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Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse

National Historic Sites of Canada

Management Plan

2022



2022

Fort Rodd Hill and
Fisgard Lighthouse
National Historic Sites of Canada

Management Plan

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FORT RODD HILL AND FISGARD LIGHTHOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES OF CANADA MANAGEMENT PLAN, 2022.

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Note to readers

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

Parks Canada acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic may have unforeseeable impacts on the *Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan*. Parks Canada will inform Indigenous partners, stakeholders and the public of any such impacts through its annual implementation update on the implementation of this plan.

For more information about the management plan or about

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Foreword



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

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

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

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

This new management plan for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada supports this vision.

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

As the Minister responsible for Parks Canada, I applaud this collaborative effort and I am pleased to approve the *Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan*.

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

Steven Guilbeault

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

Recommendations

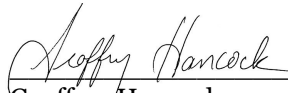
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Executive Summary

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are beautiful places to visit. Located in Colwood, British Columbia within the Greater Victoria Region, a visit to Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse rewards people with scenic coastal views and fresh air, while offering engaging opportunities to appreciate cultural and natural heritage. Through exploring the remains of the military fortification and admiring the lighthouse, visitors learn about Canada's military and maritime history. The sites and adjacent lands also offer other opportunities to connect with the rich cultural and natural heritage of British Columbia's south coast and contribute to Canada's efforts to conserve biodiversity, and have led the way in taking a holistic and integrated view of cultural and natural values. As national historic sites and treasured greenspace, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse offer experiences for everyone to enjoy.

To deliver these diverse experiences, the roles of partners and stakeholders are vital. As lands and waters that are culturally significant to First Nations, increasing the level of collaboration with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations is particularly important to Parks Canada. Parks Canada also works closely with conservation and tourism partners in the Greater Victoria Region, and dedicated volunteers make a significant contribution at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse.

The management plan focuses on three key strategies that will guide management of the national historic sites. The plan presents a 15-year vision for the sites, and outlines strategies and objectives that support the vision. The management plan also introduces principles and opportunities related to the management of adjacent lands that contribute to the special character of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse.

Key Strategy 1: Conserving a Cultural Landscape

Building on growing relationships, significant infrastructure investments, and ongoing successes, the focus of this key strategy is the conservation of cultural and natural resources.

This key strategy will achieve the following objectives:

- The condition of heritage buildings is maintained or improved;
- The condition of objects and archaeological resources is maintained or improved; and,
- The condition of the natural environment and landscape features are maintained.

Key Strategy 2: Working with Partners

Recognising the intersection of layered histories at the sites and opportunities to share a wide range of stories with diverse audiences, this key strategy focuses on the importance of collaborating with others.

This key strategy will achieve the following objectives:

- Relationships with First Nations are strengthened;
- Relationships between Parks Canada and key partners within the region are broadened and strengthened; and,
- Wayfinding information related to accessing the sites is improved.

Key Strategy 3: Welcoming Visitors

Expanding on recent steps to assess visitor needs, update interpretive materials and introduce new visitor experiences, this key strategy sets direction for a revitalised visitor offer.

This key strategy will achieve the following objectives:

- Visitor experiences that are accessible and meaningful to visitors with a wide range of abilities, identities and interests are maintained or improved;
- The experiences offered at the sites are shared with national and international audiences, increasing awareness and inspiring them to visit;
- While being managed within the capacity of the sites, visitation increases; and,
- The sites' identity as a community resource is strengthened through increasing the use of the sites as a venue for community and family events.

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1.0 Introduction

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

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

The *Parks Canada Agency Act* requires Parks Canada to prepare a management plan for national historic sites administered by the Agency. The *Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan*, once approved by the Minister responsible for Parks Canada and tabled in Parliament ensures Parks Canada's accountability to Canadians, outlining how management of the historic sites will achieve measurable results in support of the Agency's mandate.

Indigenous peoples are important partners in the stewardship of heritage places, with connections to the lands and waters since time immemorial. Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, partners, stakeholders, and the Canadian public were invited to be involved with the preparation of the management plan, helping to shape the future direction of the national historic sites. The plan sets clear, strategic direction for the management and operation of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites by articulating a vision, key strategies and objectives. Parks Canada will report annually on progress toward achieving the plan objectives and will review the plan every ten years, or sooner if required.

This plan is not an end in and of itself. Parks Canada will maintain an open dialogue on the implementation of the management plan, to ensure that it remains relevant and meaningful. The plan will serve as the focus for ongoing engagement and, where appropriate, consultation, on the management of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites in years to come.

2.0 Significance of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites

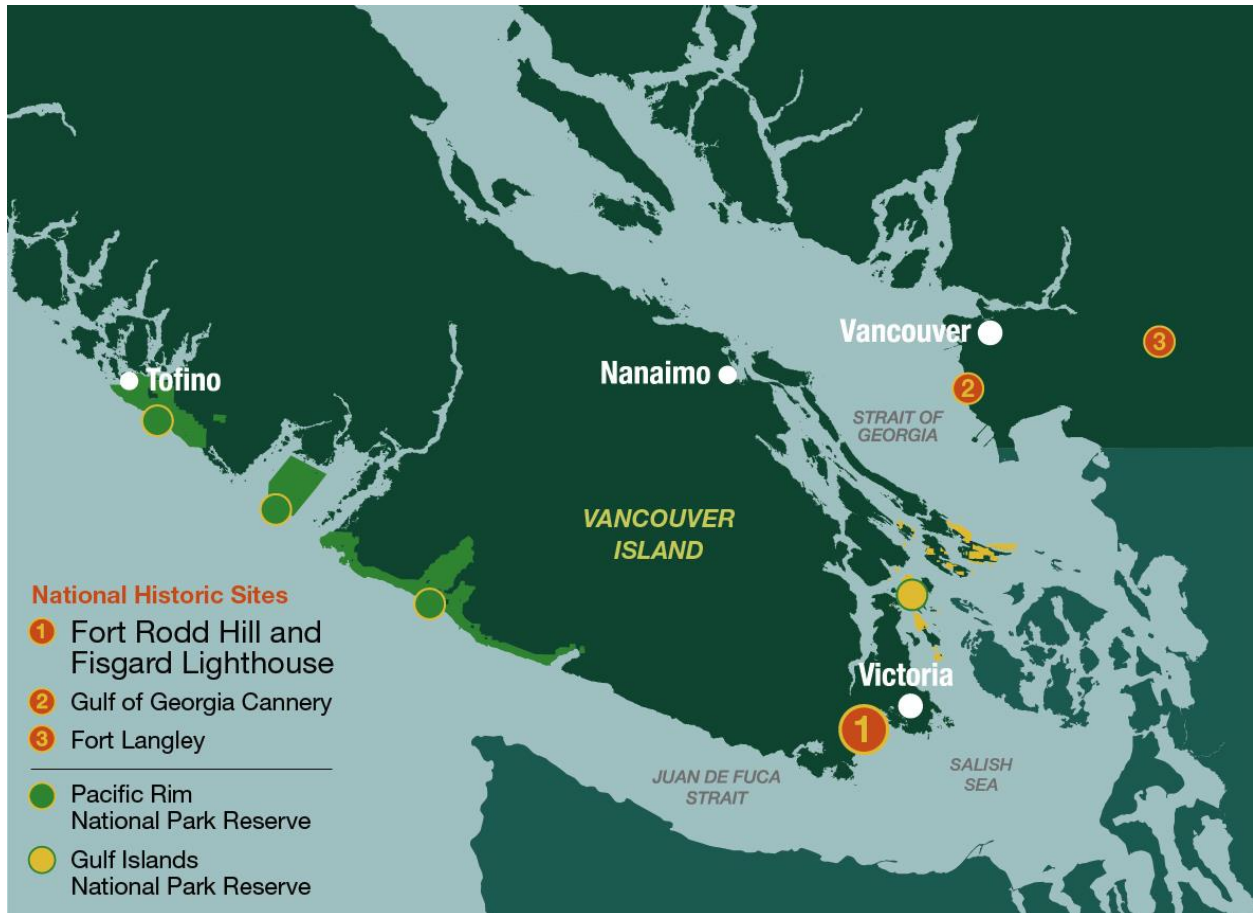
Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are within the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the lands and waters around Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are an ecologically, culturally and spiritually important place for these Indigenous communities. Acknowledging the impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples and their connection to traditionally used lands is a critical part of healing and taking a step toward reconciliation.

Located in the southwest corner of Canada, west of the City of Victoria, British Columbia, where the Juan de Fuca Strait and the Strait of Georgia meet in the Salish Sea (Map 1), Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites conserve and present Canada's military and maritime heritage. In 1958, both heritage places were designated by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as national historic sites. Parks Canada began operations of both sites in 1962. Although Fort Rodd Hill, a military site, and Fisgard Lighthouse, a marine navigation facility, do not seem directly related thematically, their co-location underscores the land's value as a desirable and strategic location. The sites are adjacent to one another and are inseparable heritage landmarks. In addition, the sites and adjacent lands contribute to Canada's efforts to conserve biodiversity. As national historic sites and a treasured greenspace, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse offer unique experiences for everyone to enjoy.

This plan considers the sites' values and opportunities in addition to the initial reasons for designation as national historic sites. Sharing these layered and interrelated themes at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard

Lighthouse is guided by Parks Canada's system plan for national historic sites, a *Framework for History and Commemoration*. This framework outlines a more inclusive, accessible and engaging approach to Canada's history. Extending the stories that are told at heritage places, beyond their original commemorative intent for designation, allows for more narratives, perspectives and voices to be heard. Parks Canada's priority is to share Indigenous peoples' history and experiences.

Map 1: Regional Setting



A Significant Ecocultural Landscape

As with many maritime sites of significance for military protection or navigation, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are located along a coastline that offers excellent views and provides an ideal setting to experience the coastal landscape, as well as to contemplate stories of the land, sea and people.

Following millennia of being inhabited and cared for by First Nations, decades as a military site, and decades more after being set aside as protected heritage places, it is an additional benefit beyond their reasons for designation as national historic sites that these lands retain their value as habitat for a number of species listed under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*. The lands retain a special character and are significant for the cultural and natural resources that can be found here, including Garry Oak ecosystems, a managed cultural landscape that supports a *Kwetlal* (camas) food system for First Nations. These ecosystems are among the most endangered in Canada, with high biodiversity and less than five percent of the ecosystem's original range remaining in a near-natural condition, creating important opportunities for conservation.

The suite of cultural and natural resources at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse provides opportunities for visitors to experience the sites and adjacent lands through multiple lenses, that speak to

the past, present and future of Canada, and also affords an opportunity to learn about rare ecosystems, and First Nations' cultures and stewardship practices.

Fort Rodd Hill

Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site commemorates the role of the Victoria-Esquamalt fortifications (1878–1956) in the defence of Victoria and the Esquamalt naval base, and by extension the defence of Canada and the British Empire. Residents of the region may be familiar with other sites along the shorelines where remains of military fortifications can also be explored, and Fort Rodd Hill is the national historic site that formally commemorates this defence system. A map of the Victoria-Esquamalt coastal defence system is provided as Appendix A.

The significance of the fortifications at Fort Rodd Hill dates back to temporary batteries constructed in response to global British-Russian tensions that peaked in the late 1870s. Canada negotiated with Great Britain in the 1890s to build a series of permanent defences to be used by British troops. The bulk of Fort Rodd Hill's original structures were constructed between 1895 and 1901, making it the first large-scale fortification on Canada's west coast, and Fort Rodd Hill was the most elaborate of the fortifications.

Canada assumed full responsibility of the fortifications in 1906. By the end of the Second World War, some of the fortifications had been rebuilt and greatly expanded. Also of relevance to Fort Rodd Hill is the cooperative Canadian and American defence system in the Strait of Juan de Fuca that was established during the Second World War and the early stages of the Cold War, during which time personnel in bunkers at Fort Rodd Hill (in the Plotting Room) were tracking the movements of ships and aircraft. By 1956 the facilities at Fort Rodd Hill became obsolete and military operations ceased.

The history of Fort Rodd Hill and the Victoria-Esquamalt fortifications has close thematic links with other national historic sites. The Halifax Defence Complex, in particular, protected Canada's major east coast naval base in the same way that the Victoria-Esquamalt fortifications defended Canada's west coast naval station.

Fisgard Lighthouse

Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Site commemorates the site's role as the first permanent lighthouse on Canada's Pacific coast. Development of Fisgard Lighthouse, and its sister station in the Strait of Juan de Fuca at Race Rocks, was considered a significant political commitment by the British government, which coincided with an influx of American gold miners. Erected during 1859 and 1860 by the British and Colonial Governments, the lighthouse sits on Fisgard Island, located on the west side of the entrance to Esquamalt Harbour, a prime location for a mariner's guide to the harbour. The original lantern for Fisgard Lighthouse was brought over from England with the site's first lightkeeper. The guiding light from Fisgard Lighthouse first shone on November 16, 1860.

In addition to recognition as a national historic site, Fisgard Lighthouse is also classified as a federal heritage building through the Federal Heritage Building Review Office, and designated as a heritage lighthouse under the *Heritage Lighthouse Protection Act*.

Fisgard Lighthouse is an active lighthouse, operating as a navigational aid managed by the Canadian Coast Guard. In the early 1940s, the acetylene lamp was replaced by a battery-powered electric light. Prior to its automation, the lighthouse keeper was on hand 24/7 to oversee operation of the light, and lived in quarters that are attached to the lighthouse. In the days of the on-site lightkeeper, connection from the lighthouse to shore was by row boat. A causeway was built in 1951-52 connecting Fisgard Island to Fort Rodd Hill. The residence of the lighthouse keeper is open to visitors and contains exhibits about the site's history.

Fisgard Lighthouse has several national historic site counterparts on the east coast, the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River in Quebec, testimony to the vital role of lighthouses in 19th- and 20th-century marine navigation. Fisgard Lighthouse shares a particularly close thematic tie with Cape Spear Lighthouse in Newfoundland, which was built in the 1840s and used much the same technology in

guiding ships to St. John's Harbour. It is notable that Cape Spear, too, was the site of a Second World War coastal artillery battery.

3.0 Planning Context

Situated on the traditional lands and waters of Coast Salish First Nations, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are located in the City of Colwood, 14 kilometers west of the City of Victoria, within the Greater Victoria Region. The sites are across the water from the City of Esquimalt, which is still home to Canada's Pacific naval base. Set in the fast-growing suburban areas of Colwood and Langford, the sites are accessible by road, but are not situated on major public transportation corridors. While the waterfront location makes an attractive setting, there is no infrastructure to facilitate access from the water. Visiting the sites provides people with an opportunity to appreciate the coastal environment and take in inspiring views representative of British Columbia's south coast. Whether for a solitary, reflective stroll, or to participate in a community celebration, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are memorable places to visit, offering opportunities to re-energise and reconnect.

Although designated separately, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are physically connected by a causeway and managed as a single unit. Visitors to one site receive information about and can experience the other site, and any management action for one site directly affects the other; so, these sites are administered as one place, under a shared management plan. The two designated places are often referred to as a single site.

Layered History

The designations of the national historic sites relate to the relatively recent history of Canada's development (construction of the lighthouse starting in 1859). Additionally, the lands and waters around Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are part of the traditional territories of the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples, who continue to exercise stewardship responsibilities over their homelands. Archaeological evidence documents First Nations' presence at the sites dating back at least 3,000 years: prior to the colonial system of reserve lands for First Nations, members of these nations enjoyed use and occupancy of these lands, including the cultivation of camas and harvesting shellfish along the shore. This land has nurtured and inspired countless generations whose prosperity continues to be ensured by a deep connection between the land and people. The living connections between land and people, between water and land, and between forest and beach, contribute to making the lands and waters of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse a national treasure of Canada.

The present-day communities of Songhees and Esquimalt Nations are within the immediate vicinity of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse, located across the water on the east side of Esquimalt Harbour. Management and programming at the sites has benefitted from the involvement of Songhees and Esquimalt leadership and community members. Songhees and Esquimalt Nations' Chiefs and councils have highlighted the importance of acknowledging and honouring their connections to the sites and adjacent lands, and Parks Canada team members continue to work collaboratively with both nations to ensure that many voices are incorporated into the presentation of the sites, and that experiences and knowledge from Songhees and Esquimalt Nations are shared respectfully with Canadians.

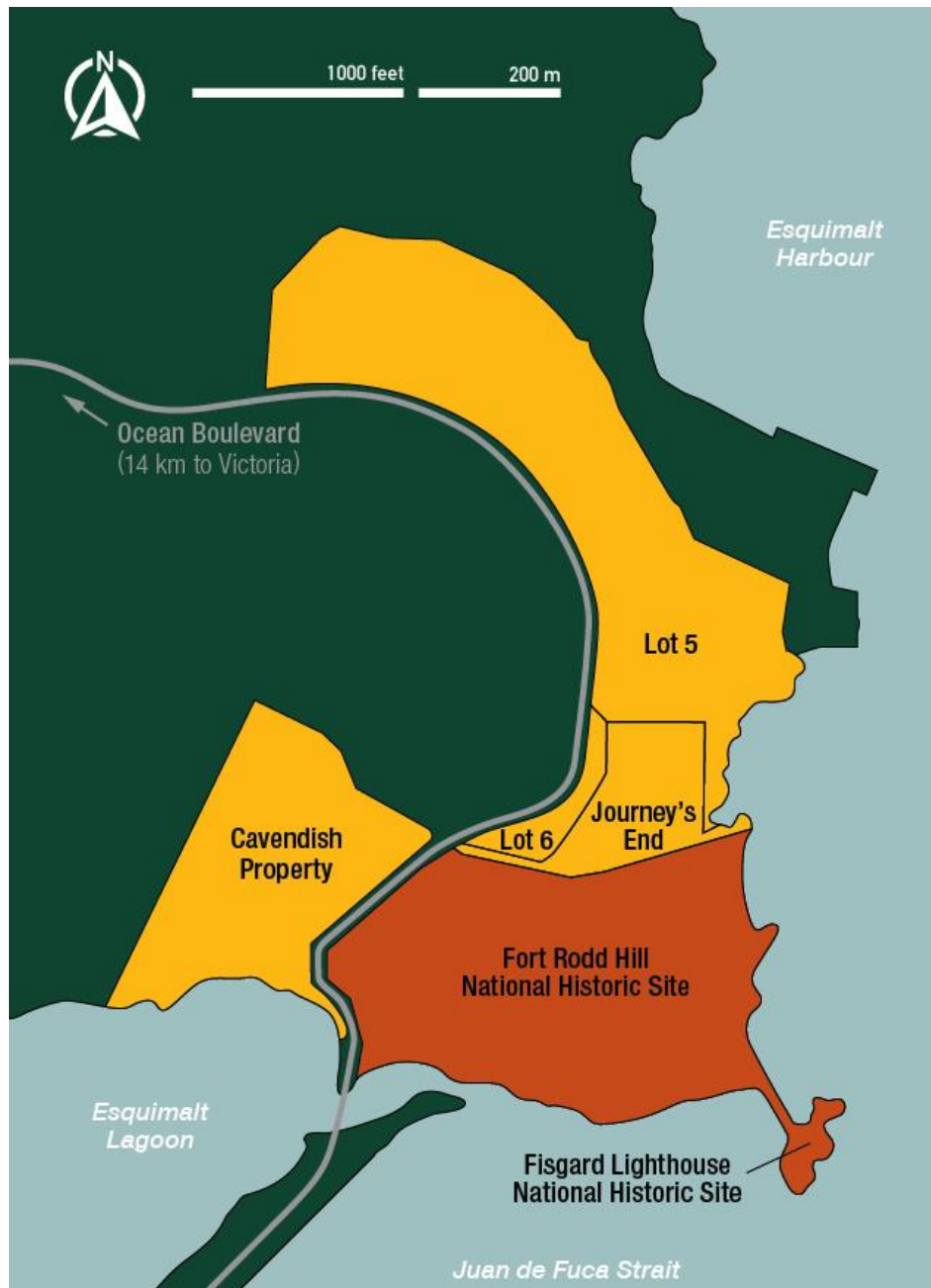
Buildings and Grounds

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse consist of 18.47 hectares. Providing a buffer for the designated national historic sites, Parks Canada also administers federal lands adjacent to the sites. These adjacent parcels of land, known as Cavendish, Journey's End, Lot 5 and Lot 6, consist of an additional 35.6 hectares (Map 2). These adjacent lands, administered by Parks Canada since 1978, are referred to as "program support lands" because the properties are not formally part of the designated national historic sites (they are not gazetted under legislation as part of a national historic site). In this management plan,

the two national historic sites together with the adjacent program support lands are collectively referred to as the Parks Canada Lands.

The designated places of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse consist of the abandoned military structures associated with the fortification and the lighthouse on Fisgard Island, connected by a causeway (Map 2). There are 27 original heritage-designated buildings at Fort Rodd Hill. Significant remains of Fort Rodd Hill's military infrastructure include three separate artillery batteries, two built in 1895 and one built in 1899, as well as associated buildings and equipment, including officers' quarters. The spacing and orientation of the gun batteries, walls, search lights, and the layout of the site reflect military strategy of the time. The spacing between the batteries and related facilities allowed for storage, encampments, and the marshalling of troops and materials. The physical layout contributes to how visitors experience the site (Map 3). The guns, tunnels, towers, hidden search light, and other remnants of the site's military history provide visitors with an opportunity to explore and learn about the place. From the batteries, visitors have an unobstructed view to the shoreline, across the mouth of Esquimalt Harbour, and to the Olympic Mountains of Washington State in the United States of America. The view of the shoreline includes other points of land that were also home to battery sites of the Victoria-Esquimalt coastal defence system (see Appendix A).

Map 2: The National Historic Sites and Program Support Lands



Map 3: Site Map



Conservation and Adjacent Lands

The Parks Canada Lands are of interconnected cultural, ecological and spiritual importance to Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. The lands also serve as a treasured greenspace for surrounding communities that are experiencing rapid urban development, presenting opportunities for a “greenbelt” that provides connectivity with adjacent jurisdictions. With the exception of a former, now demolished, building on the Cavendish property, and the Journey’s End property, which, since 1986, has housed the administration facilities for the national historic sites, the program support lands remain in a relatively natural state. The national historic sites are well buffered from urban and industrial development by greenspace and water, which has a positive impact on the character and authenticity of the national historic sites (their “commemorative integrity”).

The Parks Canada Lands also protect imperilled Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystems, including Garry Oak ecosystems which support several species listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act*. As the program support lands are not identified as forming part of the officially designated national historic sites, management of the program support lands falls outside of the laws and policies that pertain to management planning for national historic sites. Protection of natural and cultural resources on the non-

designated program support lands, as well as the possibility of adding these lands to the description of a national historic site or other form of protected area, will be managed according to principles identified in section 7.0, including applicable legislation, such as the *Species at Risk Act*.

Ecosystem Restoration

Since 2001, Parks Canada has collaborated with partners and volunteers to restore imperilled ecosystems with a focus on Garry Oak ecosystems, species at risk, and species of cultural significance to First Nations. This work has been advanced through weaving together Indigenous and scientific knowledge and is guided by recovery planning documents such as the *Multi-species Action Plan for Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site of Canada*.

Visitors learn about conservation at the sites and adjacent lands through interpretive media, as well as through interpretive and volunteer programs. Opportunities to work on ecosystem restoration attract and retain volunteers who contribute hundreds of hours to projects at the sites and adjacent lands. Management of the sites benefits from strong relationships with academic and community organisations. Since 2010, the sites have hosted a group of volunteers from the Garth Homer Society, an organisation that creates opportunities for independence, growth and participation in the community for adults with developmental and physical differences. Together, these volunteers have been unwaveringly dedicated to helping Parks Canada restore Garry Oak ecosystems, recovering species at risk and species of cultural significance to First Nations, all while gaining skills in ecosystem management.

Parks Canada and Songhees and Esquimalt Nations work collaboratively on several projects supporting ecosystem restoration. The Garry Oak Learning Meadow, converted from grass lawn to native species, was established in 2013 and provides a living classroom to support learning about Garry Oak ecosystems, including their cultural significance to First Nations throughout the region, their biodiversity, and the ecocultural restoration work Parks Canada is undertaking with partners and volunteers. In 2018, the site celebrated a successful pit cook – a traditional harvest, cooking method, feast and celebration. Other projects which amplify First Nation voices at the site include interpretive signs showcasing the ecocultural landscape, and Coast Salish Welcome Posts at the entrance to the Garry Oak Learning Meadow. These ecocultural experiences for visitors, volunteers and partners are facilitated by the species at risk team, supported on a project basis.

As protected lands that support important habitat, the Parks Canada lands at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse contribute to Canada's efforts to conserve nature. This contribution to biodiversity conservation is something recognised by Parks Canada in relation to international commitments for protected areas and conservation measures.

Investments

In the ten years leading up to this plan, the Government of Canada made major investments in the preservation and restoration of structures at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. After 100 years of wet, coastal weather, water had infiltrated the concrete structures and the condition of the buildings had deteriorated and were assessed to be in poor condition. Following on earlier assessments and investments, in 2015 Parks Canada invested over \$10 million to repair, stabilise and waterproof the fortification's heritage structures.

Infrastructure investments and the addition, in 2014, of oTENTik platform tents represented significant milestones for the national historic sites. The introduction of several new programs and events, including Learn-to-Camp, as well as programming related to species at risk and First Nations, has fostered a strong sense of pride in the sites and broadened the sites' appeal and audience.

Visitor Experience

The blend of moss-covered trees, ocean views, and layered history inspires curiosity as visitors explore gun batteries or platform tents, walk nature trails, and contemplate Coast Salish Welcome Posts that acknowledge and honour First Nations' cultures and relationships with the land and water.

The visitor experience at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse includes taking in the sights, sounds and smells of the Coastal Douglas Fir forest and Salish Sea, as well as experiences such as the historic weapons demonstrations. Visitors are fully immersed during children's dress-up programs featuring interpreters in period costumes and a restored Second World War Jeep. Inside buildings, including the iconic lighthouse, visitors can learn more through engaging displays and activities. While there have been improvements to displays and non-personal media, interpretive media and exhibits at the sites require additional investment.

Programs such as star gazing and outdoor movie events complement opportunities to experience the national historic sites in the evening. The introduction of five oTENTik tents creating an overnight accommodation offer, an innovation for national historic sites, blends opportunities to appreciate cultural and natural experiences. Since the introduction of Learn-to Camp and the oTENTiks, the sites offer overnight experiences either camping in personal tents or renting equipment. All the experiences serve to engage urban audiences from diverse backgrounds from the Greater Victoria Region and Metro Vancouver.

The integration of culture and nature provides an exceptional backdrop for visitors to make meaningful connections to the national historic sites, inviting both a wider audience and repeat visits. In particular, the sites have expanded their appeal to urban families, young adults and newcomers to Canada.

Tourism Market

Greater Victoria, a globally recognised destination, attracts over four million visitors each year. Since the last management plan was prepared (2003), annual visitation at the sites stayed below 50,000 visitors until 2010, then has increased 40 percent to approximately 70,000 visitors. An estimated average was impacted by the promotion of Canada 150 in 2017 (over 98,000 visitors), and pandemic-related restrictions in 2020 and 2021.

Peak operational season is from early May through mid-October. Open seven days a week in the peak season, the sites offer visitors access to all the buildings, complete with programs, exhibits and special events. During the off-peak season, from mid-October through April, visitation and associated revenues decline, and operational capacity is reduced. Guided tours, programs and special events are available in the off season, but are limited to weekends, holidays and school breaks. Throughout the winter Parks Canada collects admission on the weekends; during the week the buildings are closed, but the grounds remain accessible for free. Volunteer opportunities are available year-round and distinct activities vary to fit the weather and the season; however, capacity to manage volunteer programs is limited.

Community

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse benefit from strong relationships in the region that help to promote and support the national historic sites. For example, collaboration on initiatives and events throughout the year is facilitated by working with First Nation partners, the City of Colwood, Destination Greater Victoria, the Colwood Heritage Committee, and other associations related to heritage tourism. Several partners use the sites as a venue to host their own special events. To discuss mutual support of area businesses and matters regarding the harbour and ecologically sensitive areas, Parks Canada team members sit on several local community committees, such as the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative Steering Committee, Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, Capital Regional Invasive Species Partnership, Esquimalt Harbour Advisory Committee, Westshore Chamber of Commerce, and Greater Victoria Military Museums Working Group. Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site has dedicated volunteers that support the sites, including volunteer groups such as Victoria-Esquimalt Military Re-Enactors Association and the Garth Homer Society whose members have been consistently volunteering for many years.

Management Priorities

This management plan replaces the 2003 *Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada Management Plan*, which provided direction for built heritage and infrastructure; protection of cultural resources; archaeological resources; natural resources and the landscape; updating visitor facilities and presentation materials; and, collaborating with First Nations, local partners and stakeholders to enhance the profile of the site.

Based on the 2018 and 2019 *State of Site Assessments* and emerging directions during the development of this plan, the key planning considerations and critical management priorities identified for the ten-year planning period include:

- **Maintenance of heritage structures** – Significant ongoing needs related to the monitoring and maintenance of the many heritage structures on-site, including their information management (data integrity), as the heritage assets age and continue to be impacted by wet coastal weather.
- **Effects of climate change** – Threats exacerbated by climate change, such as storm surges and erosion, are expected to be more frequent and severe along the coast, and are already impacting infrastructure, ecological processes, species and habitat, and cultural resources. A better understanding of the anticipated impacts of these threats on the site is needed to inform adaptation and mitigation decisions. Another potential effect of climate change may be shifts in visitation patterns, such as increased visitation in the shoulder seasons due to milder winters.
- **Access to the lighthouse** – The causeway leading to the lighthouse requires ongoing maintenance, especially for visitor safety, accessibility, and to ensure operational access to the lighthouse.
- **First Nation relations** – Honouring and recognising First Nations connections, and respectfully ensuring First Nations' voices are part of the management of this place is of great importance. Parks Canada will continue to build stronger relationships notably with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations to support the sharing of perspectives, cultures and economic opportunities related to the Parks Canada Lands at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse.
- **Profile of the sites** – The promotion of the sites needs to capture and integrate the full range of cultural and natural resources that are protected and presented, and the full range of amenities and programs that are offered. In addition to a military fort and a lighthouse, the sites also offer other opportunities related to outdoor space, ecosystems, First Nations, camping and more.
- **Connection to a larger tourism market** – The Greater Victoria Region is a crowded and competitive tourism market, notably including an international cruise market, with many attractions located in the downtown core. Increased collaboration with nearby attractions is needed to encourage tourists from the downtown area to make the short trip to Colwood and the western communities. Regional demand related to Indigenous tourism is an opportunity for the sites.
- **Transportation access to the sites** – Currently there are no public transportation options for visitors to travel to within two kilometers of the sites and there are no nearby bus routes or bike lanes. As well, existing signage along major thoroughfares on the way from downtown Victoria needs improvement.
- **Urban growth** – With increased urban growth there is an opportunity to attract new visitors, strengthen relationships with local communities and collaborate with a variety of groups. In addition, the Parks Canada Lands are subject to changes from urban development, including undesirable activities such as trespassing and vandalism, particularly on the relatively secluded

program support lands adjacent to Fort Rodd Hill. With increased residential development in the surrounding area, there is increased pressure for public use as local greenspace.

4.0 Development of the Management Plan

Indigenous peoples, partners, stakeholders and the public participated in the development of this management plan, helping to shape the future direction of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites.

In mid-2018, the first stages of the planning process took place including an internal assessment of the national historic sites, information gathering and analysis as well as creating an approach on the development of the management plan for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. In early 2019 notification letters were sent to First Nations about the management planning program.

In early 2020, Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations, key partners and stakeholders in Greater Victoria (heritage organisations, tourism industry, municipal departments and volunteer groups) were invited to participate in the first phase of consultation and responses were received. In-person sessions were held with partners and stakeholders to consult on elements to be considered in the draft plan. In March 2020, Parks Canada temporarily suspended consultation related to management planning in consideration of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In December 2020, the first phase of consultation resumed with virtual consultations, and the management planning program was advanced.

In spring 2022, the second phase of consultation occurred. The draft plan was shared with First Nations, partners and stakeholders, and made available for public input. In addition to virtual engagement sessions with partners and stakeholders, the majority of public consultation took place on an interactive online consultation and engagement platform (letstalkparks.canadawestcoast.ca). During this phase, Parks Canada primarily heard from partners and stakeholders, and members of the public from Greater Victoria.

All feedback was carefully reviewed and considered to finalise the 2022 *Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites Management Plan*. Many thanks to all who participated. Your feedback has helped to shape the management for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites.

5.0 Vision

The vision presented in this management plan expresses the desired state of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites in 15 years.

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are treasured places for appreciating cultural landmarks and enjoying the outdoors. These important national historic sites provide people with the opportunity to reflect on the cultural and natural wonders of the area and increase their understanding about the cultures of Coast Salish First Nations, the histories of the region, including Canada's development, the Pacific coastal environment and rare ecosystems.

The highest priority for management of the sites continues to be the conservation and presentation of cultural and natural heritage, notably the iconic lighthouse and military infrastructure. Maintenance of the sites' structures and cultural resources is guided by Parks Canada's principles of cultural resource management and led by national experts.

Alongside partners and stakeholders, Parks Canada continues to demonstrate leadership in resource conservation. Parks Canada and First Nations, in collaboration with conservation organisations and volunteers, collectively restore, promote and celebrate the protection of archaeological resources, imperilled ecosystems, species at risk, and species of cultural importance. Honouring First Nations' connections to ancestral lands and waters facilitates the sharing of their stories, and strengthens the stewardship of the cultural and natural resources found on the sites and adjacent lands.

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are places where visitors – from area residents to international tourists – feel a sense of appreciation for Canadian military and maritime history, a connection to the natural world, and gain a deeper understanding of Coast Salish cultures as they explore the sites' heritage buildings, coastal trails, and engaging displays, attend inspiring programs and events, and meet site staff and volunteers. Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse are must-see heritage attractions on southern Vancouver Island. Inclusion, diversity and accessibility are important elements of decisions made at the sites, and displays and activities appeal to a broad range of interests, abilities and identities.

6.0 Key Strategies

As a long-term strategic plan, consistent with the Government of Canada approach for results-based planning, the management plan focuses on the results that Parks Canada wants to achieve. The purpose of the management plan is not to identify ten years worth of specific actions, but instead to provide decision makers and the public with the priorities that will guide decisions.

The components of results-based planning work together as follows:

- Vision – describes desired future, setting the management direction;
- Key Strategies – present major themes, introducing management approaches;
- Objectives – identify management priorities, indicating desired results;
- Targets – define timing and amount of change, using what can be measured; and,
- Reporting – communicates about ongoing implementation, connecting actions to direction.

Parks Canada will make decisions with respect to how to reach the targets identified in this plan, working in collaboration with First Nations, partners, stakeholders and the public. Over the ten-year time frame, this approach allows for flexibility to account for available resources, evolving priorities and emerging opportunities. Informing partners, stakeholders and Canadians about how ongoing decisions, actions or projects fit with the management plan is done through business planning, and through annual implementation updates and other communications.

The directions identified in this section take into account available resources and existing capacity for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. Nevertheless, some undertakings may require additional support and rely on opportunities to partner with external collaborators. Specific time frames for reaching certain targets have been provided where possible; where no dates have been referenced, the target will be achieved during the period of the plan. The measurement of targets in this plan is generally in comparison to 2018 levels, unless otherwise specified, as reference (benchmarks), from assessments that helped guide the development of this plan. Wherever possible, targets are based on measurable data that are monitored by Parks Canada through Agency-wide programs; other benchmarks and targets will be established and measured locally by the responsible manager. The Agency's programs and tools that are common sources of measurable targets include:

- Parks Canada's national monitoring programs (state of the site assessments)
- Visitor surveys
- Attendance records
- Permits
- Media tracking
- Partnering arrangements

Within Parks Canada's monitoring and rating system, things of "national significance" (for example, buildings and historic objects) are those that relate directly to the national historic sites' reasons for designation. The next state of site assessments are scheduled to initiate the next planning cycle, in approximately 2030.

In addition to the strategies, objectives and targets specified in this management plan, decision-making at the sites is guided by federal and departmental policies that provide direction on overarching issues. For example, across its network of heritage places, Parks Canada is committed to sustainable development (Greening Government, related to the *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*) and equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (Accessibility Plan, related to the *Accessible Canada Act*). Within the area of sustainable development, adaptation to climate change is expected to be a growing influence on the management of heritage places, including at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. Ensuring that the sites are well operated, and are welcoming places for all, are ongoing considerations for the implementation of this management plan.

For the duration of this management plan, three key strategies have been developed to guide the management direction for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites. As lands that are not formally part of the designated sites, management principles for the adjacent program support lands are presented in the next section of the plan.

Key Strategy 1: Conserving a Cultural Landscape

The sites offer protection and support the conservation of significant cultural and natural resources on behalf of Canadians. Conservation and presentation of these resources honours previous generations, provides benefits for today's visitors, and fosters future support for the ongoing protection of cultural and natural resources.

Conservation of cultural resources at the national historic sites is informed by policies at the national level and supported by Parks Canada's specialists in history and archaeology. To prevent the condition of objects from deteriorating, Parks Canada invests in ongoing monitoring and infrastructure upgrades.

Management of the sites will take into account the impacts of projected future climate conditions on plant and animal species, ecosystems, cultural resources, built infrastructure, human health and safety, and visitor experience. It is a priority to understand, respond to, and moderate, the current and future impacts of climate change through proactive adaptation planning and implementation. For example, since the 2018 *State of the Site Assessment*, Parks Canada has identified that the causeway to Fisgard Lighthouse requires additional assessment and repair. To build on the success of significant infrastructure investments since 2010, the conservation and maintenance of historic structures remains a priority. The site will develop a maintenance plan to support Agency objectives for conservation. In addition, Parks Canada will identify priorities related to risks of fires, floods, storms, and other emergencies, and develop improved emergency response plans that take into account projected changes in climate conditions.

In addition to the nationally significant heritage assets and archaeological resources, species listed under the federal Species at Risk Act are also present at these sites and the adjacent program support lands (see section 7.0). The Species at Risk Act and relevant recovery planning documents related to the Act, including the *Multi-species Action Plan for Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site of Canada*, and associated objectives guide species at risk priorities at the sites. These objectives can be met through projects such as the Garry Oak Learning Meadow and conservation nursery. Management of the cultural and natural resources associated with coastal landscapes and imperilled ecosystems must take an integrated approach. Meaningful collaboration with partners will support these objectives for conservation. Parks Canada will work with First Nations to inform decisions and programs, respectfully braiding together knowledge systems as appropriate. Volunteers, supported by the sites' species at risk team, also contribute substantially to the ecological restoration of the sites' natural areas, adding value to visitor experiences as well as helping to protect endangered and threatened species.

Objective 1.1: The condition of heritage buildings is maintained or improved.

Targets

- In response to ongoing assessments, the condition of the causeway to Fisgard Lighthouse is improved.
- Buildings of national significance at Fort Rodd Hill are maintained in good condition.
- The condition of Fisgard Lighthouse is maintained in good and stable condition.

Objective 1.2: The condition of objects and archaeological resources is maintained or improved.

Targets

- Historical objects of national significance at Fort Rodd Hill, including artillery pieces like the Twin-6 gun, are maintained in fair condition and improve from a declining trend to a stable trend.
- Historical objects of national significance at Fisgard Lighthouse are maintained in good condition and a stable trend.
- The condition of historical objects of other heritage value for both sites, including artifacts in the moveable collections, improves to good condition.
- Opportunities to mitigate threats to archaeological heritage are identified through strengthened relationships with First Nations.

Objective 1.3: The condition of the natural environment and landscape features are maintained.

Targets

- The level of protection provided to surrounding forest and natural areas is maintained and the condition of the landscape features remains assessed as good.
- Existing natural populations of species at risk are stable or increasing.
- In collaboration with First Nations and other organisations, Fort Rodd Hill's contribution to biodiversity protection is recognised and maintained by meeting pan-Canadian conservation standards, specifically through recognition as an "Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure."

Key Strategy 2: Working with Partners

From a spiritual place, to military defence, safe navigation, recreation, ecosystem management and habitat restoration, many stories come together at the sites, creating more opportunities to involve First Nations, partners and stakeholders in conserving, understanding, and presenting stories about the sites. Collaborations between Parks Canada, First Nations, local governments, cultural heritage organisation, researchers, volunteers, conservation groups, social organisations, and the tourism industry, are foundational to the success of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. Strategic relationships are important for mutual success, and Parks Canada can contribute to and benefit from a range of collaborative opportunities.

The participation of First Nations in the development and delivery of programs, exhibits and events that share and celebrate their stories and cultures is a priority, while identifying other opportunities as envisioned by First Nations and Parks Canada. The focus will be on developing more meaningful relationships, at the community level and nation-to-nation. It will be important to gain a deeper understanding of how First Nations want to be involved with the effective stewardship of cultural and natural resources on the sites and the adjacent lands.

There will be a greater emphasis on integrating Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites into local and regional experiences. These initiatives will include working with destination marketing organisations and other heritage places with similar audiences and objectives to explore new and innovative ways to market the sites locally and nationally. Specifically, working closely with Destination Greater Victoria and nearby attractions, including Hatley Park National Historic Site and Esquimalt Lagoon Bird Sanctuary, will be essential in collectively promoting the cluster of opportunities in the

Colwood area. To ensure a strong connection to new audiences and the larger tourism market in the region, visitor experience and outreach strategies will include target-market analysis, interpretation research, visitor-use management planning, and brand identity. Maintaining the recruitment of highly engaged volunteers will continue to support Parks Canada in meeting the vision.

Relationships with Veterans Affairs Canada, Department of National Defence, and the network of former military installations across the country will continue to help to build and share best practices that can contribute to effective collaborations at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse.

Parks Canada and partners will continue to work with municipalities and BC Transit, as transit and service plans are implemented. Parks Canada's focus will be to support an increase in transportation options for the site (for example, bike lanes and a nearby bus stop). These relationships will help improve wayfinding for visitors so they can easily navigate to the sites from various parts of the Greater Victoria Region.

Objective 2.1: Relationships with First Nations are strengthened.

Targets

- Members representing Songhees and Esquimalt Nations continue to collaborate with Parks Canada, forming advisory committees (or similar structures) as needed.
- Within five years, the level of collaboration with local First Nations increases, with more days when members of First Nations are on-site to co-deliver events and programs.
- Within five years, members of First Nations increase their profile and use of programs that support their free access to the sites.

Objective 2.2: Informed by site capacity, relationships between Parks Canada and key partners within the region are broadened and strengthened.

Targets

- The number of tourism operators bringing visitors to the site increases by 50 percent.
- The number of visitors arriving at the site as part of commercial tours increases from 2019 levels.
- The number of site-specific formal partners increases by 50 percent.

Objective 2.3: Through continued collaboration with tourism and transportation partners, including for transportation options and web-based mapping applications, wayfinding information related to accessing the sites is improved.

Targets

- Through improvements in trip planning and wayfinding information, visitor satisfaction with trip planning will be improved, increasing to over 90 percent.

Key Strategy 3: Welcoming Visitors

Like the lighthouse itself, Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites are a beacon in the Greater Victoria Region, inspiring travel and exploration. This strategy focuses on innovative and meaningful visitor experiences, and increasing awareness about Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse, locally and across Canada. Improved marketing will raise awareness of the sites and the surrounding area as a premier tourism destination and a local favourite. Tourists en route to other destinations in the Greater Victoria Region will include Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse in their travel itineraries.

The strategy rests on the unique, authentic features of the national historic sites, core stories related to the 19th century lighthouse and the heavy-artillery military defence system used in the World Wars, and the broadening of these stories. Collaborating with First Nations on existing programming will be successful, and visitor feedback indicates interest in expanding this element of the experiences available at the sites. Volunteerism will remain an aspect of the visitor offer to enhance visitor experiences, while public

education and outreach through the Garry Oak restoration program will also continue to be an important feature of the site.

The plan's visitor experience objectives are supported by ongoing implementation of the *Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site Interpretive Plan (2016)*. Strategic activities focused on promotion, outreach and connecting visitors to the sites in creative ways will be essential to achieving the objectives set out in this strategy. Product development and focused promotions will present opportunities to reach a broader market in the local tourism environment. Enriching and interactive programs will be developed, promoted and delivered to a broad range of visitors, resulting in increased visitation and meaningful connections. Events and regular programming will be supported with food services at the sites. Improvements to visitor access and circulation will enable visitors to experience the sites' cultural and natural resources more effectively. People will visit the sites more frequently, and stay longer.

Objective 3.1: Visitor experiences that are accessible and meaningful to visitors with a wide range of abilities, identities and interests are maintained or improved.

Targets

- Overall visitor satisfaction continues to exceed 95 percent.
- Interpretive materials, as well as public and school programs at the sites are renewed and enhanced, using new approaches and sharing multiple perspectives.
- Barrier-free, inclusive access for visitors with mobility impairments, other disabilities and a wide range of identities has improved.
- Welcoming visitors has improved, creating a stronger sense of arrival, better flow, and improved opportunities for gathering.

Objective 3.2: The experiences offered at the sites are shared with national and international audiences, increasing awareness and inspiring them to visit.

Targets

- The number of joint initiatives increases, with a focus on elevating Parks Canada's presence at the events of partners and stakeholders from 2019 levels.
- Media interest and publications highlighting the sites increases, with a focus on relevant coverage from 2019 levels.
- Virtual reach increases, through social media, the website, and leveraging opportunities within Parks Canada and partner organisations, using creative application of existing and emerging tools for sharing stories, photos and videos.

Objective 3.3: While being managed within the capacity of the sites, visitation increases.

Targets

- Annual visitation reaches 100,000 visitors (approximately a 30 percent increase).
- Repeat, year-round visitation by area residents, represented by the sales of annual passes, increases by five percent annually.

Objective 3.4: The sites' identity as a community resource is strengthened through increasing the use of the sites as a venue for community and family events.

Targets

- Use of the sites for public events hosted by third parties increases (for example, community festivals) by 50 percent.
- Bookings of the sites as a venue for private events increases (for example, weddings, reunions and retreats) from 2019 levels.

7.0 Management of Adjacent Lands

In addition to the preceding objectives and targets for the protection and presentation of the cultural and natural resources on the property of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites, this section of the management plan outlines management principles for the adjacent lands that are also administered by Parks Canada (see Map 2, The National Historic Sites and Program Support Lands).

Program support lands (Cavendish, Journey's End, Lot 5 and Lot 6) were brought under Parks Canada's control in 1978 for potential addition to Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. However, the properties were never formally added to the legal description of the designated national historic site. These adjacent lands continue to add value to the region and serve as a buffer between the national historic sites and nearby developments, and the properties are ecologically significant in their own right. These surrounding areas, which remain in a natural state and inspire appreciation of the coastal environment, contribute to the sense of place and historic value of the national historic sites, and complement the sites' contributions to greenspace and biodiversity conversation at the landscape scale.

Together, the national historic sites and adjacent lands provide significant greenspace for the region, and hold values and opportunities that go beyond the commemoration of military and maritime history. The following considerations make management of the additional lands important to the future of the national historic sites, and important to the region in general:

- the additional properties influence the sites' sense of place and commemorative integrity, providing separation from the nearby developments;
- management of the additional lands creates expanded opportunities and is important to partners and stakeholders that work with Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse, providing a "greenbelt" that supports connectivity for recreation and landscape-scale conservation;
- important cultural and natural resources are present on the adjacent lands, including species at risk;
- the lands are administered by the same Parks Canada team that operates the national historic sites; and,
- the administrative buildings for the national historic sites are situated on one parcel of the additional lands (Journey's End), and the house is a recognised federal heritage building.

Parks Canada recognises that the adjacent lands offer expanded opportunities and are an important element of relationships with First Nations communities, in particular Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, the City of Colwood, and other partners and stakeholders. The protection of cultural and natural resources that are present on the adjacent properties will be considered throughout the duration of this management plan.

Parks Canada is currently in the process of exploring the potential to establish a National Urban Park in the Greater Victoria region, that may include Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites. While the adjacent lands remain outside of the legal framework for the management of the national historic sites, the following principles guide the management of these federal lands, the associated cultural and natural resources, and continued collaboration with First Nations, partners, stakeholders and the public:

- Coastal lands in a natural state are important to nearby First Nations communities, including Songhees and Esquimalt Nations;
- The special character of coastal bluffs that remain in a natural state contributes to the commemorative integrity of the national historic sites;
- Greenspace is valued by area residents for its contributions to scenic beauty, habitat connectivity and potential recreation opportunities;
- Access to the adjacent lands will be managed to balance benefits, such as enhancing trail networks for connectivity and accessibility standards, with potential threats to the conservation of cultural and natural resources, such as trespassing and vandalism; and,

- Protection of species and habitat will be guided by the *Species at Risk Act* and related recovery strategies and action plans, in cooperation with First Nations and other organisations.

Officially adding program support lands to become part of Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site, or pursuing other designations that may emerge, such as the proposal initiated in August 2021 to consider this area as part of a national urban park, would be carried out in consultation with First Nations, other relevant levels of government, partners, stakeholders and the public. Should the role of the additional lands be formalised as part of a protected heritage area, Parks Canada will review this management plan and update accordingly in consultation with First Nations, partners, stakeholders and the public.

8.0 Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment

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. In accordance with *The Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals (2010)*, a strategic environmental assessment was conducted on the management plan for Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites.

The strategic environmental assessment evaluated the strategies, objectives and targets in the management plan for potential effects on cultural and natural resources and visitor experience, and found positive effects would occur to some extent for each of these. The greatest positive effect is reflected in the vision for the site as a place for visitors to connect with military and maritime history, and to develop a greater appreciation of the cultural and natural resources found there, including connections to Coast Salish First Nations cultures and a significant ecocultural landscape. Implementation of the management plan will help connect Canadians with nature, contributing to the goals of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Strategies, objectives and targets identified in the management plan that could potentially result in negative environmental effects include those related to maintenance activities on heritage buildings, increased visitation and increased use of the site for special events. Specifically, the potential for adverse environmental effects on natural resources, including imperilled ecosystems, migratory birds, and species at risk were identified. Potential effects to both cultural and natural resources, including species at risk, can be addressed through legislation (i.e., *Species at Risk Act*), policy instruments and project-level impact assessment. In general, adverse effects can be minimised by adhering to the appropriate standards, best practices and guidelines, and collaborating with others within Parks Canada. Operations at the sites are required to mitigate impacts on climate according to Greening Government requirements in support of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

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

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

Appendix A

Victoria-Esquamalt Fortification System

