

Submission Form

At its 35th session (UNESCO Paris, 2011), the World Heritage Committee (Decision 35COM12D.7) “requested the World Heritage Centre, with the support of the Advisory Bodies, **to develop, for further consideration the proposal** contained in Document WHC-11/35.COM/12D [...] and to further **explore ways of recognising and rewarding best practice through a one-off initiative** at the closing event of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (November 2012, Japan)...”.

States Parties to the World Heritage Convention are invited to participate in this initiative by proposing World Heritage properties in their country that they regard as an example of successful management and sustainable development.

In order to be eligible the site has to apply with the following criteria:

- The suggested site must be a property inscribed on the World Heritage List;
- Successful management and sustainable development has to be clearly demonstrated;
- Best practices are considered those that are tried, tested and applied in different situations and in a wider context;
- An overall good performance on all headings mentioned in the submission form, with an exemplary performance in at least one of the areas;
- An outstanding example of innovative management in dealing with one or more management challenges / issues that could offer lessons to other sites.

Each State Party may propose a maximum of two properties, preferably relating to one cultural and one natural site.

This form contains 9 topics for demonstrating best management practice – it is not necessary to comply with all of them but it would be appreciated if you could provide a comprehensive response to as many topics as possible. In your responses to the question, please provide all facts and figures to substantiate the answers, and describe the before and after situation of implementing the best practice intervention. The objective is to illustrate clearly why the example can qualify as a best practice and can be used as a source of inspiration for other World Heritage properties.

The topics are based on questions dealt with in the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.

Recognizing and rewarding best practice in management of World Heritage properties

State Party: Canada

Title proposed World Heritage property: Gros Morne National Park

Brief description of the property: Gros Morne National Park is a 1,805 km² protected heritage area that was established in 1973 as a result of an agreement between the Government of Canada and that of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The global significance of the national park's heritage assets was later recognized when it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987. The park was inscribed under **Criterion (vii)** of the *1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* as it is, "an outstanding wilderness environment of spectacular landlocked, freshwater fjords and glacier scoured headlands in an ocean setting; it is an area of exceptional natural beauty." Gros Morne was also listed under **Criterion (viii)**, because:

The rocks of the park collectively present an internationally significant illustration of the process of continental drift along the eastern coast of North America and contribute greatly to the body of knowledge and understanding of plate tectonics and the geological evolution of ancient mountain belts. In glacier-scoured highlands and spectacular fjords, glaciation has made visible the park's many geological features.

Along with the protected heritage area, the Greater Gros Morne National Park region also includes eight communities that share a municipal boundary with it. Their total combined population is about 5,000 people. When the park was created, the economy of these communities was based primarily on fishing and logging. Despite the decline in the commercial North Atlantic cod fishery in recent decades, which has impacted the province drastically, an increase in tourism is helping the Gros Morne region to sustain a level of economic prosperity. Thanks to that sustained prosperity, the region continues to retain many characteristics of its fishery culture and is highly representative of the type of coastal society that evolved with it in Newfoundland and Labrador.

While the relationship between the park and the nearby communities continues to grow into one of mutual respect and effective collaboration, things did not entirely start that way. But even if the first steps that the park and communities took together were from opposite sides of the field, eventually both began to recognize common ground. Standing upon it, we have found ways of working together that have benefited the region environmentally, socially and economically.

Accomplishments in sustainable development have been achieved mainly through the use of a collaborative working group approach that seeks to resolve common issues and pursue mutual opportunities. This model, which has worked well with communities, now forms the basis of all stakeholder relationships, including with Aboriginal partners, adjacent land managers, the educational community and the tourism industry. The distinctive collaborative and partnering arrangements that have emerged from using this process have resulted in a higher level of protection of the park's ecological integrity and of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and they have been a means of enhancing our collective ability to tell the story of Gros Morne.

The World Heritage property is therefore nominated for: The collaborative processes that park management and stakeholders, including local communities, have developed to build a respectful, mutually productive relationship. This management/stakeholder working group approach that has become well established in Gros Morne National Park, and the results in heritage protection and presentation that have been achieved through it, reflects the spirit contained in such guiding documents as the Bellagio Principles, the *Convention on Biological Diversity*, the *Budapest Declaration*, and the *Millennium Declaration*. It also illustrates the extent to which the outcomes achieved by this property are aligned with the World Heritage Committee’s strategic objectives that are known as the ‘5 Cs’: strengthening the credibility of World Heritage; ensuring effective conservation; promoting effective capacity-building; increasing awareness and support through communication; and, the important role of the community. Please also see the “additional comments” section for a description of how the management approach at this property also epitomizes the thoughts that were put forward for the consideration of the World Heritage Committee in a 2010 report from an expert meeting (*Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, WHC-10/34-COM/5D*) that explored the relationship between sustainable development and heritage protection within a World Heritage site context.

Please answer the questions below demonstrating the successful management and sustainable development of the World Heritage property and why it is an example of a best practice.

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:	Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:
<p>1. Conservation:</p> <p><i>What innovative management practices or strategies are being applied in order to ensure the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property (e.g. better resource management, restoration and rehabilitation, addressing various man-made or natural threats and challenges, etc.)?</i></p>	<p>The following are specific cases where Gros Morne National Park’s collaborative working group approach has been used with success to address conservation issues:</p> <p>Resident Snowmobile Working Group—Snowmobiling is a permitted visitor activity within Gros Morne National Park in accordance with the 1973 Federal-Provincial Agreement to establish the park. The activity is subject to Parks Canada’s regulations and operational policies “where this use does not affect wildlife, vegetation or terrain.”</p> <p>To ensure appropriate management of the activity Parks Canada staff and representatives of the eight adjacent communities formed a Resident Snowmobile Working Group. The goal was to work collaboratively to ensure the activity meets the obligations of the federal-provincial agreement while protecting the park’s ecological integrity and OUV. The group’s commitment to achieving its objectives was outstanding. The management framework with its accompanying guidelines that they developed involved identifying environmentally sensitive areas, directing research questions and gathering local knowledge, and developing strategies to protect park resources. A similar process was used with engaging a public and commercial working group on snowmobiling in the</p>

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	<p>park. This resident board has now blended with the public and commercial snowmobiling working group to form one committee which continues to advise Parks Canada on the management of this winter recreational activity.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Hyperabundant species management - Decades of intense browsing by moose, an introduced species on the island of Newfoundland, has altered the composition and structure of the boreal forest in Gros Morne National Park. With natural patterns of forest regeneration being severely interrupted, it was clear that active management of the moose population was required to restore the health of the forest. Prior to implementing any ecosystem management program, Parks Canada conducted extensive public consultations with members of surrounding communities, environmental groups, the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation, and other interested stakeholders. The purpose was to review relevant research and to collaboratively determine the best and most appropriate course of action. In 2011, a multi-year harvesting plan to reduce the numbers of the non-native moose in the park through a managed population reduction was implemented. In total, 382 members of the public assisted Parks Canada with the reduction program. They were licensed through the provincial Big Game Management System thanks to a partnership with the Wildlife Division of the Department of Environment and Conservation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Other examples appear elsewhere in the document - There are other relevant examples for this topic. Please refer to the paragraph entitled, "Connectivity on the Landscape" in <i>Topic #4-Boundaries</i> for a description of how the working group process was used to resolve another forestry issue, this time with adjacent land managers. Also, please see <i>Topic #7-Sustainable Development</i> and the paragraph entitled "Domestic Timber Harvest" for more information about the use of working groups and resolving resource extraction issues with local people.</p>

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<p>2. Local People:</p> <p><i>What exemplary practices are you using in order to effectively address the needs of local stakeholders within the management system for the property, and enable their full and active participation?</i></p>	<p>The eight communities that surround Gros Morne National Park are greatly influenced by park management decisions. Conversely, the park is influenced by development decisions within these communities. As the largest federal presence in the region, Parks Canada is also committed to being a regional partner, helping to ensure that the nearby communities benefit from the park's existence on a socio-cultural, environmental and economic basis. Some of the examples of community engagement from the past decade that have contributed greatly to the protection and presentation of Gros Morne National Park include the following:</p> <p>To engage adjacent communities and to improve regional coordination, the Superintendent and eight mayors, signed an agreement in 2001 to co-operate on issues of mutual interest. The Mayors' Forum, as it is known, continues to focus efforts on sustainable tourism, community development and park management. Through this forum, the municipalities and the park have worked together to address regional waste management issues, develop visitor experience opportunities, address regional employment concerns, raise awareness of the communities among visitors, and they have formed a number of joint working groups to address various topics. The latter includes working groups that have advised on the development of regulations that affect local residents such as: traditional resource extraction activities (domestic timber harvest and snowshoe hare harvest); snowmobile use; and ways to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Gros Morne as a national park in 2013.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Gros Morne Inside Out - One of the first ways that communities and the park started to work together was in capacity building. In our region, Parks Canada has made a significant investment in people. Whether a gas station clerk, a hotel receptionist, or a national park attendant, all local people have a role to play in making a visitor's stay safe and memorable. That is why a wide variety of service training opportunities such as the park-designed program called "Gros Morne Inside Out" are made available to our collective workforce. This course was about giving everyone a chance to learn more about the reason Gros Morne is significant as a national park and World Heritage site so that we can all be a part of sharing the story with our visitors.</p>

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	<p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Local people continue to be part of designing the visitor experience offered in Gros Morne National Park. Please see the paragraph entitled “Visitor Experience Opportunity Concept” in <i>Section #:9 Tourism and Interpretation</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>The Gros Morne Co-operating Association (the Co-op) is a community volunteer association that supports Parks Canada in its mission to protect Gros Morne as a national park and UNESCO World Heritage site and to help visitors and residents understand, appreciate and enjoy the park in ways that leave it unimpaired for future generations. As a “friends group” this organization has shown tremendous national and international leadership.</p> <p>Since its establishment in 1993, the Co-op has been the publisher behind several high quality publications that celebrate the significance of place. These products are sold at Co-op run gift shops in park facilities along with a variety of locally and regionally made goods. The revenues collected from these shops are reinvested in public and educational programming. Examples of such include a Musician in Residence Program, a summer heritage learning program for local youth, and a youth internship program for local science students to work with park ecosystem scientists.</p> <p>The Gros Morne Co-op has also pioneered innovative approaches to community and economic development that have changed the way different agencies come together in the park to support common goals, and that have contributed greatly to the sustainability of our region. Through various partnering arrangements, the Co-op has in fact been directly and indirectly responsible for an investment of some CDN \$20 million.</p> <p>For example, through a management contract regime, the Co-op operates a swimming pool and has developed a cross-country ski trail system—two high quality recreational experiences that are enjoyed as much by residents as visitors. A similar arrangement also saw the Co-op manage a contract to develop Memorial University of Newfoundland’s Bonne Bay Marine Research Station in</p>

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	<p>one of the park communities. In addition, the Co-op’s work with the regional business community is succeeding in expanding the visitor shoulder season. This has happened thanks to the Co-op’s work in gaining widespread support for tourism marketing partnerships that promote the park and surrounding region. One such strategy the Co-op has employed is to create a group known as Gros Morne Gatherings. None of the businesses in the region is big enough to attract a large conference, but by all service providers working together through this marketing arm of the Co-op, they have successfully staged, provincial, national and international conferences.</p> <p>As for direct community programming, the Co-op recently spearheaded an effort that saw all of the park communities sign an Accord for Sustainability. Through it, each of the communities has agreed to adopt sustainable practices that will help them to reduce waste and CO₂ emissions, and help to encourage visitors to make their own sustainable choices by buying local whenever possible, eating local produce where possible, and leaving no trace of their visit. Visitors and residents are encouraged to not litter, to reduce their vehicle emissions by not letting their car idle, and to recycle beverage containers (through a recycling facility that the Co-op was responsible for establishing).</p> <p>Through the Co-op’s affiliations with organizations such as the provincial Film Development Corporation, the Newfoundland and Labrador Rural Secretariat, Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, Health and Community Services, and the Centre for Environmental Excellence, the voices of this rural region are also being heard through larger provincial fora.</p> <p>The Co-op is also the managing partner of the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism; more will be mentioned about this in Topic #9: Tourism and Interpretation.</p> <p>Earlier this year, the Co-op welcomed Dr. Wade Davis, an Explorer in Residence with the National Geographic Society, as the honorary chair of its Board of Directors. When he accepted the position, Dr. Davis said: “The relationship protected areas have with the communities surrounding them is very important. I am keen to help celebrate and share some of the Co-op’s accomplishments with others.”</p>

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	<p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>The communities that surround Gros Morne National Park are culturally rich places. From the Maritime Archaic Indians 5000 years ago to the modern Aboriginal and European cultures that call the region home today, all have been attracted here by the bounty of the sea. The first thing that visitors note is that these are extremely friendly and hard-working coastal communities. Stories that relate their history and culture are presented with pride throughout Gros Morne but in particular at the Lobster Head Cove Lighthouse and the Broom Point Fishing Premises. In both cases, local people interpret exhibits and share the stories of the coast with visitors.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Parks Canada has a long tradition of supporting local communities to meet their own unique development goals by providing technical and professional support where possible and where appropriate. Examples from among many include providing the following: training for front-line staff; engineering and interpretation planning support for the development of community museums; trail construction advice and interpretation planning support for the construction of heritage walking trails and development of guided heritage walks; and design for a botanical garden.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>The importance of considering local residents in the work of Parks Canada is recognized by all Parks Canada staff. That is why the working group process has also been applied internally. A multi-disciplinary staff working group developed a number of Principles for Engaging Communities. These suggestions for improving our approach in working with communities include: Seek first to understand the local communities, be a good citizen and neighbour, celebrate who we are, good community relations involve all staff, keep promises and come through on commitments, be proactive-don't wait to be asked, and build a strong partnership with communities. (Please see the photo appendix for a complete copy of the Principles).</p>

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<p>3. Legal framework:</p> <p><i>What special measures have you taken to ensure that the legal framework for the World Heritage site is effective in maintaining the OUV of the property?</i></p>	<p>In Canada, national parks are established through a negotiated federal-provincial agreement. Upon conclusion, land is transferred from provincial control to federal jurisdiction for management as a national park. Gros Morne National Park was established under such an agreement in 1973. However, the Canada National Parks Act (CNPA) did not immediately apply here. That significant step happened in 2000 when the regulatory amendments that were required to recognize the rights of local residents to engage in specific resource extraction activities afforded under the park establishment agreement were put in place. The CNPA now includes regulations for domestic timber harvesting and snowshoe hare harvesting that were agreed to at the time of park establishment. These regulations were developed in consultation with local communities. Prior to the CNPA coming into force in Gros Morne National Park, management relied on a number of pieces of legislation from a variety of sources, including provincial and federal laws. Now that it is under the CNPA, Gros Morne enjoys the same level of protection as all national parks in Canada. The CNPA has some of the highest environmental protection standards of any legislation in Canada.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Licence Agreements that are signed with business operators operating in the park confirm that Parks Canada strives to be an industry leader in sustainable tourism practices and to maintain the highest level of operational standards. For example, the licence agreement for the Western Brook Pond Boat Tour— one of the park’s iconic geological attractions – stipulates that the tour owner is expected to officially register an environmental management system for the operation and maintain an ISO-14001 designation. This boat tour, which operates on one of the purest bodies of water in the world, was the first such tour in Canada to earn this designation denoting the highest of environmental standards. In a bidding process, potential boat tour operators are expected to demonstrate the use of engines that are fuel efficient and clean, and the use of alternative fuels to power vessels is also recommended.</p> <p>Licenses are also encouraged to draw on the local labour force of the communities surrounding the park. Increasingly community residents are also becoming involved in the development of Requests for Proposals for new products or experiences in the park.</p>

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<p>4. Boundaries:</p> <p><i>What innovative ways of dealing with the boundaries of the property, including for management of the buffer zone do you have in place, to effectively to manage the site and protect its OUV?</i></p>	<p>Connectivity on the landscape—Commercial forestry is a significant activity adjacent to Gros Morne and has an influence on how the national park is connected to the broader landscape. The potential impacts that cutting the forest could have on species like caribou, marten, lynx and song birds that migrate in and out of it are recognized by key stakeholders. To address the impacts of forestry, a park/stakeholder working group was formed called the Greater Gros Morne Connectivity Working Group. Its members included: Corner Brook Pulp and Paper—the paper company logging in the adjacent forest, the provincial Department of the Environment, Natural Resources Canada, and Parks Canada. The parties agreed to work together to develop scientifically-based solutions to the connectivity issue. They signed an agreement with Parks Canada to ensure that Gros Morne remains ecologically connected with the broader landscape while also ensuring that the company’s need for timber is met. They designed a structured program to monitor key ecological features both prior to and after cutting to determine which methods create the least impacts for four indicator species that inhabit the park and the surrounding area. The paper company also agreed to involve Parks Canada in adaptive management experiments for alternate forest harvesting and to include the park’s Manager of Ecosystem Science on a panel to advise the company on the best approach to harvesting in the forestry district adjacent to the park.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Marine Boundary – Gros Morne NP also borders the Gulf of St. Lawrence and surrounds two large marine fiords / bays. The park’s coastal ecosystem and the health of its fish populations are closely tied to the health of the surrounding marine ecosystem. Gros Morne National Park has engaged with local communities, Memorial University’s Bonne Bay Marine Station and park visitors to monitor the park’s coastal ecosystems through a Beach Watch program and the Intertidal Monitoring program. The park also has partnered with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in a number of initiatives to monitor and improve anadromous fish populations in the park and local communities. The Aquatic Connectivity project, for example, identifies and remediates artificial barriers to fish movement, such as poorly installed culverts, thereby re-establishing connections for Atlantic salmon and brook trout between the sea and their freshwater spawning and rearing habitats.</p>

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<p>5. Sustainable finance:</p> <p><i>What effective strategies have you developed and implemented to assure adequate and sustainable financial resources for implementing the management measures required to maintain the site's OUV?</i></p>	<p>In accordance with Parks Canada's national policy direction, the management team in Gros Morne develops a sustainable business plan that ensures financial resources are aligned to management priorities. We are continually looking at costs, succession planning and revenue collection strategies to ensure that the budget is sustainable and aligned to key management measures related to ecological integrity and OUV.</p> <p>Also, please see information provided about the Gros Morne Co-operating Association in <i>Section 2-Local People</i> for more about the creative partnerships that this friends group has led in the region. Their work has been directly and indirectly responsible for an investment of some CDN \$20 million.</p>
<p>6. Staffing training and development:</p> <p><i>What approaches and strategies have you developed and implemented to assure that the human resources are adequate to manage the World Heritage property?</i></p>	<p>A Human Resources Plan has been completed for Gros Morne National Park with emphasis on career development plans for employees, competency profiling, and employment equity action plans. The plan is allowing the park to ensure continued capacity, with Human Resources emphasis centred on succession planning, developing employees who are committed to career progression, and enhancing employee spirit, energy, and enthusiasm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Staff receive ongoing training in areas that are appropriate to their work such as Ecological Integrity, Conflict Resolution, Quality Visitor Experience and Service Standards, First Aid, and Cultural Resource Management. Additionally, a training tool was recently developed for raising staff awareness about UNESCO, the World Heritage Convention, and the significance of being a World Heritage site.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>See Principles for Engaging Communities in <i>Section 2-Local People</i> for a description of how the working group process was applied internally. The idea behind the principles is the realization that when protected areas and adjacent communities recognize their common goals and respective strengths, great gains can be made. The principles have been shared with all employees who are encouraged to see how these can be incorporated into relevant aspects of their work.</p>

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<p>7. Sustainable development:</p> <p><i>What are the effective mechanisms in place to ensure that resource use permitted in and around the World Heritage site is sustainable and does not impact negatively on OUV?</i></p>	<p>Parks Canada has, in conjunction with local communities, developed a strategy to manage the domestic timber harvest in Gros Morne National Park, an activity that was included in the park establishment agreement. The objectives of this co-operative effort include maintenance of ecological integrity, ensuring a sustainable harvest into the future and continued co-operation among Parks Canada, the provincial government, and municipalities. This approach to community involvement has become standard operating procedure in the park.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>As outlined in <i>Section #3-Legal Framework</i>, local residents were also involved in the drafting of regulations governing other resource extraction activities such as fishing and snaring snowshoe hare prior to the <i>Canada National Parks Act</i> being applied in the park.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Also as outlined in <i>Section#3-Legal Framework</i> the licence agreements that are signed with businesses operating in the park require that the highest environmental operational standards are put in place.</p> <p>Parks Canada applies the same high standards to its own operations. Examples include: using visitor demand management techniques such as establishing site capacity, respecting the management plan zones that are established for different sectors of the park; and the requirement for an environmental assessment process to be carried out for any new developments—that includes the identification of mitigation measures.</p>
<p>8. Education and interpretation programmes:</p> <p><i>How do the education, interpretation and awareness programmes you have developed and implemented significantly</i></p>	<p>Gros Morne National Park was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site on the basis of its internationally significant geological features and for its outstanding natural beauty. All live interpretation programs in Gros Morne inform audiences that in addition to being a Canadian national park, the property is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. The reasons the park is considered internationally significant are explained. Visitors can learn more through specific World Heritage experiences that offer several ways to learn about the geological story of the park. From</p>

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<p><i>enhance the understanding of OUV of the site among stakeholders?</i></p>	<p>taking a Zodiac boat tour, or using an Explora GPS device on the Tablelands, to taking guided walks of several of the park’s geological features, visitors have many opportunities to discover that Gros Morne is a World Heritage site and to learn why. They also have many non-personal media opportunities to learn about this special place. The park’s visitor guide and other publications explain the World Heritage story as do exhibits at the park’s visitor facilities. As well, several film and radio documentaries have been created that convey the story.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Parks Canada, along with a team of dedicated partners that includes the provincial Department of Education and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association, offers a Teachers’ Institute to educators from across Newfoundland and Labrador. The experiential learning programs they participate in Gros Morne have helped to provide them with the tools and the inspiration to bring the nationally and internationally significant stories to life in their classrooms. The lesson plans the teachers create as part of the Institutes are posted on the Virtual Learning Centre of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers’ Association where they can potentially reach up to 6500 teachers and 87,000 students throughout the province. All participants of this program have agreed that Parks Canada and teachers share a very important goal: to educate students about our country, our world, and our shared heritage.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>A partnership that has been established between Newfoundland and Labrador’s Western School District and Parks Canada is delivering a unique Outdoor Education Program for all Grade 5 school children in the district—a much larger region than the park communities on their own. In the program, environmental, park and outdoor themes are covered across all areas of the Grade 5 curriculum. The students then visit the park for three days where they get a chance to take part in curriculum-based outdoor activities with their teachers and park interpreters.</p>

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	<p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Aboriginal outcomes for grades 7 and K -2 have been added to Newfoundland and Labrador’s Social Studies curriculum as a result of a collaboration among Parks Canada, the Department of Education, and all five Aboriginal groups in the province. At the invitation of the Department of Education, the working group involved with developing the curriculum gave two in-service sessions for the teachers who were to pilot the program.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Through a partnership with the Qualipu First Nation, the Western Region Vice Chief is an interpreter with Gros Morne National Park. This has allowed for a wealth of stories about the Mi’kmaq peoples of Newfoundland to be shared with visitors. Examples include visitors learning about traditional medicines, and how to construct a traditional ocean-going birch bark canoe.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>The Art Gallery of Newfoundland & Labrador in partnership with Parks Canada established the Gros Morne Artist-in-Residence Program in 1997. This project encourages a variety of artists to spend a residency period at Gros Morne with funding provided by the Canada Council for the Arts. During the residency, participants offer public programs and produce works of art based upon their time in the park and surrounding region. A number of curated exhibitions have now been held around the world including in Canada, the US, Ireland and Japan. Pieces created through the residency are also frequently exhibited in the national park’s Discovery Centre Art Gallery.</p> <p>This residency was the spark that ignited Art-in-the-Park, i.e., a much larger approach to arts programming. It covers a wide range of partnership projects including experiential programs where visitors work with an art interpreter; a television special and Web site feature based on the art book <i>Gros Morne Time Lines</i> that was produced in partnership with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; a concept musical CD entitled <i>Gros Morne: A Musical Journey</i> that celebrates the features of Gros Morne in music. The disk was created by a local singer/songwriter and a regional</p>

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	<p>composer who worked in partnership with the Gros Morne Co-operating Association and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It also includes the staging of a modern dance extravaganza called “Feel the Earth Move.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Since the introduction of this arts programming, the region has become a veritable hotbed of high quality arts programming that now includes a literary festival, a classical music festival, a theatre festival, as well as traditional music and storytelling festivals. It is evident that a cultural clustering effect is taking place. In that regard, since April 2010, Parks Canada, along with federal partners in the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency have been working in close collaboration with community and cultural sector partners, as well as provincial government departments, to support the strategic development of cultural tourism for the Gros Morne region, known as the Gros Morne Cultural Blueprint. The <i>Gros Morne Cultural Blueprint</i> identifies a range of strategic initiatives to transform the Gros Morne region into a national centre for culture and creativity in an acclaimed natural environment that will attract international attention.</p> <p>Parks Canada, Canadian Heritage and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency recognize the significant role that cultural industries play in keeping Canadian communities vibrant and dynamic. While respecting the intrinsic value of arts and culture, the parties also recognize that culture can play a positive role in the economic development of rural regions in ways that are environmentally sustainable. The parties are exploring opportunities to work in close collaboration with cultural, community and business stakeholders in the Gros Morne region to develop and implement a strategic and coherent horizontal approach to sustainable cultural and economic development.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>To help people understand the fascinating story of the 500,000,000-year-old Tablelands – an outcrop of the Earth’s mantle thrust up on land and one of the park’s most celebrated geological features – interpreter Fred Sheppard took a highly entertaining space-age odyssey approach when</p>

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	<p>he developed his acclaimed program “Mission to the Mantle.” Fred has performed “Mission” at the Johnson Geo Centre in St. John’s (the capital city of Newfoundland and Labrador) and at a Canada-wide science fair for 750 student and parent participants. He was also invited to deliver the program at the North American Society for Geoscience Education Conference in Calgary, and at the 32nd International Geological Congress in Florence, Italy. Along with “Mission,” Fred also presented a session at the Congress on Parks Canada’s role in geo-science education focusing on Gros Morne’s contribution to both school and public geo-science education. He will present a similar session as a guest panellist at the 2012 Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Geological Association and Mineralogical Association.</p>
<p>9. Tourism and interpretation:</p> <p><i>What innovative plans have you designed and successfully implemented to ensure that visitor management does not negatively impact on the maintenance of the property’s OUV?</i></p>	<p>Gros Morne National Park is a major travel generator and a marketing icon for the provincial tourism industry. The region is considered to be a <i>Tier One</i> destination in the Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism Product Development Strategy, and as such, features prominently in provincial tourism advertising and marketing campaigns. The attractiveness of the national park to the provincial tourism industry is evidenced through the number of visitors who travel to Gros Morne. With approximately 180,000 visitors annually, it is matched only by the province’s capital city of St. John’s for visitation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>There is a long tradition of collaboration and partnership among tourism industry representatives, including Parks Canada, in the Gros Morne region. In fact, the concept of sustainable tourism has been <i>de rigueur</i> in the region for some time. This is especially evidenced through the Viking Trail Sustainable Tourism Accord that was signed in 1999 by representatives of the tourism industry, federal and provincial government partners, and the communities on the Northern Peninsula and southern Labrador (i.e., the region where Gros Morne National Park is located). It was through the process used to compile this accord that the tourism industry, municipalities, and federal and provincial partners began to set out the quality standards that the region would strive for in terms of human resource and product development. This was also the beginning of numerous</p>

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:	Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:
	<p>collaborative working arrangements between the tourism industry and Gros Morne National Park for which the region is now so well known. Starting with the words, “On behalf of the people of....” this accord was considered a groundbreaking document when it was developed. That same level and spirit of collaboration continues to this day, examples of which are described below and elsewhere in this document.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>The establishment of the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) stands in this Province, and throughout Atlantic Canada, as a significant example of how sustainable tourism has evolved from principle to practice in the region. GMIST understands that part of helping operators to ensure our collective success involves providing them today with the skills, knowledge and tools they need to face the future sustainably.</p> <p>GMIST has a mandate to promote and train tourism industry representatives, particularly in the four most eastern Canadian provinces, (i.e., Atlantic Canada) toward effective, sustainable tourism practices. Its vision includes being recognized internationally as an innovator and leader in developing capacity for sustainable tourism and to have Gros Morne and Atlantic Canada recognized as destinations committed to improvement of sustainable tourism practices. This centre of learning excellence for the tourism industry was created as the result of an innovative partnership among the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency-Tourism Atlantic, Parks Canada, the Canadian Tourism Commission, and Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador who led the development of GMIST on behalf of the tourism industry associations in Atlantic Canada. The Institute offers all sectors of Atlantic Canada’s tourism industry the opportunity to learn about the principles and practices of sustainable tourism, how to build excellence in the delivery of quality visitor experiences, and adventure tourism skills. National and international tourism experts are delivering these high-quality programs through the use of innovative learning techniques, field-based learning experiences, and showcasing best practices in sustainable tourism.</p>

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	<p>While GMIST helps industry representatives from across Atlantic Canada to better apply the principles and practices of sustainable tourism, it also helps us to do the same in the Gros Morne region. As a result of GMIST training, and as a result of serving GMIST clients, businesses in the area are becoming much more involved in collaborating to enhance the visitor experience offer in the region, and in taking measures to improve their green performance.</p> <p>GMIST is operated by the Gros Morne Co-operating Association (See <i>Section #2-Local People</i>).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Clearly, part of the role of heritage managers is to consider how a site should approach its relationship with visitors and manage its participation in the tourism industry. To date, the visitor experience in Gros Morne has offered a variety of interpretation programs, print information, orientation maps, and some speciality programs for targeted audiences. A range of recreational services such as campgrounds and hiking trails have also presented ways to enjoy the park through self-discovery. However as organizations and society evolve, they must manage change if relevance is to be maintained. Social science research serves an important role in supporting Parks Canada and Gros Morne National Park in its work to better understand their visitors and to help staff stage ways for visitors to connect with these special places in ways that are relevant and memorable.</p> <p>In 2008, the park began to use a values-based visitor segmentation model, developed for the Canadian Tourism Commission, in its planning and product development activities. From a consumer perspective <i>The Explorer Quotient™</i>, referred to as “EQ,” is a quick, five-minute quiz comprised of 20 questions. Once completed, participants get immediate feedback on their <i>Explorer Type</i>. This market research tool has helped Gros Morne to better understand the social and travel values as well as the travel behaviours that influence travellers’ decision-making. It has also enhanced our ability to develop programs and partnerships that deliver meaningful visitor experiences in ways that resonate with the nine different types of travellers EQ profiled—experiences that are appropriate to the region culturally and environmentally.</p>

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	<p>To build on the work done in the past with the EQ tool, Gros Morne National Park now approaches its development and management of visitor experiences by employing a Visitor Experience Opportunity Concept (VEOC) model that uses a whole destination approach. Gros Morne's VEOC was developed in collaboration with community representatives, tourism partners, Aboriginal partners and other stakeholders in order to have a shared vision of what the visitor experience opportunities for the Gros Morne destination should be. This enables us to work with others to expand the array of desired guest experiences befitting Gros Morne as a national icon and an international treasure. Our shared vision is based on a better understanding of visitor values and interests and provides a base for strategic investments and collaborative actions.</p> <p>The VEOC provides ways and means to innovate and enhance visitor opportunities and facilitation services that Parks Canada and its tourism industry and community stakeholders provide for their guests. It identifies a number of cutting edge services, through which visitors are able to achieve their desired connections with people, places and events of Gros Morne that are of international, national, provincial and local significance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Gros Morne National park is one of the partners contributing to a Geospatial Research Facility that is housed at the Corner Brook Campus of the College of the North Atlantic. Other partners include the College, Natural Resources Canada, the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Ltd., Memorial University of Newfoundland, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Technological Industries. The facility is enhancing the partnership's capability to undertake research and development in areas such as biodiversity modeling, forest and ecosystem modeling, digital 3-D visualization tools, and software tools and methods for application to sustainable forest management, resource assessments and eco-tourism marketing.</p>

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:	Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:
	<p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Visitor demand management strategies are an important part of the strategic approach that the park takes to resource protection. For example temporal zoning ensures that Gros Morne Mountain is closed to visitors annually until 1st July in order to protect nesting ptarmigan and Arctic hare. With recreational snowmobiling, use must not affect wildlife, vegetation and terrain, therefore there are defined areas and dates of operation, and the limit to growth has been identified by capping the number of snowmobilers who will be permitted in any one season.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">§</p> <p>Parks Canada has introduced new sewage treatment technology at its boat tour facilities at Western Brook Pond in Gros Morne National Park. The operator has already worked with Parks Canada to define a carrying capacity and was the first in Canada to receive ISO 14001 certification for a boat tour operation. Now, this new peat filtration system will improve effluent quality while reducing the attraction’s overall footprint. Solar panels are used to power facilities at the Trout River Campground instead of using a gas generator. (For more on operational standards employed by Parks Canada, please see “operations” in <i>Section #7-Sustainable Development</i>).</p>
Additional comments:	
<p>The report from an expert meeting (<i>Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, WHC-10/34-COM/5D</i>) that was submitted for the consideration of the World Heritage Committee during its 34th session in 2010 offered a description of the ideal relationship between heritage protection and sustainable development. It stated:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“The protection of heritage, as an attribute of natural and cultural diversity, plays a fundamental role in fostering strong communities, supporting the physical and spiritual well-being of its individuals and promoting mutual understanding and peace. Through a variety of goods and services and as a storehouse of knowledge, moreover, a well-protected World Heritage property very often contributes directly to livelihoods and sustainable development, intended as development where each of the three pillars, the environmental, the economic and the social, including intra and intergenerational equity, is given adequate consideration.”</p> <p>The ideas contained in this expert description were recently compared with comments made by a number of interview respondents (n=20) concerning their perception of whether Gros Morne National Park is a model of sustainability (World Heritage Master Thesis - Cottbus entitled: <i>Toward</i></p>	

Understanding Gros Morne National Park as a Model of Sustainability”). That comparative discussion is summarized below:

Most interview respondents indicated that they felt nature was the dominant attribute of the Gros Morne region. It is what people see before they see a “destination.” A number said they see the park as helping the region to retain not only its natural, but also its cultural values. They feel the region’s traditional cultural landscapes have an air of authenticity since they are comprised of signs of people’s actual life and work. Through the many partnerships it has developed with cultural industry representatives and local communities, the park is recognized for its work in embracing the cultural sector in ways that help to tell the story of this unique place. Some of the interview subjects also associated the attention their region receives as a result of the World Heritage designation with an enhanced feeling of pride about where they live.

Through its role as stewards of Gros Morne National Park, Parks Canada has become a significant partner in the region and has thereby shown itself to be a member of the community too. Many respondents could name ways that the park has collaborated in regional initiatives that have helped to support the surrounding communities. It was evident that people perceive that Gros Morne National Park has a role to play in a healthy community—one that people enjoy living in because it offers them a high quality of life. Gros Morne provides many activities and services that are of interest to residents as much as to visitors. Furthermore, a number believed that because the park exists—as a large federal presence in its rural context—it has helped to stabilize and maintain a cluster of other federal, provincial and private services in the area, such as health, social, educational and recreational services, as well as restaurants and shops. In the view of most people interviewed, a sustainable region is able to provide for the needs of its people in such ways.

Public engagement is a cornerstone of operational practice in Gros Morne. Park management considers it important that people have a say in matters that affect them. Many respondents alluded to what they see as an increased blending of values and goals between the protected area and the communities. Most respondents were able to name some of the formal and informal mechanisms through which the park has reached out to communities to address common concerns, and achieve common goals such as the Mayors’ Forum or loaning out its professional and technical expertise to support community needs.

Gros Morne National Park is recognized as the premier natural heritage destination in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. As such, it plays a significant and valued role as a regional anchor tourism attraction. Increasingly, individuals, organizations, businesses and municipalities are working in partnership along with the park to protect and present this very special region of Canada. Through initiatives like the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism, the community/park working groups, the Accord for Sustainability that is helping communities to address climate change issues, the level of involvement the park has with the educational system, and through the variety of ways that communities are telling their own story, sustainable development is clearly a major focus of regional thinking. Additionally, the combined efforts of the communities and the park are producing high quality visitor programs and services that help visitors to make meaningful connections with the place. In addition to tourism expenditures, Parks Canada’s own financial contributions to salaries and operations also have a noticeable impact. All of these collaborative efforts are promoting an economic vitality and a continuing degree of prosperity that are helping to offset some of the losses the communities have felt as a result of the decline

in the North Atlantic cod fishery. In relation to the numbers of people that visit the park, there were suggestions by some respondents that the positive exchanges that can occur as a result help to contribute to the quality of life in the region.

Respondents seem to perceive that aspects of the social and economic pillars of sustainability are well tended in the Gros Morne region. The responses they provided suggest that they feel the communities are culturally vibrant. They also see that protecting and presenting their natural and cultural heritage through sustainable tourism opportunities is providing them with economic development options. Responses would also indicate that the environmental protection pillar has a very firm base in Gros Morne. Ecosystem management principles that have encouraged people to become part of solutions are helping to ensure that the health of natural heritage resources receives foremost consideration. Along with park management, businesses and municipalities understand the value and importance of environmental health and support numerous initiatives in an effort to build a sustainable region. Therefore, issues that have the potential to impair the ecological integrity or the OUV of the park, but also impact upon the lives of local residents and a broader public, are resolved through involved collaborative processes. Many sense that long-term conservation goals are best served by fostering local ownership as opposed to managing by stern enforcement means and measures.

To conclude, Gros Morne National Park is managed in such a way that it exhibits numerous characteristics that may be considered model-like. As stated by one respondent, “sustainability at the local level comes with empowerment. It is a democratic process.”

Brief description/ summary of the best practice, including a statement on how it can be useful for other sites (max.600 words)

Moving from a management culture where protection of heritage assets is “enforced” to one where stakeholders are engaged in protecting a site because they understand the values associated with it and support the management approach because they have been involved with defining it, does not and cannot happen by accident. Our job is simply too big to do without the support and help of stakeholders. It takes a concerted effort on the part of heritage management agencies to achieve desired outcomes. By adopting an approach of inclusive engagement, and sharing responsibility for decision making, it allows for a higher level of heritage protection and increases the quality and authenticity with which the story about special places is told. By recognizing our common goals and respective strengths, together, with our communities and stakeholders, it is possible to protect our natural and cultural environments, provide a high quality of life for residents and employees, and share the significance of pride and place to visitors. Inclusion, engagement and involvement of others lie at the heart of sustainable development.

Management planning is used as the primary tool for identifying issues that have the potential to negatively affect Gros Morne National Park’s ecological integrity or OUV, and for designing the appropriate level of management response. Worthy of particular note is the number of Parks Canada/Community and Stakeholder Working Groups that successfully resolve land use and other user conflict issues, as well identify areas for mutual co-operation. This collaborative approach has become standard operating procedure in Gros Morne National Park and is the subject of this nomination. The various working groups and collaborative arrangements that have been formed balance the rights of user groups with resource protection needs and help to realize appropriate development opportunities. This document has demonstrated a number of ways that the process has been used across all areas of

management. Gros Morne has developed a specific approach to the working group process, which can best be described as follows: In formulating such groups, the goal of park management is always to help group members become knowledgeable, highly effective, and supportive participants in the planning processes. Where local communities are part of a particular working group, representation is first sought through the Mayors' Forum (see p. 5). Typically, a neutral facilitator is hired to chair sessions so as to ensure group members understand there are no preconceived solutions to an issue beforehand. Additionally, stakeholder travel costs are supported. While different groups may address different topics, there is a constancy to approach that has emerged in the park. In their deliberations, working groups are encouraged to:

- Recognize Gros Morne National Park as a protected heritage area and understand that maintaining its ecological integrity and outstanding universal value can call for special considerations;
- Place protection of the resource as the first priority;
- Use the results of scientific study to inform management direction;
- Respect local knowledge;
- Apply the precautionary principle where there is any doubt; and
- Respect legally defined jurisdictions.

§ § § §

In conclusion, others have commented on the successful way that the Gros Morne National Park region has pursued, and will continue to pursue, sustainability. The first is offered by Australian Lorraine Edmunds, a 2007/08 Churchill Fellowship recipient who travelled to the Gros Morne region specifically to study its particular tourism development and management model. After an opportunity to speak with many of the stakeholders who are responsible for creating it, she wrote of her experience:

“I learned of innovative programs and policies.... I saw world-class interpretive facilities and experienced storytelling at its best. I learned of collaborative partnerships between communities, management agencies and research institutions in which cultural and natural places are protected whilst creating new economic opportunities for host communities”.

The second account appeared in a 2005 edition of National Geographic Traveler Magazine. In one issue, 55 of North America's national parks were reviewed as part of a destination scorecard series. The parks were ranked according to how sustainably they were being managed. The reviewer said that part of the reason Gros Morne tied for second place was:

“...I've never felt more welcome anywhere in North America,” and it is “a model of the collaborative actions of local communities and park management”

Finally, please provide us, if possible, with up to ten images of the concerned World Heritage property that can be used free of rights in UNESCO publications (commercial and/or non-commercial), and on the UNESCO website. Please provide the name of the photographer and the caption along with the images (he/she will be credited for any use of the images).