

FORTRESS OF LOUISBOURG NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, NOVA SCOTIA

PROTECTING HISTORY,
CULTURE, AND BIODIVERSITY

Photo:
Derek Gallant © Parks Canada

OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA BASED CONSERVATION MEASURE (OECM)

Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, located in Cape Breton, also known as Unama'ki in the Mi'kmaw language, brings visitors back to French colonial life. First the home of the Mi'kmaq, the 18th century brought French, Basque, German, English, Irish, Scottish, and African people to its shores. The Fortress of Louisbourg is of national historic significance because it played a pivotal role in the Franco-British struggle for empire between 1713 and 1768. This importance led to its designation as a national historic site in 1920. The site also has strong linkages to Mi'kmaw history and culture and is rich in the stories of colonial impacts on L'nu'k (Mi'kmaq for 'the people') particularly for the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia.

The site is composed of reconstructed buildings and fortifications representing about one quarter of the original settlement, including homes, military structures, gardens, and other buildings. The reconstructed townsite is surrounded by 5,922 hectares of land which does not feature reconstructions

but is nevertheless protected under the National Historic Sites of Canada Order of the Canada National Parks Act. This area has been designated as an OECM.

The portion of the Fortress of Louisbourg that is recognized as an OECM is a mix of intact rocky coastline and headlands, coastal barrens, coniferous forest, and wetland ecosystems that supports a wide range of native species and ecological processes.

The Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site supports several federally listed species at risk including little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*), Northern myotis (*M. septentrionalis*), bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), and barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*). In addition, the intact land provides habitat for other native plants and animals. To the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia, the land and its inhabitants represent both a cultural and natural resource due to the intrinsic connection between nature and culture.



Does the property have a defined geographical space?

Yes! The boundaries of Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site are well identified and can be accurately placed on a map.



Is there an effective way of ensuring that biodiversity will continue to be conserved into the future?

Yes! Parks Canada's legislative, regulatory and policy instruments provide the ability to manage activities on all Agency-administered lands.



Is there an expectation that the biodiversity on the site will be conserved for the long term?

Yes! Most of the site is protected under the National Historic Sites of Canada Order of the Canada National Parks Act, ensuring consistent and long-term protection through the associated regulations which prohibit damage and destruction to plants and animals.



Is biodiversity conservation the primary objective of the area?

No – and that's okay! The primary objective for national historic sites is for the protection of commemorative integrity, but at the Fortress of Louisbourg, conservation of biodiversity and cultural integrity are woven together. The land itself is a cultural value to Mi'kmaw people past and present, and the environment around the Fortress and townsite is a significant part of the site's story.

Quick tip

If this answer was "yes" for Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site it would likely be assessed as a Protected Area. Both types of areas are important, and both achieve biodiversity conservation.



Is biodiversity on the site conserved?

Yes! Guided by a site management plan that provides strategic and long-term direction for site management, Parks Canada in collaboration with key partners ensures that the culture, history, and biodiversity of the site are conserved.