continue to provide trail maintenance, designated campsites and bridges to the Parks Canada management standard of “primitive”; encourage British Columbia to adopt and maintain a similar standard for the B.C. Athabasca Heritage Trail.
2. Engage Aboriginal people in the development of new interpretive messages and media.
3. Provide basic interpretive media at the Moab Lake trailhead.
4. Develop new interpretive media at the Hardisty Hill pull-off on the Icefields Parkway and remove trees as necessary to maintain views toward the pass.
5. Include the story of Athabasca Pass as part of a significant new national historic site exhibit at Pioneer Plaza, and/or the grounds of the Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site, in the Town of Jasper.
6. Install new interpretive media at the Moab Lake trailhead.
7. Link the Athabasca Pass historic route with the contemporary trail network through communication products, and signage at important places like Old Fort Point (the approved management plan for Jasper National Park provides direction to improve interpretation at Old Fort Point).
8. Include information about Athabasca Pass in publications, websites, tourism industry information, personal presentations, and exhibits in other institutions. Update websites with dynamic text and images to build site awareness.
9. Work with regional museums and educational institutions to present national historic site messages.
10. Install an interpretive booklet and visitor register at the summit of the Pass.

Partnerships**Objectives**

To work with the Government of British Columbia to ensure management of the site respects jurisdictions and shared objectives for protection, presentation, and visitor experience.

Work with local museums and educational institutions to present national historic site messages.

Actions

1. Pursue a Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada and the Province of British Columbia outlining joint management goals.
2. Work with the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives to present the story of the site. Explore partnerships with other area museums, including the communities of Golden, B.C., and Hinton, Alberta.
3. Work with the Jasper High School stewardship program to enhance awareness and understanding of Athabasca Pass and the family of national historic sites.



3.5 Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

Parks Canada has prepared a strategic environmental assessment to consider any adverse environmental effects, including cumulative effects, which may arise from implementation of the proposed management plans for the four national historic sites in Jasper National Park. Given that the four sites have an overlapping and pre-existing national park designation, the plans are intended to be fully consistent with the management plan for Jasper National Park, approved in 2000. Parks Canada is accountable to ensure the lands are managed in accordance with the *Canada National Parks Act* and related policies – as well as policies and guidelines respecting national historic sites. Notwithstanding two of the sites are shared with British Columbia, the decisions in the plans are strictly limited to the lands and matters under the jurisdiction of Canada’s Minister of the Environment, who is responsible for Parks Canada.

The strategic environmental assessment was completed as a matter of policy in accordance with the *Cabinet Directive for The Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*. Individual undertakings within the plans may require further assessment prior to implementation, under the provisions of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

From a strategic perspective, the ecological and cultural resources and management issues for each of the sites are well understood. Each site has an approved commemorative integrity statement that sets out the values of the sites. The plans explicitly provide direction to improve commemorative integrity, visitor experience and learning. Effective protective measures are in place or achievable, given that Parks Canada manages land use in Jasper National Park through the approved park management plan (2000), and through the *Canada National Parks Act* and regulations. A *State of the Park Report* for Jasper National Park was prepared in 2005, and provides a rational basis for considering the environmental effects, cumulative or otherwise, of the plans for the national historic sites.

Key findings of the strategic environmental assessment are:

- The management plan for Jasper House National Historic Site recognizes the sensitivity of the site and the high ecological value of its setting in Jasper National Park. Emphasis is placed on the provision of information and visitor experiences off-site. On-site use may see a minor increase as a result of efforts to build awareness, but visitation is expected to remain low given the access constraints. Proposed construction of a new interpretive trail from Highway 16 to the riverbank opposite Jasper House will require assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. An alternative exists to retain the NHS plaque at the Disaster Point pull-off and develop new interpretive media there.
- The management plan for Jasper Information Centre National Historic Site addresses appropriate stewardship of the heritage building and foundations, and the surrounding grounds that are not part of the national historic site. Potential environmental effects are negligible.

Development of an interpretive node is proposed at Pioneer Plaza and/or on the grounds of the Jasper Park Information Centre National Historic Site in the community of Jasper, to present the stories of all four sites and communicate Canada’s system of national historic sites. The exhibit development will occur at a hardened site developed for that purpose and will pose no adverse environmental effects.

- Issues related to protection of ecological and cultural resources in Yellowhead Pass arise primarily from the management of transportation infrastructure. Accordingly, measures are identified in the management plan for Yellowhead Pass National Historic Site to better protect ecological and cultural resources, including a key undertaking to prepare a conservation strategy for the management of cultural resources and engineered landscape features, which will integrate ecological considerations and the management of ongoing natural processes. Undertakings aimed at improving visitor experience and learning

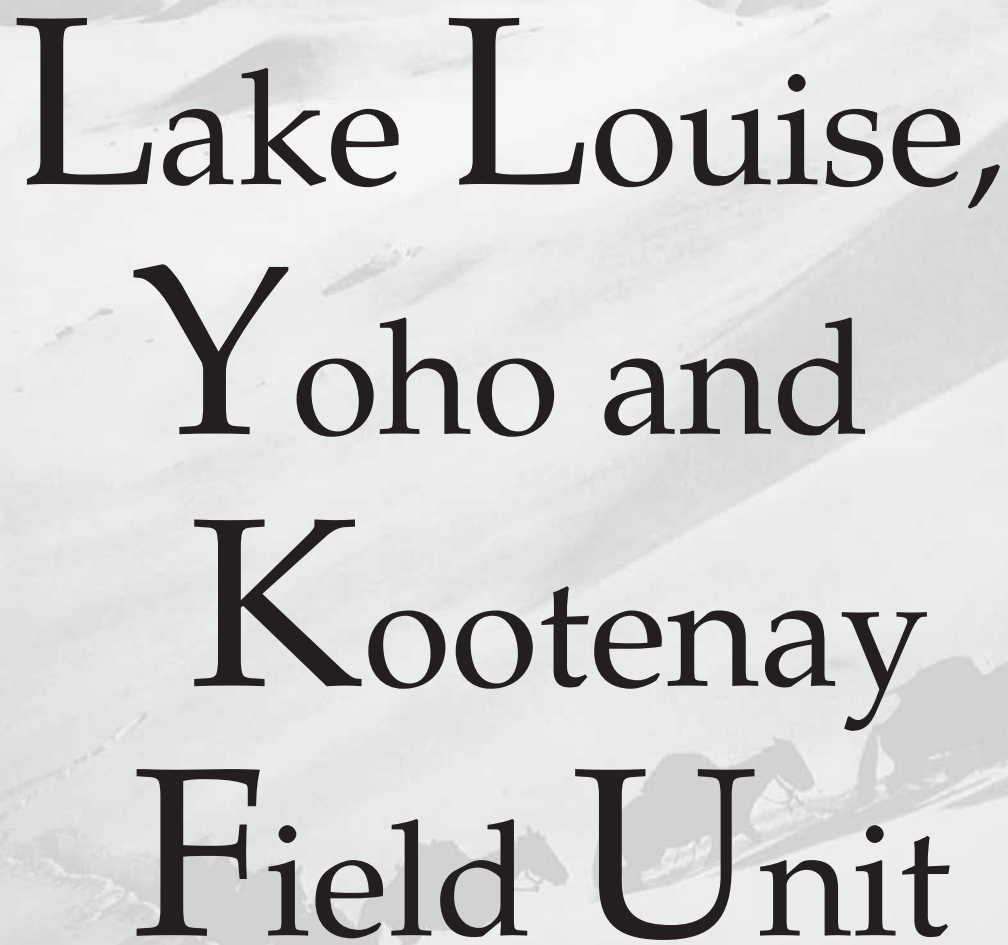


primarily occur at existing hardened sites, and potential environmental effects are negligible. The proposal to develop “sense of arrival” signage along the Highway 16 corridor needs consideration to ameliorate existing sign pollution in the area.

- Athabasca Pass National Historic Site will be managed as a wilderness location as set out in the management plan for Jasper National Park, with a standard of minimal trail and campsite facilities to support low-impact wilderness visitor experiences and low levels of use. Work with Province of British Columbia to adopt similar standards and marketing is important to safeguard wilderness values, ecological function and visitor experience. Development of new interpretive media off-site at Hardisty Hill and the Meeting of the Waters/Moab Lake node will have a minor to negligible environmental effect. Education and awareness efforts may result in a rise in visitors seeking to experience the Pass, particularly during the David Thompson bicentennial.

In conclusion, with application of suggested mitigating measures, implementation of the management plans for Jasper House, Jasper Park Information Centre, Yellowhead Pass, and Athabasca Pass National Historic Sites are not expected to result in important environmental effects. Initiatives proposed in the plans are compatible and consistent with management plan direction for Jasper National Park, and are expected to make a positive contribution to the commemorative integrity of the sites through improved protection, education, and visitor experience. Implementation of the plans, together with the management plan for Jasper National Park, is expected to contribute to maintenance and improvement of ecological integrity in the park.





Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit

4.0 Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit

The Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay field unit includes the Lake Louise and Icefields area of Banff National Park, Yoho National Park and Kootenay National Park. It is an important, core-protected area of the greater Central Rockies ecosystem. The communities of Lake Louise and Field, Lake Louise Mountain Resort, the Trans-Canada Highway, Highway 93 (the Icefields Parkway) and a number of campgrounds and trails are part of the area. This Field Unit receives heavy visitor use. The area offers exceptional scenic driving and backcountry opportunities.

Skoki Ski Lodge NHSC, Howse Pass NHSC, Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC and Kicking Horse Pass NHSC are located in the Lake Louise and Icefields area of Banff National Park. Twins Falls NHSC is located in the Yoho Valley of Yoho National Park. Kootenae House NHSC is located near the community of Invermere, British Columbia.

The Kicking Horse Pass NHSC designation takes in the original CPR route from Lake Louise in Banff National Park to Field in Yoho National Park. Operated under Licences of Occupation, the three sites of Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC, Skoki Ski Lodge NHSC and Twin Falls NHSC provide overnight accommodation in the backcountry. Howse Pass NHSC, Kicking Horse Pass NHSC and Kootenae House



NHSC are non-operational sites, with no on-site staff. The Howse Pass NHSC designation extends from the confluence of the Howse and North Saskatchewan Rivers in Banff National Park to Cairnes Creek in British Columbia. Parks Canada shares jurisdiction for this national historic site with the Province of British Columbia.

These six sites protect a diverse range of irreplaceable cultural resources, related natural resources and built heritage. The following six management plans are intended to enhance national historic site awareness, improve the quality of the visitor experience, safeguard heritage resources and promote the sites as key attractions of the Mountain Park heritage tourism experience.

Table 2. Status of National Historic Sites in Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit.

| National Historic Site | CIS Approved | CI Evaluation | FHBRO Designation |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Skoki Ski Lodge | ✓ | ✓ | Classified |
| Abbot Hut Refuge Cabin | ✓ | ✓ | Classified |
| Howse Pass | ✓ | ✓ | N/A |
| Twin Falls Tea House | ✓ | ✓ | Recognized |
| Kicking Horse Pass | ✓ | | N/A |
| Kootenae House | | | N/A |

* CIS = Commemorative Integrity Statement, CI = Commemorative Integrity
 FHBRO = Federal Heritage Building Review Office

4.1 Howse Pass National Historic Site of Canada

4.1.1 Vision

Howse Pass bears witness to a long history of Aboriginal use. Many park visitors on the Icefields Parkway stop at a viewpoint at Saskatchewan Crossing to learn about this remote national historic site and take in its inspiring views. The site itself retains a strong sense of place, intact views and protected archaeological remains that connect people to the history and geography of this important landscape. A select few self-reliant visitors form personal connections by hiking or horseback riding through the heart of the national historic site. The Province of British Columbia and Parks Canada share in the management of this spectacular trans-boundary heritage trail.

4.1.2 Background

The importance of Howse Pass dates from the 18th century when the Ktunaxa First Nation used it to reach buffalo herds east of the Rocky Mountains. In the 19th century, the pass became an important link between the Saskatchewan River Valley and the Columbia River. As early as 1800, Howse Pass was associated with the North West Company, when two traders – Le Blanc and La Gasse – traveled west over the mountains with Ktunaxa who traded at Rocky Mountain House. David Thompson crossed Howse Pass in 1807 and established “Kootenae House” near Lake Windermere on the Columbia River.

The pass is named for Joseph Howse, who used it to reach the Columbia River country in 1809.



4.1.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

Howse Pass was designated a national historic site in 1978. The reasons for designation, as derived from the 1980 plaque text, are:

- The pass was probably used from the 18th century onwards by the Ktunaxa First Nation to gain access to the buffalo herds on the plains east of the mountains; and
- The pass was used by fur traders until 1810 to explore and establish posts west of the Rockies.

4.1.4 Setting

Howse Pass NHSC is a large cultural landscape that stretches 30 km from the confluence of the Howse and Saskatchewan Rivers in Banff National Park to the start of the Howse Pass Trail near the confluence of Cairnes Creek and the Blaeberry River in British Columbia. The communities of Nordegg and Rocky Mountain House are located on Highway 11, east of the national historic site. Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site of Canada, located near the town of the same name, is closely connected to Howse Pass through the story of David Thompson. The community of Golden is located south of Howse Pass NHSC on the British Columbia side.



*View towards pass.
Credit: Gwyn Langemann.*

4.1.5 Banff National Park Management Plan

Amendments to the *Banff National Park Management Plan* (2004) included four specific actions for the Howse Landscape Management Unit:

1. With British Columbia, establish a heritage trail through Howse Pass on the original historic route; link the trail to commemoration of Howse Pass National Historic Site and manage with minimal facilities for existing low levels of use.
2. Maintain the existing effectiveness of the Howse Pass regional wildlife corridor.
3. Discontinue maintenance of the current Howse River Trail from the Glacier cut-off to Howse Pass.
4. Develop new interpretive information for the North Saskatchewan Heritage River and Howse Pass National Historic Site.

4.1.6 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Situated between southern Banff National Park and the Columbia Icefields, Howse Pass is the only low-elevation pass across the Continental Divide in Canada that has no road.



In Banff National Park, the site is a Declared Wilderness Area. In British Columbia, the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts manages its portion of the site as a heritage trail. The trail is a provincially designated site that requires a permit from the Archaeology Branch with respect to any alterations. Adjacent to the site (trail), this area is still unroaded and managed for multiple resource values by the Ministry of Forests. The trailhead is accessible from existing logging roads.

Howse Pass has a sense of place that derives as much from its visual impact as from the presence of specific historic or cultural resources. Cultural resources of national historic significance include artifacts associated with Aboriginal peoples and the fur trade. Archaeological surveys have identified a number of Aboriginal campsites, but more work is required to determine the relationship of the sites to the national historic designation and to complete the inventory along the heritage trail on the British Columbia side.

There are opportunities to work closely with Ktunaxa, Stoney and Siksika peoples to shape the way the site is protected and Aboriginal stories are told.

The current low level of use is consistent with the goal of managing Howse Pass as a significant regional corridor for wildlife such as lynx, wolves and grizzly bears.

Education and Presentation

The pass's wilderness setting and opportunities for backcountry travel on foot or horseback are major assets. There is an excellent view toward Howse Pass from the Howse Viewpoint on the Icefields Parkway at Saskatchewan Crossing. The viewpoint and the nearby Crossing Resort are ideal venues for interpretive media.

Little information is available about the site, the reasons for its designation, or the system of national historic sites, either on-site or in park publications. Howse Pass is rarely identified as a national historic site. The primary source of information is the plaque located in the pass. Clear opportunities exist to make the experience more memorable and relevant for backcountry travellers and for people using the Icefields Parkway.

For the adventurous, the site offers remote backcountry hiking on a combination of designated trails and unmarked routes. Facilities are limited to a few signs and trail markers. The Howse Valley provides access to remote mountaineering and ski mountaineering on the Freshfield Icefields and surrounding peaks.

4.1.7 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Preserve the elements that define the character and sense of place of Howse Pass, including the wilderness setting, scenery, historic routes and archaeological resources.

Manage the existing trail between the Mistaya Trailhead and Cairnes Creek as a heritage trail following the original historic route.

Maintain the existing effectiveness of the Howse Pass regional wildlife corridor.



Actions

1. Complete the site's cultural resource inventory.
2. Use *Parks Canada's Cultural Resource Management Policy* to evaluate existing sites as Level I or II cultural resources.
3. Monitor sites to ensure they are not threatened by natural processes and human impacts; take action as required to address threatened sites.
4. Manage the trail for existing low levels of use.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Provide opportunities along the Icefields Parkway for visitors to see and learn about the site.

Provide a memorable backcountry heritage trail experience for well-prepared backcountry travellers.

Ensure that Aboriginal messages are a key part of the presentation program.

Actions

1. Complete the redevelopment of the Howse Pass viewpoint; market the viewpoint as the primary off-site location to learn about Howse Pass NHSC .
2. Work with Tourism BC and Alberta Tourism to increase awareness and to inform people about where they can go to learn about the site (e.g., Howse Pass Viewpoint).
3. Engage Ktunaxa, Siksika, and Stoney peoples in developing new interpretive media for the Howse Pass Viewpoint.
4. Work with the operator of the Crossing Resort to display interpretive media about the national historic site in a prominent location.
5. Provide basic information about the national historic site and backcountry travel on the heritage trail (e.g., map) at the trailhead in their leasehold.
6. Continue to provide minimal facilities for backcountry hiking and horseback riding for a limited number of visitors.
7. Install trail markers between Glacier Lake cutoff and the Howse warden cabin to assist backcountry travellers to find the route.
8. Update the Parks Canada website to create a more dynamic presentation of Howse Pass, including a virtual tour.
9. Survey visitors to assess their understanding of Howse Pass and their satisfaction with their experience.

Partnerships

Objective

Work with private and public sector agencies to protect and present the national historic site in ways that complement national park and provincial heritage trail goals.



Actions

1. Pursue a Memorandum of Understanding with the Province of British Columbia outlining joint management goals.
2. Encourage British Columbia to maintain vehicle access to the start of the heritage trail from existing logging roads and to upgrade trailhead signage.
3. Install an exhibit about Howse Pass at a prominent location in Golden.
4. Include information about Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site at the Howse Pass Viewpoint.

4.2 Kootenae House National Historic Site of Canada**4.2.1 Vision**

Kootenae House National Historic Site of Canada is recognized as a place that protects significant archaeological resources. The site receives low visitation consistent with its setting, minimal facility development and intact archaeological features. Those who visit the site feel a strong sense of place, shaped by its intact cultural resources, informative interpretive approach and quiet clearing near Toby Creek. Visitors to local museums discover more about the site and gain a greater appreciation of the cultural importance of the site to the region and the country

4.2.2 Background

Following trails traveled by the Ktunaxa First Nation, David Thompson, noted surveyor and explorer for the North West Company, crossed Howse Pass and established Kootenae House in 1807. The site will celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2007 and will play a part in the celebration of the David Thompson Bicentennial.

Basil Hamilton, a resident of the Invermere area, identified the original location of Kootenae House in 1910 after carrying out some limited excavations and studying David Thompson's journals. In the 1930s, his widow Alice Hamilton donated a five-hectare parcel of land containing Kootenae House to the Government of Canada.

4.2.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The first trading post in the Columbia Basin, Kootenae House became a national historic site in 1934. The post served as David Thompson's base of explorations in the Columbia Basin and led to contacts and trade with First Nations throughout the region.

4.2.4 Setting

Kootenae House is in the Upper Columbia valley, just north of Invermere, British Columbia. It is perched on a high, grassy terrace near the



Archaeological Excavations at Kootenae House.
Credit: Parks Canada Agency/1691T-32T.



confluence of Toby Creek and the Columbia River. The historic site consists of the remains of the 1807 post, an old wooden Kootenae House sign, and the monument displaying the national historic site plaque. Occupying less than a hectare, the site is enclosed by a page wire fence.

The land surrounding the site is zoned as Rural Residential and two acreages border the property to the north. Although there is no formal easement, the road to the acreages cuts across the northwest corner of the five-hectare parcel. Toby Creek is to the east and there is grazing land to the south. The area between the site and Toby Creek is important to elk and deer.

4.2.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Archaeological investigations in 2005 confirmed the fenced area contains the structural remains of buildings associated with the 1807 post, non-structural archaeological features, the remains of Aboriginal campsites and a historic trail. All these resources are secure. Research has also revealed the existence of archaeological resources outside the fenced area.

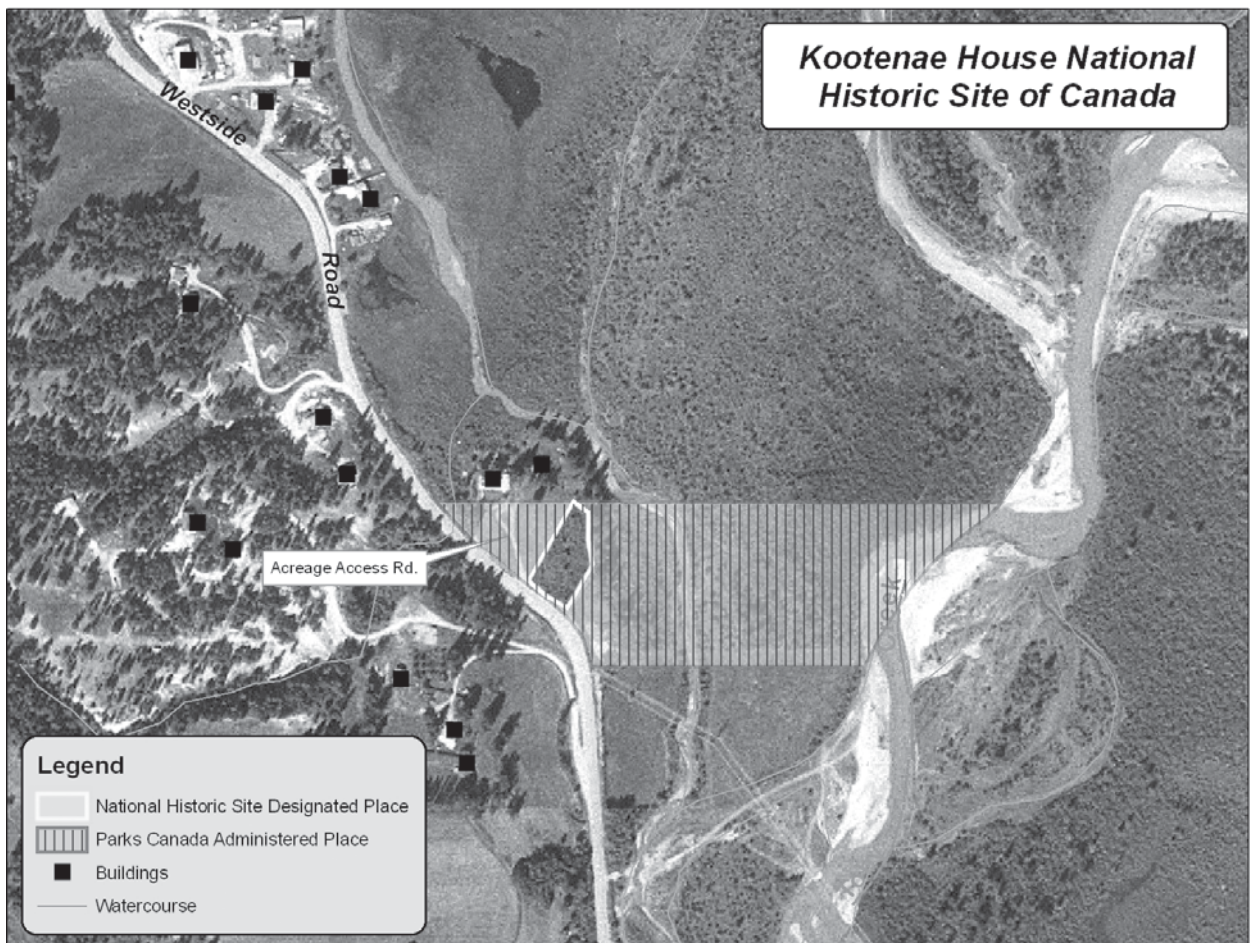


Figure 3. Aerial photo of Kootenae House NHSC



Education and Presentation

Few visitors stop at Kootenae House. For those that do, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque and the wooden sign are the sole sources of information. There is no defined parking area and the site requires some basic maintenance.

While the stone monument is visible from the road, there is no sign marking the spot as a point of interest or as a national historic site. The location of the site on a tight curve along Westside Road adds to the difficulty of recognizing it as a potential stopping place.

4.2.6 Objectives & Actions**Heritage Protection***Objectives*

Protect the area designated as a national historic site and its associated Level I and II cultural resources.

Maintain the five-hectare parcel of land as a buffer for the national historic site and as habitat for ungulates.

Actions

1. Survey the boundary of the five-hectare site and install prominent markers along the property lines.
2. Consider fencing the access road and a short section of the north boundary to protect sensitive natural and archaeological resources.
3. Prepare a *Licence of Occupation* for the existing access road; maintain the footprint of the road for existing users.
4. Install a sign near Toby Creek indicating Parks Canada owns the land.

Education and Visitor Experience*Objective*

Enhance presentation of the site and the visitor experience.

Actions

1. Provide a small parking lot.
2. Meet with local government representatives to discuss improving sight lines at the curve on the Westside Road in front of the site.
3. Replace the national historic site plaque using the existing monument. Review the plaque text for historical accuracy.
4. Install a national historic site sign near the entrance to Kootenae House and provide a low-key interpretive exhibit on-site.
5. Improve the fenced boundary of the site.
6. Install a new entrance gate that reflects the site's historic themes.
7. Use on-site media, print and the Internet to present the story of David Thompson, the fur trade and First Nations.



Partnerships

Objective

Involve the Ktunaxa First Nation, local museums, and educational institutions in the protection and presentation of the site and its associated messages.

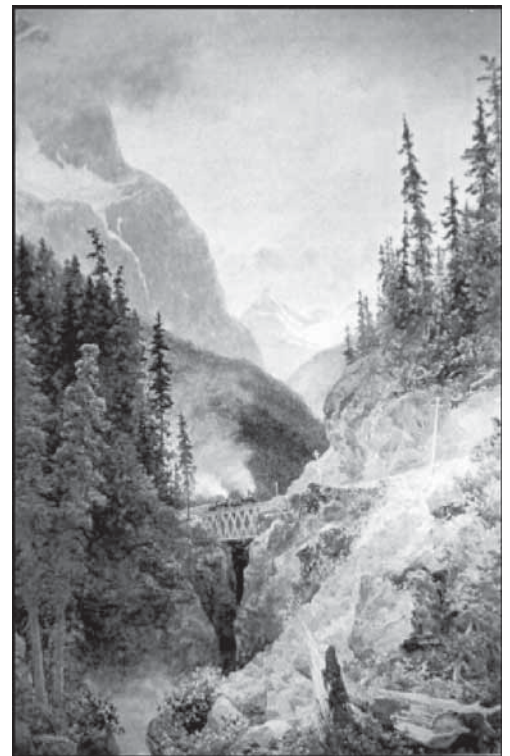
Actions

1. Work with the Windermere Valley Museum to present Kootenae House to off-site audiences.
2. Work with local Aboriginal groups regarding the development of new interpretive media.

4.3 Kicking Horse Pass National Historic Site of Canada

4.3.1 Vision

Kicking Horse Pass is widely recognized by regional residents and visitors as a large-scale cultural landscape that commemorates the original route of the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Rocky Mountains. The site retains a strong sense of place, inspiring views and intact cultural resources that connect people to the history and cultural landscape of this historic railway corridor. High numbers of motorists on the Trans Canada Highway stop at the Spiral Tunnels Day Use area to view long trains passing through the Spiral Tunnels and to learn why the site was commemorated. The story of Kicking Horse Pass is brought alive to travellers on trains passing through the area. The more adventuresome take time to pursue short and safe hikes to authentic heritage resources. The communities of Field and Lake Louise take special pride in the national historic site as a treasure that is closely connected to their history. Parks Canada, in cooperation with Canadian Pacific Railway, work to safeguard related cultural resources.



Kicking Horse Pass. Oil painting by Lucius O'Brien, 1887.

Credit: British Columbia Archives/PDP04901.

4.3.2 Background

When British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871, the province insisted upon construction of a railway that would link it to the eastern provinces. Of the many obstacles involved in the construction of a national railway, perhaps the most daunting was finding a way to cross the Rocky Mountains. When the CPR decided on the more direct southern route, engineers faced the task of moving trains through the Kicking Horse Pass area. With a gradient of 4.5%, far exceeding the recommended slope for trains of the day, the pass required the CPR to move trains using extra locomotives and speed restrictions. Although originally intended as a temporary measure, trains travelled in this fashion until the completion of the Spiral Tunnels in the early 20th century.

Today the pass is one of the most popular routes through the mountains. The CPR continues to administer the land within their right-of-way. Millions of motorists pass through on the Trans-Canada Highway and provisions are in place to allow for future twinning of the highway.



Rich in Level I cultural resources, this national historic site is a special place thanks to the sum of its parts – the combination of archaeological resources, landforms and human-engineered changes.

4.3.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

Kicking Horse Pass was designated a national historic site in 1971. The reason for designation, as derived from the text approved in 1979, is that the Canadian Pacific Railway adopted it as their route through the Rockies.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque is at the Spiral Tunnels Viewpoint, east of Field.

4.3.4 Setting

Kicking Horse Pass straddles the border between Banff and Yoho national parks. Bounded on the east by Lake Louise and on the west by Field, the historic site follows the CPR right-of-way and includes the Spiral Tunnels.

Valued for its scenic beauty, Kicking Horse Pass encompasses important natural and cultural resources. From the pass, visitors have access to short hikes, cross-country skiing or wilderness excursions. Facilities include rest stops along the Trans Canada Highway.

National Park zoning recognizes the transportation rights-of-way (Zones III and IV). The surrounding wilderness area is classified as Zone II to protect its ecological integrity.

4.3.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

Reminders of the site's engineering history are abundant, with many Level I cultural resources dating from the construction of the railway between 1881 and 1909. These include remnants of the roadbed, the rail grade, embankments, rock cuts, siding and the associated wyes and yards, remains of bridges, culverts, a stone bake oven, snowsheds and the two tunnels. Parks Canada has completed an extensive inventory of cultural resources, including archaeological remains.

Education and Presentation

Most visitors experience this national historic site from a vehicle or rail coach. Despite the large number of vehicles travelling on the Trans-Canada Highway each year, few motorists realize they are passing through a national historic site. The current visitor experience is shaped more by the landscape than by the site's historic resources.

Some elements of the site, such as the Spiral Tunnels and the Bake Oven, are well known. In 2003, new interpretive media was installed at the Spiral Tunnels Day Use area, where many motorists stop to take photos and use the restroom.

Clear opportunities to make the experience more memorable and relevant exist. The site is accessible year-round and, while somewhat limited, facilities do exist to build awareness.

Websites about the Kicking Horse lack the appeal necessary to attract people and fail to provide information about all the interesting things to see and do at the site.

The community of Field has strong links to the railway and transportation in general, and would support projects to provide information in the town.



4.3.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Protect the elements of the physical landscape that serve as reminders of the site's association with the railway.

Recognize that Kicking Horse Pass is part of a modern transportation corridor that will continue to evolve.

Actions

1. In cooperation with CPR, prepare a conservation and presentation strategy to:
 - a. Determine intervention (e.g., protective measures) and monitoring requirements for cultural resources and engineered landscape features;
 - b. Integrate ecological considerations and the management of ongoing natural processes;
 - c. Identify measures to manage vegetation to improve visibility of key features; and
 - d. Consider ways to allow visitors to interact with, and experience, the authentic resources.
2. Regularly monitor specific cultural resources.
3. Record the overall pattern of the cultural landscape, including the relationship between its natural and cultural components.
4. Ensure that the CPR and Parks Canada transportation managers are aware of the location, significance of cultural resources and any on-going management requirements.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Ensure heritage presentation activities convey the national historic significance of the site.

Focus heritage presentation activities at the Spiral Tunnels, the Kicking Horse Campground and in Field.

Increase public awareness of the site.

Actions

1. Develop a communication plan to increase awareness and understanding of the site.
2. Survey visitors to assess their understanding of Kicking Horse Pass NHSC and their satisfaction with their experience.
3. Include the story of the national historic site in new interpretive media in Field.
4. Develop signage to convey a sense of arrival at the national historic site along the highway corridor.
5. Update websites.
6. Maintain open views of the Spiral Tunnels from the Spiral Tunnels Day Use area by periodically removing trees.
7. Provide new interpretive media on the range of cultural resources associated with the site near the Bake Oven in the Kicking Horse Campground.



8. Market the Spiral Tunnels Day Use area as a key location from which to view the remarkable engineering features associated with the site.
9. Enhance an existing trail opportunity to learn about the site and related resources.
10. Investigate emerging technologies to communicate/enhance message delivery (e.g., automobile tours on compact disc, global positioning systems).



Early 20th Century locomotive near the top of the Big Hill. This trestle still survives.

Credit: Canadian Pacific Railway Archives.

Partnerships

Objective

Work with corridor managers and other agencies to identify approaches that support protection, presentation, efficient operations, and public safety.

Actions

1. Work with operators of motor coaches and passenger rail services to improve information for visitors and create memorable experiences.
2. Continue to work with the Friends of Yoho National Park to enhance presentation.
3. Work with local museums and educational institutions to present national historic site messages.
4. Work closely with the CPR to protect and present the site.
5. Collaborate with agencies responsible for the Trans-Canada Highway to ensure planning and operations respect the protection and presentation of the site and its resources.



4.4 Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site of Canada

4.4.1 Vision

Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site of Canada protects a well-preserved collection of log buildings constructed in the 1930s in the Rustic Design Tradition. Skoki Ski Lodge continues to be used as a base for backcountry skiing and hiking. Those who stop by or stay overnight at this mountain getaway feel a strong sense of place, shaped by the traditional patterns of access, the heritage ambience of the lodge and cabins, the hospitality of the hosts, and the site's protected wilderness setting. The rustic design features of the interior and exterior of the buildings in combination with the natural elements of the surrounding grounds convey a sense of respect, stability and connection with the past. Communication of national historic site messages both on-site and off-site fosters understanding and appreciation of the national historic significance of the site, including its association with outdoor recreation in the national parks.

4.4.2 Background

Skoki Ski Lodge has served visitors to the backcountry of Banff National Park since 1931. The first commercial facility of its kind in Canada, the Lodge represents the pioneering phase of backcountry skiing as a major recreational activity. It remains a major destination in the park.

The Lodge, built in 1930, has long served as the centre of activity at the site. Additions to the original building include a kitchen wing (1932) and a second floor on the Lodge (1934-35). The resort's popularity led Peter and Catharine Whyte, who managed Skoki at the

time, to build the Honeymoon and Wolverine Cabins in 1932. Construction of the Bunkhouse, Creek Cabin and Former Bathhouse followed in 1936, completing the site's development.

The site is managed through a Licence of Occupation. In 2001, Parks Canada issued a 10-year licence to Resorts of the Canadian Rockies (RCR) for management of the site. The terms of this licence are an important consideration in drafting the management plan. RCR manages the main Lodge, Honeymoon Cabin, Wolverine Cabin and Creek Cabin as commercial overnight accommodation. The Bunkhouse and Former Bathhouse are used for staff accommodation. The Resorts of the Canadian Rockies recently invested a significant sum on a major rehabilitation of the Lodge.

4.4.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

Its rustic design and its association with tourism and outdoor recreation in the national parks led to Skoki Lodge's designation as a national historic site in 1992. Six buildings, including the Lodge, are of architectural and national historic significance.



Skoki Ski Lodge. Historic Sites and Monuments Board plaque in foreground.

Credit: Parks Canada Agency.



4.4.4 Setting

At the heart of magnificent ski touring country, Skoki Lodge is 11 km north of the Lake Louise Ski Area. Sitting on the bank of Little Pipestone Creek, the main building is surrounded by picturesque mountain scenery. The five cabins are arranged in a semi-circle around the main building. This natural setting is one of the elements that define the character of the site.

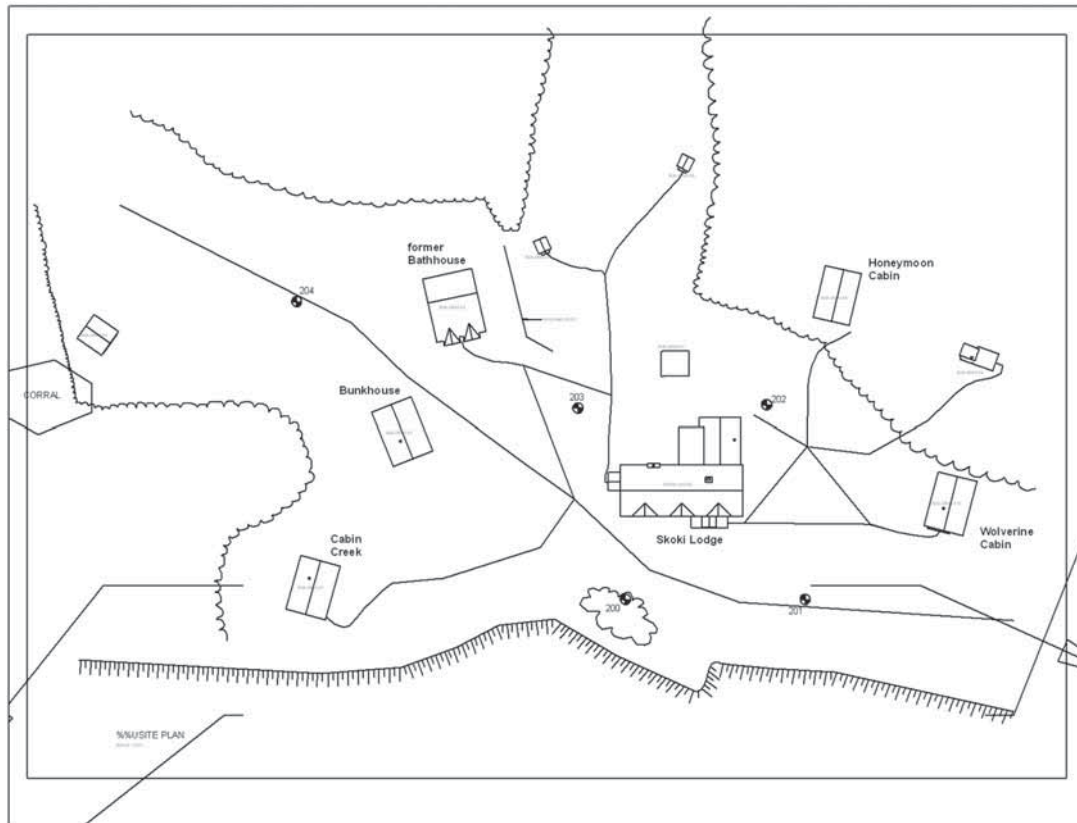


Figure 4. Site layout at Skoki Ski Lodge NHSC

4.4.5 Banff National Park Management Plan

The ecological setting of the national historic site is an important planning and management consideration for Skoki Ski Lodge NHSC. Three concentrations of female grizzly bears have been identified in Banff National Park. The Pipestone/Baker/Skoki Valley area is one of the three areas. Human use will be managed more directly in these areas than in other areas of the park to improve habitat security and effectiveness. The *Banff National Park Management Plan* (2004) identified a number of key actions for the Skoki area:

- manage the Skoki, Pipestone and Baker Landscape Management Units (LMU) for low to moderate use, in recognition of their importance as a reproductive area for female grizzly bears;
- manage most of the Skoki LMU as Semi-Primitive and provide for moderate levels of day and overnight use on designated trails;
- pilot a summer shuttle to Temple Lodge for the vast majority of Skoki area backcountry users;



- encourage people to travel in groups in the backcountry;
- provide information at trailheads about national historic sites in the backcountry;
- work with operators to protect and present cultural heritage properties in the backcountry; and
- maintain the current capacity of Skoki Lodge.

4.4.6 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

A Commemorative Integrity Evaluation in 1997 identified the need for urgent action to protect Skoki Lodge's resources. Water infiltration, foundation decay, lack of a fire detection system and on-site development were identified as major problems.

Between 2001 and 2005 a major rehabilitation project on the Lodge addressed these issues while maintaining its historical relationship to the other buildings, along with its craftsmanship and rustic character. Improvements included a new foundation, major log repair and replacement, new floor joists, a rebuilt stone chimney and significant landscaping on the northeast side of the Lodge.

Rehabilitation of the four Level 1 cabins is the next priority. An assessment of the Honeymoon Cabin and Bathhouse was undertaken in the fall of 2006. Conservation work on both buildings is required, with particular attention to base log replacement and new foundations.

There is no single repository for information about the management, conservation and operation of the national historic site. To date, detailed heritage recording and condition assessment work has not been carried out for the remaining three cabins. An informal photographic inventory of Level II movable cultural resources, including photographs, memorabilia, objects, and furnishings in the Lodge, was conducted in 1995.

Wildfire is a threat to Level I cultural resources at Skoki Ski Lodge.

Education and Visitor Experience

Visitors staying at the Lodge or dropping in for tea enjoy Skoki's rustic ambience. Operation of the Lodge has changed little over the years, allowing today's visitors to enjoy a similar experience to the guests of the 1930s. Access remains by traditional means – hiking and skiing.

The 1997 evaluation rated the effectiveness of communication as poor, with presentation limited to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board plaque.

4.4.7 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Adopt a holistic management approach to the Lodge and surrounding landscape based on the principles and practices of the cultural resource management policy.

Protect the buildings from natural threats.

Preserve the site's heritage character, including its rustic design, craftsmanship, the relationship of the lodge and cabins, and the natural setting.



Actions

1. The Licencee will implement the Building Maintenance Plan and conduct regular monitoring, as required by the Licence of Occupation.
2. Parks Canada will update the heritage record and the drawings for the Lodge to reflect the work undertaken during the recent conservation project.
3. Undertake conservation work on the Honeymoon Cabin and Bathhouse as a priority.
4. Parks Canada will complete an assessment and heritage record of the Wolverine, Bunkhouse and Creek Cabin.
5. Parks Canada will negotiate terms and conditions of a conservation work agreement with the operator.
6. In conjunction with the Licencee, Parks Canada will complete and evaluate the inventory of historic objects associated with the site.
7. The Licencee will complete a fire safety plan for the buildings and operations.
8. In conjunction with the Licencee, Parks Canada will selectively thin surrounding forest cover to reduce wildfire threats.
9. Parks Canada will establish a single repository for records related to the national historic site.
10. Parks Canada and the Licencee will ensure that any facility improvements maintain the sense of place, heritage character and historic ambience of the national historic site as set out in the commemorative integrity statement and heritage character statement.
11. Parks Canada will offer training to the operator in the principles and practices of cultural resource management.

Education and Visitor Experience**Objectives**

Raise awareness of Skoki Ski Lodge National Historic Site of Canada.

Improve communications both on- and off-site.

Continue to manage the Skoki area as one of the premier overnight camping and backcountry lodge destinations in Banff National Park.

Manage the Skoki, Pipestone and Baker Landscape Management Units (LMU) for low to moderate use, in recognition of their importance as a reproductive area for female grizzly bears.

Improve grizzly bear habitat security, reduce habituation and risks to public safety.

Actions

1. The Licencee will continue to facilitate unique and memorable visitor experiences by maintaining the heritage character, the traditional patterns of access, the rustic design features of the lodge and cabins and the protected wilderness setting.
2. Parks Canada will prepare a communication plan that identifies a unified storyline and cultural resource messages.
3. The Licencee will provide basic interpretation at the site, including a catalogue of captioned photographs.



4. Parks Canada will provide information at the Temple trailhead about the national historic site.
5. Parks Canada will survey visitors to assess their understanding of national historic site messages and their satisfaction with their experience.
6. Parks Canada will highlight historic links between this building and other rustic buildings in the national park.
7. The Licencee will maintain an exhibit at the ski area (i.e., at the Lodge of the Ten Peaks).
8. In conjunction with the operator, Parks Canada will ensure national historic site messages are available on-site.
9. Parks Canada will develop new web and print media that provide more detailed information about the site.
10. Manage most of the Skoki LMU as Semi-Primitive, with well-maintained facilities. Provide for moderate levels of day and overnight use on designated trails.
11. Encourage lodge guests to travel in groups and to stay on designated trails in the summer to reduce disturbance events throughout the Skoki area and enhance visitor safety.
12. Pilot a summer shuttle to Temple Lodge for the vast majority of Skoki area backcountry users.

Partnerships

Objective

Work with the Resorts of the Canadian Rockies to protect the site and enhance presentation of national historic site messages.

Actions

1. Parks Canada will continue to manage Skoki as a backcountry lodge under a Licence of Occupation.
2. The Licencee will ensure promotional material refers to the national historic site.
3. Parks Canada will share responsibility for ensuring the site's commemorative integrity with the Licencee.

4.5 Twin Falls Tea House National Historic Site of Canada

4.5.1 Vision

Twin Falls Tea House National Historic Site of Canada is a well-preserved example of a small backcountry lodge built by the Canadian Pacific Railway before 1930. The building's rustic design features and its protected mountain setting in the backcountry of Yoho National Park convey a strong sense of place and connection to the past. The Tea House provides overnight lodging for backcountry guests and food service to other park visitors hiking in the Upper Yoho River Valley. Communication of national historic site messages in the building and at off-site locations creates understanding and appreciation of the site's national historic significance, including its association with outdoor recreation in the national parks.



4.5.2 Background

Twin Falls Tea House, commonly referred to as Twin Falls Chalet, has served visitors to Yoho's backcountry since 1908, when the Canadian Pacific Railway built it as a stopover for tourists on trail rides. In 1915, the trail to the Chalet was improved. The 1920s saw the construction of an adjacent chalet, which was later linked to the original structure.

The Tea House is open from July through early September, offering rustic backcountry accommodation for a maximum of 14 guests per night. Fran Drummond has operated the Tea House for more than 35

years. A Licence of Occupation governs the management of the Chalet. This agreement between Parks Canada and the operator incorporates both the *Heritage Character Statement* and the *Commemorative Integrity Statement*.

The building and its beautiful setting create a distinctive sense of place, especially evident in the view of Twin Falls from the front porch.

4.5.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

Twin Falls Tea House became a national historic site in 1992. Commemorated for its role in the growth of backcountry recreation and its architectural qualities, the Tea House is a well-preserved example of rustic log design and construction. The three linked buildings are Level I cultural resources. The Tea House is a 'Recognized' Federal Heritage Building.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque was recently installed at the site.

4.5.4 Setting

At an elevation of 1,800 m, the Tea House sits in a small clearing near the foot of Twin Falls in the Yoho Valley. On a popular circuit trail that approaches the foot of the Yoho Glacier, the site affords an excellent view of the scenic Twin Falls. The site's natural setting is one of the elements that define its character.

The Tea House is 8 km from the Takakkaw Falls parking lot, a hike of about two and a half hours.

4.5.5 Yoho National Park Management Plan

The *Yoho National Park Management Plan* (2000) identified the following direction for Twin Falls:

- protect and present Twin Falls Chalet National Historic Site;
- include the requirements of the Commemorative Integrity Statement in the Licence of Occupation;



Plaque unveiling at Twin Falls Tea House NHSC in 2006.

Credit: Parks Canada Agency.



- complete the maintenance manual; and
- erect the HSMBC plaque.

4.5.6 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

In 2003, the Auditor General reported that Twin Falls Tea House required a substantial investment of resources to stabilize and restore the lodge. This spring, Parks Canada completed a major conservation project to replace sill logs and the concrete foundation, install new floor joists, restore damaged purlins and porch structures, improve drainage and walkways, and install new interpretive signs. A woodshed/storage building and a modern privy were built to improve the efficiency of the operation.

The Auditor General revisited the Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit in 2006 and is expected to release a follow-up report in November 2006.

A “FireSmart” program is slated for the fall of 2006 to reduce the threat of wildfire.

Inside the Tea House, dishes, furnishings, photographs and documents belonging to the operator bear witness to the social aspects of the Tea House’s history. There has been no formal inventory of these resources.

Parks Canada has carried out extensive research into the building and its archaeological resources. The Archaeological Collections database includes a small collection of artifacts, including bottle glass, window glass, nails and tableware. There is no single repository for information about the management, conservation and operation of the national historic site.

Education and Visitor Experience

The rustic ambience, scenic setting, and operation of Twin Falls Tea House NHSC has changed little over the years, allowing today’s visitors to enjoy a similar experience to the guests of the late 1920s. Twin Falls is a popular destination for day trips, a stopping point for hikers and a place for overnight lodging.

In 2001, a Commemorative Integrity Evaluation rated the Tea House’s presentation of national historic messages as “poor”. New interpretive signs have recently been installed at the Tea House and at the Takakkaw Falls trailhead to increase awareness of the site’s national historic significance.

In 2002, an outhouse and a bench installed near the Tea House improved the day use experience.

4.5.7 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Protect the elements that define the character of the Tea House and surrounding landscape.

Protect the lodge as a Level I cultural resource.

Protect the buildings from wildfires.



Actions

1. Parks Canada will prepare a building maintenance plan and the operator will ensure implementation of the plan and a monitoring program, as specified in the Licence of Occupation.
2. The operator will carry out regular maintenance and structural repairs, as specified in the Licence of Occupation.
3. Parks Canada will replace the existing shake roof with a more historically accurate shingle roof.
4. Parks Canada will offer the operator training in maintenance and cultural resource management.
5. Parks Canada will work with the operator to complete an inventory of historic objects associated with the Tea House, and take steps to retain these objects on-site.
6. The operator will develop a fire safety plan for the building and operations.
7. Parks Canada and the operator will selectively thin surrounding forest cover to reduce wildfire threats while respecting the heritage character of the national historic site and surrounding landscape.
8. Parks Canada will establish a single repository for records related to Twin Falls.
9. Parks Canada will update the heritage record and details of the as-built drawings for the Tea House to reflect the work that was undertaken during the recent conservation project.
10. Parks Canada will highlight historic links between this building and other rustic buildings in the national park.
11. Parks Canada and the Licencee will ensure that any facility improvements maintain the sense of place, heritage character and historic ambience of the national historic site as set out in the commemorative integrity statement and heritage character statement.

Education and Visitor Experience**Objectives**

Maintain the Tea House's special sense of place, including the relationship between the building and the surrounding landscape.

Raise awareness of Twin Falls Tea House.

Continue the tradition of providing overnight shelter and food to backcountry travellers.

Actions

1. The Licencee will provide basic interpretation at the site, including a catalogue of captioned photographs.
2. Parks Canada will add new information about the site to the Parks Canada website.
3. Parks Canada will survey visitors to assess their understanding of Twin Falls and their satisfaction with their experience.
4. Parks Canada will allow overnight accommodation for a maximum of 14 patrons and the provision of food and beverages to other park visitors.
5. Parks Canada will encourage the operator to provide refreshments for day hikers.
6. Parks Canada and the Licencee will ensure communication activities reflect the approved Commemorative Integrity Statement.



Partnerships

Objective

Work with partners to protect and present the site.

Actions

1. Parks Canada will continue to manage Twin Falls Tea House under a Licence of Occupation.
2. The Licencee will ensure promotional material refers to the national historic site.
3. Parks Canada will share responsibility for the site's commemorative integrity with the licencee.

4.6 Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin National Historic Site of Canada

4.6.1 Vision

Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin NHSC remains intact and in sound condition. Its mountain setting in the windswept Abbot Pass remains pristine. Mountaineers continue to use the cabin as a refuge and staging area in the Lake Louise and Lake O'Hara area in the same manner as they have done since 1922. Communication of national historic site messages within the building enriches the on-site experience. Enhanced off-site heritage presentation connects Canadians to this remote national historic site in a low-key, informative and non-promotional way.

4.6.2 Background

The Canadian Pacific Railway built Abbot Pass Hut in 1922 as a refuge for mountaineers attempting climbs between Mount Lefroy and Mount Victoria. Guides and construction workers remember it as an arduous building project. Perched atop a windswept col straddling the Continental Divide, the hut is made of locally quarried stone. Packhorses carried all other materials past the Lower Victoria Glacier, where guides picked them up and carried them to the summit. At the time of its construction, Abbot Pass Hut was the only cabin in the Rockies above the tree line.

4.6.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The Rustic Design Tradition style and its association with outdoor recreation in national parks led to the recognition of Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin as a national historic site in 1992. The Cabin is a Classified Federal Heritage Building.

4.6.4 Setting

Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin is on the border of Banff and Yoho National Parks, at an altitude of 2,925 m.



*Climbers approaching Abbot Hut, July 1931.
Credit: Glenbow Archives/NA-4868-184.*



4.6.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

The first high alpine accommodation for experienced mountaineers in the Canadian Rocky Mountains, the hut has been an overnight destination for generations. The cabin is in remarkably good condition given its age and location, reflecting respectful use and care by mountaineers.

In 1968 the CPR transferred responsibility for the hut to Parks Canada. The Alpine Club of Canada has managed the cabin since 1985 under a Licence of Occupation, an agreement that addresses the use, care and maintenance of the site, including the protection and presentation of cultural resources.

The building requires some work on the stone masonry walls and a structural analysis to assess the stability of the roof. There is no conservation plan or maintenance manual for the building.

Education and Visitor Experience

Hazardous mountain terrain limits access to about 400 guided travellers or experienced mountaineers each year. These visitors relive much the same experience as the earliest hut users. The Alpine Club of Canada manages reservations for the cabin, which has a capacity of 24 people.

A limited communications program for the Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin reaches a substantial number of people visiting Banff and Yoho National Parks. Information is available at the Lake Louise Visitor Centre, the Spiral Tunnels and the promenade at the Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise. Information at the site and on the Parks Canada website is limited.

4.6.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Maintain the heritage character and structural integrity of the building.

Preserve the pristine windswept elements of the surrounding landscape that complement the national historic site.

Actions

1. Parks Canada will complete the conservation and maintenance plan.
2. The operator will repair structural elements as necessary.
3. Parks Canada will assess the stability of the roof.
4. The licensee will implement a regular monitoring program and conduct necessary operational maintenance, as specified in the Licence of Occupation.
5. Parks Canada will submit any proposals for work on the hut to the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objective

Improve awareness of Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin National Historic Site.



Actions

1. Parks Canada will install basic information about the site, its history and its status as a national historic site, in the cabin.
2. Parks Canada will develop new web and print media products.

Partnerships

Objective

Work with private sector partners to manage the site and enhance presentation of historic site messages.

Actions

1. Parks Canada and the Licencee will ensure that any facility improvements maintain the sense of place, heritage character and historic ambience of the national historic site as set out in the commemorative integrity statement and heritage character statement.
2. Parks Canada will continue to manage the site through a Licence of Occupation with the Alpine Club of Canada.
3. The Licencee will ensure that promotional material refers to the national historic site.
4. Parks Canada will share responsibility for the site's commemorative integrity with the licencee.
5. Parks Canada will work with the Alpine Club of Canada and the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies to achieve the goals for education and visitor experience.
6. Parks Canada will work with the Alpine Club of Canada to maintain the structural integrity of the building.

4.7 Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

Parks Canada has prepared a strategic environmental assessment, in accordance with *The Cabinet Directive for the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*, to consider any adverse environmental effects, including cumulative effects, that may arise from implementation of the proposed management plans for the six national historic sites in the Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit. The strategic environmental assessment verifies that the proposed plans are consistent with the park management plans for Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks, and that actions proposed in the plans will not diminish ecological integrity. Individual undertakings within the plans may require further environmental assessment prior to implementation, under the provisions of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)*.

Parks Canada must ensure that the sites are managed in accordance with the *National Parks Act* and related policies, as well as policies and guidelines respecting national historic sites. One of the sites, Kootenae House, is located outside national park boundaries within the province of British Columbia, and another, Howse Pass, is shared with British Columbia. The decisions in the plans are limited to the lands and matters under the jurisdiction of Canada's Minister of the Environment, who is responsible for Parks Canada.

From a strategic perspective, the ecological and cultural resources and management issues for each of the sites are well understood. Each site, with the exception of Kootenae House, has an approved *Commemorative Integrity Statement* that sets out the values of the sites. The commemorative integrity statement for Kootenae House is nearing completion. The plans provide explicit direction to improve commemorative integrity, visitor experience and learning. Effective protective measures are in place or achievable, given that Parks Canada manages land use in Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National



Parks through the approved park management plans, and through the *Canada National Parks Act* and regulations. The park management plans provide a basis for considering the environmental effects, cumulative or otherwise, of the plans for the national historic sites.

Key findings of the strategic environmental assessment are:

- The majority of actions proposed in the management plans for all six national historic sites managed by the Lake Louise, Yoho and Kootenay Field Unit are expected to be environmentally neutral. Actions related to physical conservation and landscaping work will result in minor adverse effects to local aesthetics and vegetation values. These actions are subject to application of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* prior to implementation.
- The management plan for Howse Pass National Historic Site recognizes the ecological importance of the pass and adjacent lands as identified in the Banff National Park Management Plan. Actions involving physical changes are focussed on provision of improved interpretation and visitor experience opportunities at existing high use, frontcountry areas, and on limiting the potential for negative effects to aesthetic values, vegetation and wildlife habitat in the area of Howse Pass. In order to ensure that increased public awareness of the site does not lead to unacceptable environmental or cultural resource impacts, the plan includes direction to manage the trail through Howse Pass for existing low levels of use, to monitor site impacts, and to provide limited backcountry facilities for hiking and horseback riding.
- Implementation of the management plan for Kootenae House National Historic Site may result in minor adverse effects to local aesthetic values, wildlife habitat and vegetation. The plan provides measures to mitigate impacts associated with improved visitor facilities and increased visitation, including limiting motorized access along Toby Creek and improving site delineation and protection of cultural resources. Given that the site is not located within a national park and is surrounded by lands subject to rural residential development, roads, cattle grazing and recreational activity, the relative contribution to cumulative effects resulting from implementation of the management plan is expected to be negligible.
- The management plan for Kicking Horse Pass National Historic Site recognizes the important relationship between management of transportation infrastructure and protection of ecological and cultural resources. The plan includes direction to prepare a conservation strategy for the protection and presentation of cultural resources and engineered landscape features, which will integrate ecological considerations and the management of ongoing natural processes. Actions aimed at improving visitor experience and learning opportunities are focussed on existing hardened sites, in order to limit the potential for adverse environmental effects.
- The management plans for Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House, and Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin focus on improvements to cultural heritage protection and increased awareness and understanding of these sites. The majority of proposed actions will have no environmental effects. Increased public awareness of these sites creates the potential for increased visitation and human activity with related impacts to wildlife habitat values. This potential is significantly reduced by the established capacity limits for these facilities, combined with limitations to development potential inherent in national historic site status, and the relatively remote locations of the facilities. Additional measures to ensure that potential impacts to wildlife values are minimized are included in the management plan for Skoki Lodge, in recognition of the importance of the area to grizzly bears.



- At Skoki and Twin Falls, management plans provide for thinning of nearby forest to reduce the risk of wildfire impacts to the sites. Implementation of this work will be subject to further environmental assessment and application of project-specific mitigating measures to ensure that any adverse effects to the environment or heritage values are minimized.

In conclusion, with application of suggested mitigating measures, implementation of the management plans for the Howse Pass, Kootenae House, Kicking Horse Pass, Skoki Ski Lodge, Twin Falls Tea House and Abbot Pass Refuge Cabin national historic sites is not expected to result in important adverse environmental effects. Initiatives proposed in the plans are compatible and consistent with management plan direction for Banff, Yoho and Kootenay national parks, and are expected to make a positive contribution to the commemorative integrity of the sites through improved protection, education, and visitor experience. Implementation of the national historic site plans, together with the park management plans, is expected to contribute to the enhancement of ecological and commemorative integrity in the park.







Banff Field Unit

5.0 Banff Field Unit

The three national historic sites of the Banff Field Unit – Cave and Basin, Banff Park Museum and Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station – are located in the most heavily visited and oldest national park in the system. They are closely connected with the Town of Banff and the history of Banff National Park.

Every year, more than 100,000 people visit the original cave, view the indoor and outdoor exhibits and stroll on boardwalks through the rich thermal spring environment at the Cave and Basin. Visitors at the prominently located Banff Park Museum within the Town of Banff take in original exhibits at Western Canada's oldest natural history Museum. More than 300,000 people visit the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station NHSC as part of the Sulphur Mountain Gondola experience each year.

The Cave and Basin and Banff Park Museum are the only national historic sites that operate on a year-round basis in the mountain parks. For many visitors, these sites will be their first point of contact with Canada's national historic site system. Both sites protect a diverse range of irreplaceable cultural resources, related natural resources and built heritage that require ongoing conservation and maintenance. The Cave and Basin itself is faced with significant challenges associated with aging



facilities, protection of the sensitive thermal spring environment and the declining quality of the visitor experience.

Given Banff National Park's annual visitation of 3.1 million (based on a 2005 survey), these sites are well positioned to significantly increase visitation levels. The management plans for these three sites are intended to enhance national historic site awareness, improve the quality of the visitor experience, safeguard heritage resources and promote the sites as cultural heritage components of the Banff National Park heritage tourism experience.

Table 3. Status of National Historic Sites in the Banff Field Unit

| National Historic Site | CIS Approved | CI Evaluation | FHBRO Designation |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Cave and Basin | ✓ | ✓ | Classified |
| Banff Park Museum | ✓ | ✓ | Classified |
| Sulphur Mt. Cosmic Ray Station | ✓ | ✓ | N/A |

* CIS = Commemorative Integrity Statement, CI = Commemorative Integrity
FHBRO = Federal Heritage Building Review Office

5.1 Cave and Basin National Historic Site of Canada

5.1.1 Vision

Cave and Basin National Historic Site of Canada is a must-see attraction in Banff National Park. Visitors form personal and meaningful connections by exploring the magic of the original cave, viewing engaging indoor and outdoor exhibits and strolling on boardwalks that safeguard significant cultural resources and unique thermal spring environments. The presentation program engages the hearts and minds of Canadians and compels them to embrace and support the protection of this special place. People leave understanding that this site is the birthplace of Canada's national park system and why it is now commemorated as a national historic site. The Town of Banff and its residents take special pride in the national historic site as an integral part of the community through its historic and modern connections to tourism and conservation. Significant cultural resources, built features, unique thermal spring ecosystems and the endangered Banff Springs Snail are secure. Parks Canada showcases how it integrates the protection and presentation of significant cultural resources and sensitive thermal spring environments at this busy national historic site.

5.1.2 Background

Used by Aboriginal people for many years, the mineral springs at the Cave and Basin remained unknown to the rest of the world until Canadian Pacific Railway workers came across them in 1883. In 1885, the government set aside a small area to protect the springs for public use. This was truly the beginning of the national park mandate – the very first recognition of the need to protect special places for the benefit of the nation.

The Cave and Basin underwent a major renovation in the 1980s, reopening in 1985 to mark the Parks Canada Centennial. Today, three buildings and two interpretive trails introduce visitors to a unique thermal spring environment.



The stone and concrete Bathing Pavilion, designed in 1914 by Walter Painter, houses the visitor centre, a tunnel to the cave spring pool, an outdoor spring and an outdoor reflecting pool in place of the original swimming pool, which closed in 1992. A theatre where visitors can see a video on the park's history is located in a reconstruction of the original 1903 log bathhouse. The Caretaker's Residence, built in 1954, served as staff accommodation and later as a Tea House for patrons of the bathhouse. It is now home to Parks Canada offices.



Credit: Parks Canada Agency.

The upper boardwalk, to the source of the Upper and Lower Springs and the lower boardwalk to the Cave and Basin Marsh, are popular with visitors. Banff residents make extensive year-round use of the site's trails.

The national historic site protects rare thermal spring features, including critical habitat for the Banff Springs Snail, a species listed as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).

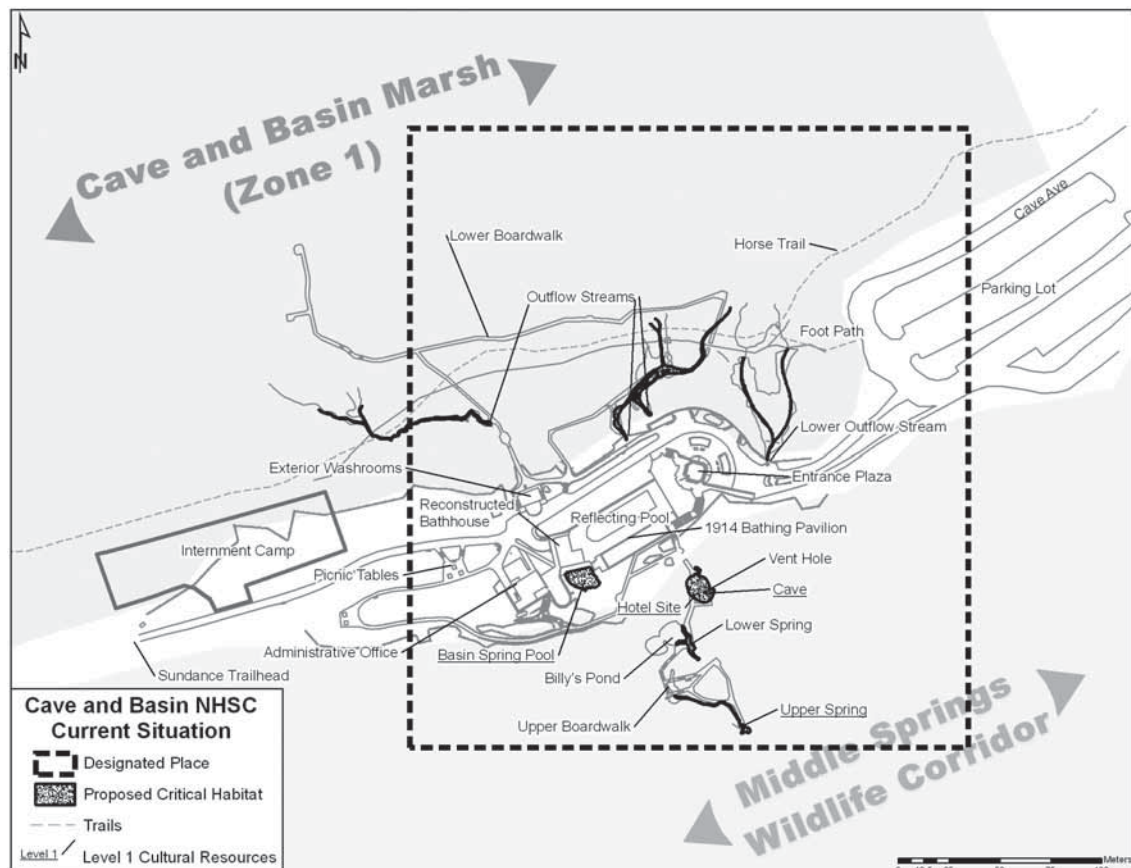


Figure 5. Facilities at the Cave and Basin NHSC



At the site of a nearby WW I internment camp, interpretive media recognize the contribution of internees to the construction of facilities in Banff National Park.

Facilities at the Cave and Basin include a picnic area, a cafeteria in summer, and washrooms. In spite of its location outside the Town of Banff, the site is connected to the town's utilities. A trail for hikers and horses passes through the national historic site

5.1.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada recommended the designation of the Cave and Basin as a national historic site in 1981, citing its significance as the birthplace of Canada's national parks.

The historic site encompasses the Cave, the interior pool and original vent hole, the Basin, the thermal springs, the remains of a hotel, the Bathing Pavilion and the Caretaker's Cottage (Fig. 5).

5.1.4 Setting

The Cave and Basin is at the southwest edge of the Town of Banff, on the lower slope of Sulphur Mountain. The boundaries of the site are defined by the parking lot to the east, the upper thermal springs to the south, the Sundance trailhead to the west and the Cave and Basin Marsh to the north. The site is between the Middle Springs Wildlife Corridor above and the Cave and Basin Marsh below, a Zone I Special Preservation area. Cave Avenue provides access to the site's large parking lot.

5.1.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

In an age-old cycle, water bubbling to the surface from deep underground deposits the minerals it absorbs along its journey through the earth. One mineral, calcium carbonate, hardens into a porous rock known as tufa, which covers the area around the hot springs. The Cave is the product of natural erosion of glacial till below the tufa.

More than a century of development at the Cave and Basin has modified the environment, especially the natural flow of water. Managing the discharge of spring water above the Bathing Pavilion is essential to the long-term protection of the site's cultural resources and built heritage. Other conservation problems include the condition of the Bathing Pavilion roof and efflorescence and spalling of the exterior masonry.

An elaborate system of pipes allows thermal water to flow through and around the main building. The pipes have deteriorated to the point where corrosion is affecting the control valves. Hydrogen sulphide vapour corrodes exposed metal and electronics, and the growth of bacteria in the pipes is an ongoing problem.

The heating system for the Pavilion and the pool, installed in 1985, requires the boilers to operate year-round. This system is inefficient and needlessly expensive now that the pool is no longer used.

Level I Cultural Resources

Vent Hole
Hotel Foundation
Thermal Springs
The Cave and Basin Pools

Level II Cultural Resources

Bathing Pavilion
Caretaker's Cottage (Parks
Canada's Office)



In 2001, a plugged grate caused surface water to seep through the tufa layer, destabilizing the till in the Cave. This had a serious impact on the site's Level I cultural resources when a corner of the berm around the hotel foundation washed away. Stabilizing the till is key to preserving the Cave's long-term integrity.

In 2003, the Auditor General reported that the Cave and Basin National Historic Site was in fair condition and required investment to avoid further deterioration. Although a conservation plan is in place for built assets, the site lacks regular monitoring and maintenance and there has been no systematic investment in re-capitalization. Emergency funding has allowed for repairs to leaking decks and the replacement of the ventilation system in the theatre.

The closure of the pool and the drafting of a commemorative integrity statement that recognizes the sensitive thermal spring environment necessitate a review of the site's visitor services and its ability to meet its cultural and natural resource management responsibilities. Changes in the flow of thermal water can have a significant impact on the Banff Spring Snail population, as can soaking, swimming, and even the dipping of feet or hands in the springs. Natural threats include unpredictable disturbances, population fluctuations, and genetic inbreeding. A Research and Recovery Program, in place since 1996, has reduced the threat to the Banff Springs Snail and has resulted in many improvements.

Education and Presentation

More than 100,000 people, down from a peak of 160,000 in 1999, visit the Cave and Basin each year. While this is a significant number, it represents a small fraction of the people who visit the Town of Banff. The 2003 *Survey of Visitors to Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Yoho National Parks of Canada* indicated that most visits to the Four Mountain Parks included at least one stop in the Town of Banff (2.1 million visits, or 62 %). The site's location, excellent disabled access and convenient visitor parking are major strengths. The quality of exhibits, programs, historic structures and facilities are key factors in offering a meaningful experience for visitors.

The site's image is not in keeping with its status as the birthplace of our national parks system. The main exhibit areas, which date from the 1985 restoration, are outdated and no longer present key messages as identified in the *Commemorative Integrity Statement* (1999). Access to the second floor exhibit is difficult for many visitors. The messages in the video, "Streams, Schemes and National Dreams" are not current. While upgrades to exterior signs have improved the sense of arrival and orientation, directional signs remain inadequate.

A 1996 survey reported visitors were very satisfied with services and facilities. Visitors were less satisfied with pre-trip information, orientation, information along the walkways leading to the site, activities for children, and the availability and quality of guided tours. A subsequent survey in 2001 showed that while visitors were generally satisfied with the interpretation program, exhibits required improvement. The 2001 survey also revealed that most visitors are not from Canada, 25% are from Alberta and only 2% are from the local area. Seventy-nine per cent are first time visitors and nearly half the people surveyed spend one to two hours at the site.

In 2005, a marketing plan focused on increasing visitation was completed for the national historic sites in Alberta and eastern British Columbia. Implementation of this plan has started, although an improvement in the visitor experience is needed to significantly increase visitation levels at the Cave and Basin.

The visitor experience begins in the parking lot, out of view of the national historic site. No orientation or facilities (for example, washrooms) are available in the parking lot to meet immediate visitor needs or create a positive sense of arrival. Inside the building, two small washrooms on the main floor cannot meet the needs of large numbers of people. However,



visitors now have the opportunity to purchase food from a facility that complements the site's commemorative integrity goals.

A highlight for visitors is the unique experience of entering the original Cave, which has remained unchanged for 120 years. Maintaining the quality of the Cave experience is an essential aspect of the overall visitor experience.

While a lack of funds limits the site's ability to offer personal interpretation, opportunities exist to diversify interpretive activities. The site has a modest outreach and school curriculum program.

Substantial new investment in heritage presentation, cultural resource protection, built heritage conservation and protection of the thermal spring environments, including the endangered Banff Springs Snail, is required to attract more visitors.

The Cave and Basin is adjacent to a former World War I internment camp, one of 24 locations across the country that detained landed immigrants who were citizens of countries at war with Canada. The Ukrainian Canadian Community has submitted a proposal to enhance the presentation of the internment camp story.

5.1.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Undertake an integrated management approach to address protection of the site's cultural and natural resources.

Protect the designated historic site and associated Level I and II Cultural Resources.

Protect the Bathing Pavilion and contemporary facilities from natural forces, including the corrosive thermal springs environment.

Protect the thermal springs environment by mitigating human and natural threats.

Restore self-sustaining snail populations and critical habitat within their historic range, while respecting requirements for the site's commemorative integrity.

Actions

1. Update the conservation plan.
2. Create an integrated maintenance plan for cultural and natural resources.
3. Fill gaps in knowledge about in situ resources, including the details of as-built features.
4. Create a vegetation management plan to identify appropriate landscaping and address the removal of vegetation from the remains of the hotel.
5. Protect the hotel remains and the vent hole from damage due to fluctuating water levels in the adjacent pond.
6. Repair and stabilize the till beneath the tufa rock deposits along the east wall of the Cave; provide adequate drainage.
7. Keep ponding of water above the Bathing Pavilion to a minimum.
8. Install a proper flow monitoring system and continue to control the flow of spring discharge above the Bathing Pavilion.



9. Upgrade the heating and ventilation system; replace fittings and fixtures.
10. Simplify the plumbing system.
11. Upgrade the main electrical service, fire panels, distribution systems, and electrical fixtures and fittings and protect them from corrosion.
12. Replace the gravel and membrane roof on the Bathing Pavilion.
13. Monitor snail populations, thermal water flows and the impact of humans on snails and snail habitat.
14. Reduce the impact of human use through education, standardized signs and additional staff.
15. Examine the feasibility of reconfiguring streams below the Bathing Pavilion to create a series of pools and slow waterflow areas to enhance snail habitat.
16. Reduce the impact of the horse trail on outflow streams.
17. Continue to monitor the integrity of Billy's Pool liner and develop a plan for its replacement.
18. Implement actions in the Recovery Strategy and Action Plan for the Banff Springs Snail that are associated with the Cave and Basin.
19. Remove redundant valves and piping, where possible, to accommodate natural fluctuations in thermal water flow; avoid impacts to cultural resources.
20. Maintain the boardwalk and enhance presentation.
21. Protect other rare species and inhabitants (e.g., mosses, liverworts, damselflies).

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Enhance the visitor experience through improvements to heritage presentation and facilities.

Position the Cave and Basin as one of Banff National Park's must-see attractions.

Increase visitation by 5% over the next three years.

Improve regional media coverage of the national historic site.

Actions

1. Based on visitor research, develop a communication plan that reflects the site's Commemorative Integrity Statement.
2. Create a unified storyline that includes messages about cultural and natural resources, reflects audience expectations and incorporates innovative methods of delivery.
3. Use the communication plan as the basis for a phased redevelopment of the site.
4. Consider providing an information kiosk and a washroom in the parking lot.
5. Maintain the special sense of place of the Cave and its interior pool, including its sensory attributes (e.g., sulphur smell, subdued lighting).
6. Develop a significant new exhibit in the Bathing Pavilion.
7. Relocate the main exhibit space from the second floor to the current changing area on the main floor to improve public access and to showcase the architectural details of the building.



8. Update communication activities to promote a better understanding of snail ecology, thermal spring ecosystems, and the threats they face.
9. Implement an aggressive marketing strategy.
10. Focus marketing initiatives on Calgary, the Town of Banff and Canmore.
11. Provide an opportunity outside the Cave for visitors to touch the thermal spring water.
12. Emphasize recreational opportunities such as accessible hiking trails.
13. Improve on-site directional signs.
14. Work with the Town of Banff to provide summer bus service to the Cave and Basin; identify a drop-off area in the parking lot.
15. Upgrade the outreach and school curriculum program.
16. Update the Cave and Basin web page.
17. Continue to promote the site at the Calgary Airport, in the Vacation Planner and Best Bets brochures and other visitor brochures.
18. Continue visitor surveys to assess their understanding of the Cave and Basin, their satisfaction with their experience, and their expectations related to facility improvements.
19. Annually dedicate a page in the Mountain Guide to national historic sites.
20. Work with local information outlets (Banff National Park, Town of Banff) to create awareness and promote Banff's national historic sites and Canada Place as must-see attractions.
21. Improve the presentation of messages about the internment camp.
22. Encourage visitors to make the connection between the Upper Hot Springs and the Cave and Basin.

Partnerships

Objectives

Work with others to protect, present and market the site.

Increase the number of tourism and community partnerships.

Negotiate private sector agreements to provide complementary facilities that enhance the visitor experience.

Actions

1. Work with the Ukrainian community on new interpretive media about internment operations.
2. Continue to offer a summer food service.
3. Promote cross-marketing strategies with Travel Alberta and Banff- Lake Louise Tourism.
4. Develop a special pass for the regional market to encourage both new and repeat visitors.
5. Promote the Ambassador's Pass.
6. Use the site for after-hours events and as a venue for special expositions.
7. Improve marketing and sales of the Heritage Passport.



8. Offer “locals” days and other events at the site to increase community support.
9. Work with the Town of Banff to ensure a coordinated approach to improve way-finding to key facilities including the Cave and Basin NHSC.

5.2 Banff Park Museum National Historic Site of Canada

5.2.1 Vision

Passersby are drawn to the Banff Park Museum as an architectural landmark on Banff Avenue near the Bow River. The rustic design features of the building, complemented by evocative design features in the surrounding landscape, convey a sense of respect, stability and connection with the past. Once inside, visitors are engaged by the architectural detail of the building’s interior and original exhibits. People step back in time to experience firsthand an early approach to natural history interpretation in a safe and serene atmosphere. Here, visitors ask questions and learn about the natural history of Banff National Park. Residents and visitors treasure Banff Park Museum as a significant year-round cultural attraction in the heart of the Town of Banff. Parks Canada protects and conserves the Banff Park Museum and its collections as irreplaceable cultural resources.

5.2.2 Background

The Banff Park Museum is Western Canada’s oldest natural history museum and the best surviving example of the rustic architectural design popularized in early national park buildings. The Museum itself is the oldest surviving federal building in a national park.

The Museum’s collection contains more than 5,000 objects, including zoological collections, ethnographic objects, library and archival collections, black and white photographs, historic artworks, and antique furnishings.



*Historic Postcard of Banff Park Museum.
credit: Steve Malins Collection*

5.2.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada designated the Banff Park Museum as a national historic site in 1985. This “museum of museums,” developed by Norman Bethune Sanson, reflects an early approach to the interpretation of natural history in Canada and an architectural style and detailing typical of early federal buildings in the park. The designation applies to the 1903 museum building together with a significant surviving portion of the original exhibit collection.

5.2.4 Setting

The building occupies a prominent location near the Bow River on Banff Avenue. Central Park to the east, at one time the site of a zoo and botanical exhibits associated with the museum, contributes to the historical sense of place, as does all the land owned by Parks Canada between Central Park and Banff Avenue.



The buried remains of a North West Mounted Police post are located in the parking area to the north of the museum.

A Parks Canada exhibit is located north of the Museum.

5.2.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

The museum, a Classified Federal Heritage Building, is in good condition considering its age. Recent projects include new flooring on the main and second floor galleries and upgrades to the sprinkler, security and fire alarm systems. A major structural reinforcement of the roof trusses and the mezzanine was undertaken in 2002-2003. The original roof trusses were reinforced with steel braces, the wooden beams encircling the mezzanine opening were replaced with steel beams and steel posts were inserted through to the foundation, to provide safe access to the mezzanine level and displays.

The majority of the collections (mostly Level I cultural resources) are in good condition, considering their average age of between 70 and 120 years. A few objects, mainly natural history specimens, are in fair to poor condition. The hiring of a conservation technician in 1993 has led to extensive improvements in the care of the collections through better storage, comprehensive condition assessments, conservation treatments and environmental monitoring. However, the collection will continue to experience slow deterioration from the effects of light, temperature and humidity fluctuations, pollution etc. This process can only be mitigated, not halted.

While improvements since 1993 have mitigated some threats, a number of issues remain as a result of changes to the building's heating system, ventilation, plumbing and attic insulation. These changes have accelerated the deterioration of a number of objects in the collection. Other concerns include the condition of pipe fittings and valves, and the lack of an effective floor drain in the basement storage area and Mechanical Room. Any leak from the mechanical, plumbing or sprinkler systems could have a significant impact on the collections and the building.

The cross-log motif of the building is one of its key heritage values. The brown exterior paint is not in keeping with the original clear finish, compromising historical accuracy and detracting from the building's distinctive architecture.

The building is located in the popular Central Park. The Museum is equipped with fire and security systems.

Education and Presentation

Parks Canada's communication program for the Banff Park Museum consists of personal and non-personal interpretation. Personal interpretation includes a greeting and brief orientation at the front entrance. The museum is involved in a local school program on a limited scale. Daily site tours are offered in the summer months.

Non-personal communication outside includes panels adjacent to the building, the HSMBC plaque on Banff Avenue, information on the website, and a newly designed brochure. Inside the museum, the architectural details of the building, the display cabinets, the natural history exhibits and the original labels convey an impressive historic message.

The site faces a unique challenge in communication because of the complexity of its nationally significant messages. Many visitors expect a more modern museum experience. While existing exhibits convey some of the content outlined in the Commemorative Integrity Statement, there is room for improvement, including a revamping of the Discovery Room.



While the site welcomes a significant number of visitors annually (40,000+), the actual ratio of historic site visitors to townsite visitors is relatively low and should be higher, considering the museum's location and the volume of visitors on Banff Avenue.

Relocation of the HSMBC plaque to the front entrance and improvements to the parking lot have improved the sense of arrival and orientation. The site lacks a landscape plan to address visitor flow, orientation and historic design considerations.

5.2.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Protect the historic site and associated Level I and II cultural resources.

Protect the archaeological resources associated with the former NWMP Post.

Actions

1. Update the conservation plan.
2. Prepare and implement a maintenance plan.
3. Inspect and repair the original rock and mortar foundation; replace polyurethane foam with a more suitable, less flammable alternative.
4. Complete the planned exterior building project – restore the original natural finish, conserve the cross-log detail, replace the shingled roof and repair gaps in the exterior walls.
5. Address knowledge gaps about in situ resources, including the details of as-built features.
6. Identify required modifications to the heating and ventilation system.
7. Upgrade, as a priority, the basement storage area and the mechanical room: repair the radiant hot water heating system valves and pipe connections; install a floor drain in the storage area; connect the drains in the mechanical room to the sewer system.
8. Identify needed improvements to site security; integrate security and fire protection systems.
9. Make more efficient use of the staff work area, including the basement office.
10. Prepare a landscape plan; identify guidelines for the installation and maintenance of contemporary features (interpretive media, walkways, fencing, etc.) and maintenance procedures for the lawn and parking lot.
11. Update the collections inventory and improve the connection with the national Artifact Information System (AIS) database.
12. Undertake conservation work on the specimens in the collection that are in poor condition.
13. Re-install the Victorian display stand in the second floor exhibit.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Improve the street appeal of the building.

Position the Banff Park Museum as one of Banff National Park's must- see attractions.



Improve the visitor experience.

Increase visitation by 15% over the next three years.

Actions

1. Based on visitor research, prepare a communication plan that reflects the site's Commemorative Integrity Statement and its role in natural history interpretation for Banff National Park.
2. Create a unified storyline that includes messages about cultural resources, reflects audience expectations and incorporates innovative methods of delivery.
3. Use the communication strategy as a basis for redevelopment of the Discovery and Reading Rooms.
4. Implement the *National Historic Sites in Alberta and Eastern British Columbia Marketing Plan*.
5. Install new exhibits in the Discovery Room that include messages of national significance.
6. Introduce visual elements (e.g., a flag pole bearing the Union Jack, banners) near the front entrance to attract visitors, improve the sense of place and create an historic ambience.
7. Update the outdoor exhibits by the totem pole, with a focus on the national historic sites of the mountain parks and the family of national historic sites.
8. Update the interpretive panels on Banff Avenue, near the entrance, and at the northeast corner of the building.
9. Direct pedestrian traffic on Banff Avenue to the museum's front entrance.
10. Update the Banff Park Museum website.
11. Upgrade the outreach and school curriculum program.
12. Continue to promote the site at the Calgary Airport, in the *Vacation Planner* and *Best Bets* brochures and in other products.
13. Survey visitors to assess their understanding of the Banff Park Museum, their satisfaction with their experience and their expectations related to improvements; use this information to plan and implement site enhancements.
14. Provide new interpretive media about the former zoo in Central Park.
15. Dedicate a page in the *Mountain Guide* to national historic sites.

Partnerships

Objective

Work with others to protect, present and market the site.

Actions

1. Work with the University of Calgary and the Provincial Museum in Edmonton to inventory, document and manage the Norman Sanson collections as Level I resources.
2. Work with local information outlets (e.g., Town of Banff and Parks Canada) to create awareness and promote Banff's national historic sites and Canada Place as must-see attractions.
3. Continue to work with the Town of Banff on the downtown enhancement project to ensure proposed changes to Banff Avenue complement the protection and presentation of the national historic site.



4. Maintain a passenger drop-off zone in front of the building if parking is removed from Banff Avenue.
5. Revitalize the Heritage Passport with other cultural attractions in Banff (Wyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies and the Luxton Museum).
6. Promote cross marketing strategies with Travel Alberta and Banff-Lake Louise Tourism.
7. Develop a special pass for the regional market to encourage new and repeat visitors.
8. Promote the Ambassador's Pass.
9. Offer "locals" days and other events at the site to increase community support.
10. Coordinate emergency plans with the Town of Banff and Banff National Park.
11. Work with the Town of Banff to ensure a coordinated approach to improve way-finding to key facilities including the Banff Park Museum NHSC.



*Displays in the Banff Park Museum.
Credit: Parks Canada Agency.*



5.3 Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site of Canada

5.3.1 Vision

A trip to the national historic site is a must-see part of the visitor experience at the top of Sulphur Mountain. The remains of the laboratory's concrete foundation, the final switchback on the approach to the site and the prominent high elevation setting of the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station are intact and protected. On-site media bring the story alive so that all visitors understand and experience the connection between the site and the study of cosmic rays. Enhanced off-site heritage presentation connects Canadians to this remote national historic site in ways that improve site awareness and understanding.

5.3.2 Background

The Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station was one of nine research facilities built in support of Canada's participation in the International Geophysical Year (1957-58), when some 80,000 scientists from 67 countries took part in a series of coordinated observations of geophysical phenomena. The laboratory atop Sulphur Mountain offered an ideal location to study cosmic rays – high-energy particles that travel from outer space at nearly the speed of light, striking the Earth from all directions.



Surviving concrete foundation of the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station.

Credit: Parks Canada Agency.

Completed in early 1957, the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station began operation in April of that year. In 1960, the National Research Council transferred responsibility for the station to the University of Calgary. An extension to the original building in 1961 provided space for new, more powerful monitoring equipment in time for the International Year of the Quiet Sun (1964-65), a period of minimal sunspot activity. The building was demolished in 1981, leaving its large concrete foundation and the remains of the access road.

5.3.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station was designated a national historic site in 1982 to commemorate its contribution to the International Geophysical Year.

Two plaques, one at the site and the other at the University of Calgary, explain the station's historic significance.

5.3.4 Setting

Exposed to the elements at an altitude of 2,238 m, the Station is close to the summit of Sulphur Mountain in Banff National Park. A boardwalk (about 1 km long) from the upper gondola terminal or a two-hour hike up Sulphur Mountain from the Upper Hot Springs parking lot takes visitors to the site. The Gondola is operated as a commercial business with a fee. A rugged access road, used by specialized vehicles when the Cosmic Ray Station was operational, is now closed.



5.3.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

The remains of the laboratory's concrete foundation are relatively stable and in fair condition. The site encompasses the final switchback on the original access road, now covered by an elevated boardwalk.

Graffiti, a persistent problem at the adjacent weather observatory, is beginning to appear on the Cosmic Ray Station's interpretive signs.

Education and Visitor Experience

The Cosmic Ray Station is one of the most visited national historic sites in the country. Banff Gondola patrons stroll along the boardwalk to the site. However, visits appear to happen more by accident than design. Most people are unaware they are visiting a national historic site and are apt to confuse the Cosmic Ray Station with the nearby weather observatory.

Interpretation is limited to signs with some basic information. Other historic site messages are non-existent or unclear. Some exhibits require upgrading.

While the boardwalk allows safe access to the site and limits erosion, it causes some confusion for visitors who may think the laboratory's foundation is part of the boardwalk. The boardwalk also obscures the original access road.

The site is closed in winter because of the amount of snow on the boardwalk and concerns for visitor safety. Visitors have also used the old access road as an alternate route off the mountain to return to the Banff townsite.

5.3.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objectives

Maintain the integrity of the concrete foundation and the final switchback.

Preserve the character of the surrounding landscape in ways that complement the national historic site.

Actions

1. Monitor the site and its resources regularly.
2. Implement a conservation and maintenance plan.
3. Prepare a strategy to deal with graffiti at the Cosmic Ray Station and the weather observatory.
4. Consider the recommendations of the 2006 *Commemorative Integrity Evaluation* in management decisions.

Education and Visitor Experience

Objective

Raise awareness of the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site.



Actions

1. Upgrade on-site exhibits.
2. Add more information about the Station to the Parks Canada website.
3. Include information about the Station in the proposed national historic sites exhibit near the Banff Park Museum.
4. Provide basic information about the Station's history and its status as a national historic site at the base of the gondola.
5. Improve site safety messages and orientation signage.
6. Initiate seasonal closures due to snow and avalanche hazards.

Partnerships**Objective**

In partnership with public and private sector organizations, continue to protect and promote awareness of the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site.

Actions

1. Work with the operator of the Sulphur Mountain Gondola on projects to provide information about the site.
2. Work with the University of Calgary to improve on-site and off-site interpretive media.

5.4 Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

Parks Canada has prepared a strategic environmental assessment under policy (*The Cabinet Directive for The Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*), to consider any adverse environmental effects, including cumulative effects, that may arise from implementation of the management plans for the three historic sites in Banff Field Unit. The strategic environmental assessment also verifies that the plans do not contradict the management plan for Banff National Park, and that actions proposed in the plans will not diminish ecological integrity.

From a strategic perspective, the ecological and cultural resources and management issues for each of the sites are well understood. Each site has an approved commemorative integrity statement that sets out the values of the sites. The plans explicitly provide direction to improve commemorative integrity, visitor experience and learning. Effective protective measures are in place or achievable, given that Parks Canada manages land use in Banff National Park through the approved park management plan (2004), and through the *Canada National Parks Act* and regulations. A *State of the Park Report* for Banff National Park was prepared in 2003, and provides a rational basis for considering the environmental effects, cumulative or otherwise, of the plans for the national historic sites. Ecological management of the Cave and Basin NHSC is also guided by the *Species at Risk Recovery Strategy* for the Banff Springs Snail, a key document for ensuring maintenance and restoration of ecological integrity at the site.

Key findings of the strategic environmental assessment are:



- The majority of actions proposed in the management plans for the Banff Park Museum National Historic Site and the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station National Historic Site are expected to be environmentally neutral. Actions related to physical conservation and landscaping work will result in minor adverse effects to local aesthetics and vegetation values. These actions are subject to application of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* prior to implementation.
- The management plan for the Cave and Basin National Historic Site was assessed in consideration of the dynamic relationship between managing for commemorative and ecological integrity and facilitating quality visitor experiences. Management actions to protect or enhance some features of the site may act as stressors to other elements.

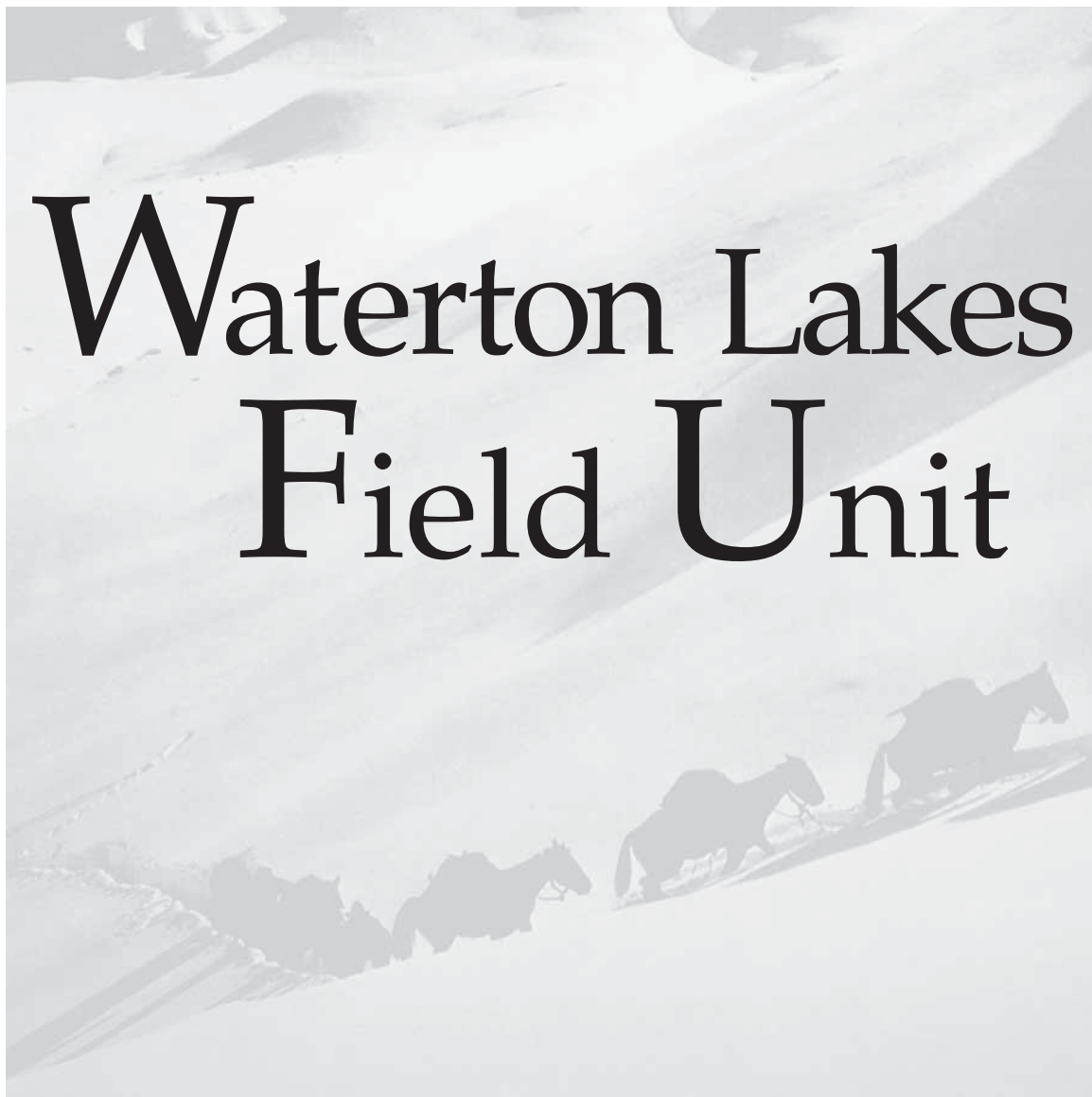
Key recommendations from the strategic environmental assessment of the Cave and Basin NHSC Management Plan are intended to address the uncertainties inherent trying to manage potential conflicting values and include:

- The importance of integrating protection plans for cultural resources and natural resources into one comprehensive approach. Integration will ensure that progress is made towards resource protection without compromising other objectives.
- That recovery actions related to the Banff Springs snail be implemented in a strategic sequence in the context of the whole management plan and that monitoring take place at each stage before determining the need for, and nature of further actions.
- That maintaining the special sense of place of the Cave take into account the visitor experience needs to touch thermal waters and snail habitat protection needs.
- That themes of special expositions should be consistent with those of the communications strategy within the context of the commemorative integrity statement for the site and the *Recovery Strategy and Action Plan for the Banff Springs Snail*. Expositions or events not consistent with the commemorative integrity statement would not be considered.

In conclusion, with application of suggested mitigating measures, implementation of the management plans for the Banff Park Museum, the Sulphur Mountain Cosmic Ray Station and the Cave and Basin national historic sites are not expected to result in important adverse environmental effects. Initiatives proposed in the plans are compatible and consistent with management plan direction for Banff National Park, and are expected to make a positive contribution to the commemorative integrity of the sites through improved protection, education, and visitor experience. Implementation of the plans, together with the management plan for Banff National Park, and in the case of the *Cave and Basin the Snail Recovery Strategy*, are expected to contribute to the enhancement of ecological and commemorative integrity in the park.







6.0 Waterton Lakes Field Unit

The Waterton Lakes Field Unit includes Waterton Lakes National Park of Canada and the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site of Canada.

The First Oil Well NHSC is located within Waterton Lakes National Park, a place with diverse physical, biological and cultural resources. The park has two national historic sites, the First Oil Well in Western Canada and the Prince of Wales Hotel, as well as hundreds of known archaeological sites, heritage buildings and structures, historic objects and cultural landscapes.

The park is open year round, although most facilities are closed in winter. Annual visitation is more than 230,000. The community of Waterton is located within the national park.

Scenic driving is a popular activity in the park. Located on a winding mountain road that runs 16 km along the Cameron Valley from the townsite to Cameron Lake, First Oil Well is one of the attractions along the Akamina Parkway.



Oil and gas activity continues to play a vital role in the landscape surrounding the national park. Structures associated with the oil and gas industry are a common sight on lands to the north of the park. The oil and gas industry supports the protection and presentation of the national historic site.

Table 4. Status of the National Historic Site in the Waterton Field Unit

| National Historic Site | CIS Approved | CI Evaluation | FHBRO Designation |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| First Oil Well in Western Canada | ✓ | | N/A |

* CIS = Commemorative Integrity Statement, CI = Commemorative Integrity
FHBRO = Federal Heritage Building Review Office

6.1 First Oil Well in Western Canada National Historic Site of Canada

6.1.1 Vision

First Oil Well in Western Canada NHSC is appreciated as the first producing oil well in western Canada. The protected and presented well provides insight into the roots of the oil industry in Canada. Regional residents, visitors and the active oil and gas industry value the national historic site as an early pioneering effort.

6.1.2 Background

While the Geological Survey of Canada scouted a number of places in western Canada for oil as early as the 1870s, it wasn't until 1884 that serious oil exploration occurred in Waterton. First Nations had long been aware of oil seeping from the ground along Cameron Creek, but claims by P. Patrick, who staked the first claim, and William Aldridge in the late 1800s amounted to little. Aldridge harvested oil in a primitive fashion by enlarging a seepage pool, soaking up the oil in burlap sacks, and selling the product to local farmers.

Drilling operations elsewhere in the west were proving equally unsuccessful and it wasn't until 1902 that the Rocky Mountain Development Company drilled the first moderately successful well in western Canada. Located near Cameron Creek and known by a variety of names – Rocky Mountain Development No. 1, the Lineham Discovery Well and the Patrick Discovery Well – the well produced 8,000 barrels of oil at a rate of 300 barrels a day. It was abandoned when the drilling apparatus became jammed in the well.

In 1904, the Western Coal and Oil Company from Vancouver drilled for oil near Cameron Falls, striking a flow of one barrel/day. They were responsible for the first settlement in the present community of Waterton Park, constructing a cookhouse, bunkhouse, blacksmith shop, office, stable and engine room.



Parks Canada Photo of the HSMBC plaque and exhibits on the concrete foundation.



Further explorations in the Waterton area proved fruitless but the success, brief as it was, encouraged the search for oil in Alberta.

6.1.3 Becoming a National Historic Site

The historical importance of the first producing oil well in western Canada was brought to the attention of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada in 1958, and in 1965, the well was declared of national historic significance. A monument incorporating the embedded drill tools was designed especially for the site and installed in 1968.

6.1.4 Setting

The First Oil Well in Western Canada is located about eight kilometres from the community, along the Akamina Parkway. The site is situated between the parkway and Cameron Creek.

6.1.5 Current Situation

Heritage Protection

The well is the park's only Level I cultural resource. In spite of periodic flooding on Cameron Creek, the site is currently stable and protected. However, a large flood could have an impact on the site's resources.

Level II cultural resources in the surrounding area include a marked grave, an oil seepage pool, drill holes, machinery, and the remains of Oil City. The remains of a drill site, refuse pits and a steam engine have been recorded on upper Lineham Creek. While the surface inventory of Level II cultural resources is relatively complete, gaps do exist. The area above the parking lot requires further investigation. Conservation of metal machinery is an ongoing concern.

Education and Visitor Experience

The site is open year-round, however, most people visit from spring to late fall. In spite of traffic counts of some 43,000 to 45,000 cars per year using the Akamina Parkway, a low number of motorists stop at the site. A standard Parks Canada sign on the parkway marks the site. A large lot, built in the late 1960s, provides ample parking. The only information available is the Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada plaque. Better signs, new interpretive media, and increased marketing are needed for the site to operate closer to capacity.

6.1.6 Objectives & Actions

Heritage Protection

Objective

Protect the site's Level I and Level II cultural resources.

Actions

1. Complete the inventory of Level II cultural resources.
2. Monitor cultural resources.
3. Review methods to conserve metal machinery objects; implement conservation measures as required.
4. Evaluate the stability of the stream near the well; undertake protection measures if required.
5. Retain the footprint of the existing parking lot.



Education and Visitor Experience

Objectives

Enhance the on-site and off-site visitor experience.

Ensure heritage presentation conveys the national historic significance of the site.

Improve awareness of the site.

Increase the number of visitors to the site.

Actions

1. Improve highway signs marking the site.
2. Install new interpretive signs near the site and near Cameron Falls in the community of Waterton.
3. Update websites with new stories and images to build awareness and understanding of the site and its significance.
4. Improve the communication of Parks Canada messages, including the reasons for the site's designation.

Partnerships

Objective

Pursue cooperative approaches to improve awareness and understanding of the national historic site.

Action

1. Work with the Petroleum industry, the Waterton Natural History Association, local museums and educational institutions to present national historic site messages.

6.2 Summary of the Strategic Environmental Assessment

6.2.1 First Oil Well in Western Canada NHSC

Parks Canada has prepared a strategic environmental assessment under policy (*The Cabinet Directive for The Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*), to consider any adverse environmental effects, including cumulative effects, that may arise from implementation of the management plan for the First Oil Well NHSC in Waterton Lakes National Park. The strategic environmental assessment also verifies that the plan does not contradict the management plan for Waterton Lakes National Park, and that actions proposed in the plans will not diminish ecological integrity.

From a strategic perspective, the ecological and cultural resources and management issues for the site are well understood. The Waterton Lakes National Park Management Plan outlines strategic goals in relation to the First Oil Well site including ensuring the commemorative integrity of the site, the protection of cultural resources and the presentation of associated themes.

Key findings of the strategic environmental assessment are:

- Although the First Oil Well is a long established site it is underutilized and management plan actions are aimed at enhancing the visitor experience, enhancing awareness and increasing visitation.



- Improvements to highway signs and interpretive signs at the site and in town will have minimal environmental impacts but are expected to increase awareness and visitation. Public use will be monitored to identify any adverse impacts related to increased use including traffic flow issues.

In conclusion, with application of suggested mitigating measures, implementation of the management plan for the First Oil Well NHSC is not expected to result in important adverse environmental effects. Initiatives proposed in the plan are compatible and consistent with management plan direction for Waterton Lakes National Park, and are expected to make a positive contribution to the commemorative integrity of the site through improved awareness, education, and visitor experience. Implementation of the plan, together with the management plan for Waterton Lakes National Park is expected to contribute to the enhancement of ecological and cultural integrity in the park.







Implementation of Management Plans

7.0 Implementation of Management Plans

These 14 management plans set out a long-term vision for national historic sites under the administration of the mountain parks. Each management plan provides direction for achieving the Parks Canada mandate, including ensuring commemorative integrity, the facilitation of meaningful visitor experiences, and the provision of public education opportunities. The plans reflect Parks Canada's cultural resource management principles and practices.

Field Unit Superintendents (FUSs) and all managers are responsible for the execution of management plans in their respective field unit. Annual reporting on management planning implementation is a priority for Parks Canada. Reporting methods may range from distribution of print media to multi-day fora that are professionally facilitated. Reporting requirements will be streamlined for both operational and non-operational national historic sites by linking annual national historic site reporting to that of the annual national park reporting processes. Annual national historic site implementation reports will:

- address specific progress made in advancing the Parks Canada mandate; and
- report on the results of actions in the approved plans.



Management plans will be subject to periodic review and may be amended to reflect changing circumstances. A formal review of management plans will be undertaken in five years. At that time, Parks Canada will determine if the direction set out by the current plan remains valid or whether an amendment is needed. Public consultation is an important part of this process. Any resulting plan amendments, beyond minor administrative adjustments, will be tabled in Parliament. The amendment will be tabled in Parliament.

State of National Historic Sites Reports are produced on a five-year cycle. The “state of” report provides a synopsis of the current condition of a national park, national historic site or national marine conservation area and assesses performance in meeting established goals and objectives for indicators associated with the Agency’s mandate. They are the basis for the five-year management plan review.

The *Commemorative Integrity Evaluation* (CIE) will continue to be used as the key process to allow Parks Canada to report on the state of national historic sites and to address elements that have been rated “poor” as a result of an evaluation. The CIE originates with the *Parks Canada Agency Act*, which states that it is in the national interest to ensure the commemorative integrity of national historic sites.

Park Canada has developed a framework for measuring performance in delivering on the visitor experience component of its mandate. Each management plan has reconfirmed the Agency’s commitment to providing opportunities for Canadians to have meaningful national historic site experiences. This commitment will help Parks Canada fulfill its range of mandated requirements by positioning the “visitor experience” at the core of its responsibilities, together with protection and education. This framework includes Key Performance Areas, Success Indicators and Measurement Systems. The Key Performance Areas (KPAs) are:

- understanding Visitors;
- providing Opportunities;
- delivering High Quality Service; and
- connecting Visitors Personally with the Place.

Strategies, objectives and actions in each management plan will be implemented through the Mountain Park and Field Unit Sustainable Business Plans. Implementation depends on the allocation of resources within the Field Units. Cooperative initiatives with partners will be sought to identify, evaluate and pursue appropriate projects.

