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Sir Wilfrid Laurier

National Historic Site of Canada

Management Statement

2018



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SIR WILFRID LAURIER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE OF CANADA MANAGEMENT STATEMENT, 2018.

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Foreword



Canada's national parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas belong to all Canadians and offer truly Canadian experiences.

These special places make up one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and cultural heritage areas in the world.

The Government is committed to preserving our natural and cultural heritage, expanding the system of protected places and contributing to the recovery of species-at-risk. At the same time, we must continue to offer new and innovative visitor and outreach programs and activities so that more Canadians can experience Parks Canada places and learn about our environment, history and culture.

This new management statement for Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada supports this vision.

Management statements are developed through extensive consultation and input from various people and organizations, including Indigenous peoples, local and regional residents, visitors and the dedicated team at Parks Canada.

National parks, national historic sites and national marine conservation areas are a priority for the Government of Canada. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this management statement for their commitment and spirit of co-operation.

As the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, I applaud this collaborative effort and I am pleased to approve the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada Management Statement.

Catherine McKenna

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

Recommendations

Recommended by:

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Parks Canada manages one of the finest and most extensive systems of protected natural and historic areas in the world. The Agency's mandate is to protect and present these places for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. This management statement outlines Parks Canada's management approach and objectives for the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada.

The Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site of Canada Site is located at the heart of the municipality of Saint-Lin-Laurentides in the Lanaudière region, approximately 60 km north of Montréal. The site was recognized as having national historic importance in 1938, as illustrated in the following commemorative statement:

“The site, as the birthplace of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, commemorates the life and work of this prime minister of Canada.”

The site is dedicated to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the first francophone to become prime minister of Canada. An interpretation centre tells of his life and political career. In the small Robinette House, constructed in 1871 on a property belonging to Laurier's father, visitors can discover the politician's place of origin. Housing more than 600 objects, this residence reproduces the interior of a country home at the turn of the twentieth century. Visitors can also enjoy the yard and the garden. Each year, the site hosts Canada Day celebrations and the town's Fête au village.

The site is open to the public during the summer from the end of June to the beginning of September. In 2016 and 2017, the site drew 623 visitors. In 2017, more than 1,900 people visited the site for free for the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation.

To extend its reach, the national historic site works with several local partners, such as the Société d'histoire et du Patrimoine de Saint-Lin-Laurentides and the Association des loisirs folkloriques de Lanaudière. The site also collaborates with the two other national historic sites commemorating Sir Wilfrid Laurier: Laurier House National Historic Site in Ottawa and the Musée Laurier in Arthabaska.

Management Approach

Parks Canada's aim is to continue with the management approach established for the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site. The site will remain a protected heritage area dedicated to discovery and education. Its goal will be to showcase the life and work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as well as rural lifestyle at the turn of the twentieth century. Parks Canada will also work on fostering partnerships to take advantage of opportunities that further the discovery of the national historic site through increased visitor attendance generated by alternative activities or events.

Management Objectives

Resource conservation: Parks Canada protects the cultural resources of heritage sites in accordance with the Cultural Resource Management Policy and the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada. To maintain the site's commemorative integrity, the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site strives to preserve cultural resources for current and future generations. These efforts include the continued monitoring of cultural resources, as well as the completion and documentation of ad hoc conservation projects. Moreover, any action that could negatively impact the cultural resources will be the subject of an impact assessment, as stipulated in the Cultural Resource Management Policy.

Public understanding, commemoration, and appreciation: Parks Canada's goal is to continue communicating and effectively commemorating the life and work of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the diversity of historical perspectives related to his career, as well as presenting the rural lifestyle at the turn of the twentieth century. The national historic site will also continue to provide information online to help people learn about the childhood home of this politician. Finally, the site will keep improving its visibility by working jointly with other sites dedicated to Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Relationships with local and regional partners: The national historic site would like to seize opportunities for collaboration with the town, partners, and Indigenous communities to promote the site and hold activities that complement the current offering. This will help animate the site, facilitate its integration with existing networks, and allow a greater number of Canadians to take advantage of the place.

Maintaining the site: Parks Canada maintains the area to support its heritage value, to present a positive image to the public, and to affirm Parks Canada's brand.

Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

In accordance with *The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals* (2010), a strategic environmental assessment is conducted on all management statements tabled in Parliament. The purpose of strategic environmental assessment is to incorporate environmental considerations into the development of public policies, plans, and program proposals to support environmentally-sound decision making. Individual projects undertaken to implement management statement objectives at the site will be evaluated separately to determine if an impact assessment is required under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 2012*, or successor legislation.

A strategic environmental assessment was undertaken on this management statement, and the management direction found within has been adjusted to respond to findings. This assessment has been submitted to participants in the consultations related to the development of this management plan. The concerns raised were taken into account. The following presents the environmental assessment.

The goals set out in the management statement proposal consist in continuing with the management approach established for the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site. The site will remain a protected heritage area dedicated to discovery and education. Parks Canada will also try to establish partnerships to take advantage of opportunities that further the discovery of the national historic site through increased visitor attendance.

The implementation of measures to achieve the objectives set out in the management statement proposal will help promote the site and its activities. The impact assessments will evaluate the negative effects that each of the proposed projects could have on the site.

The strategic environmental assessment confirmed that the Sir Wilfrid Laurier National Historic Site's management statement proposal would have several positive effects on the visitor experience.

It is impossible to determine whether the management statement proposal will make a significant contribution to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy's goals, but considering Parks Canada's mandate, it is unlikely that it will hinder their progress. No significant negative environmental impacts are expected following the implementation of this management statement.